

COMMODORE MAILINK

NEWSLETTER OF —
MEETING 64/128 USERS
THROUGH THE MAIL

SEPTEMBER 2005



Congratulations MUTTM!



How BIG
is your
Umbrella?



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Members may place free Commodore BUY/SELL/TRADE ads in the Mailink. Send diskfile of ad to next editor, or if ad is very short, hard copy may be submitted instead

EDITOR GUIDELINES: (abbreviated version))

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

Editor should where possible use the two-column per page format for better readability. Also, all page margins, excepting page 2, should be no less than 3/4" on each right and left margins. Text, regardless of which font, should, with rare exception, be 12 point or larger. The number of different fonts on a page is not written in stone, but no more than two is a good rule of thumb, or three if you include footers and/or headers.

Requirements for the Editor include, regular columns such as TWS, geoPublish Tutorial, BASIC, and Q&A DESK, and if submitted, ARCHIVES, BUY/SELL/TRADE ads, Treasurer's Report, Obituaries, Announcements, Address Changes, and New Member BIO's. Also the Editor must detail the computer system, including software and hardware and printer used in the production of the current newsletter, as well as name, requirements, and deadlines of next editor. This could be in two separate columns: "The Editor's Desk" and "The Next Editor". If as Editor, you receive more than enough to fill pages 3-18, you will publish all "requirements" and some of the "options", then forward to next editor only whatever "options" would not fit in newsletter.

The Editor should edit each item as it arrives, creating a diskfile and a backup diskfile, making certain a TWS version of all disk files is (also) created. A good, clean "master copy" on single, unfolded sheets, printed on one side only and protected by cardboard should be sent along with the TWS disk files to our Mailer, Richard Savoy, by the first day of the month you are editing. **NOTE #1** TWS diskfiles may be sent as textfiles via email to Richard Savoy; remember to affix title to each file. **NOTE #2:** to include a color page, send 100 completed sheets of that page, printed on both sides (ready for insertion into CML), along with the "masters" and TWS disk. A second copy of CML (copied on the back of junk mail is OK) should also be sent to the President for proofreading purposes.

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 running late, notify the President who can help expedite matters.

Editing can be fun. It can be mentioned in your resume', so what are you waiting for? Contact us now.

-----September's editor: **Dale Sidebottom**-----

MEETING NEWS

September, 2005

We have a slight change in our slate of Officers. After years of wearing probably too many hats for comfort, Richard Savoy has decided to pass the baton of Disk Editor, or Editor of MaiLink-On-Disk, to another dedicated member, Mr. Ken Barsky, as of January, 2006.

For the remainder of this year, Ken will be learning the ropes of what amounts to maintaining the only disk archives of our newsletter, as well as copying and distributing the disks to subscribers. We are delighted that Mr. Barsky has volunteered the position, and wish him well.

Richard Savoy will remain on board in charge of printing, collating, and mailing newsletters. He is the man who ushers the newsletter on its way and sometimes must politely remind editors about overdue deadlines.

By now, a number of summer EXPO's and other Commodore gatherings have come and gone, and hopefully some member will volunteer to write a pertinent article.

One member sent me a January, 2005 Newsday article entitled, "U.S. firm buying Commodore." There was brief mention of this on internet lists, but since I did not recall any updates, I am summarizing the article here. **Tulip Computers International BV** had held the rights to **Commodore** since 1997, and agreed to sell all remaining patents and the Commodore brand to **Yeahronimo**, known in Europe for providing music and video downloads via the internet. Yeahronimo said they "will use the Commodore name to increase awareness of its services and hopes to cash in on a recent renaissance of interest in vintage games and computers", Chief Executive, Ben van Weijhe said in a telephone interview.

Stay tuned.....

Hopefully you will enjoy this issue created by Dale Sidebottom who always manages to push the Commodore to new heights. Thank you, Dale.

Linda Tanner
President

QUESTION & ANSWER DESK

Rolf Miller,
Q & A Editor
rolfmiller@aol.com



Questions may be submitted by regular or e-mail. Answers will be returned as soon as obtained, then published in coming issues, though the identity of those asking questions will not appear because duplicate, similar, and associated items will be compiled.

Q. I tried to write a little game in BASIC which consumes less than 1K of program memory. I read somewhere that a 1K program would require only 4 disk blocks to save. So that is what I shot for. I missed. It took 5 disk blocks. So I set about to trim some characters, yet keep the game intact. I got it down to where I needed to eliminate just 2 characters for a 4 block save. That's when I came across this puzzle.

The game requires cycling a numeric variable L from 1 to 12. I originally did this by writing `L=L+1: IFL=13THENL=1`. I count 19 characters. I found that `L=1+L*(ABS(L<12))` did the same thing with 2 characters less, but it still took 5 disk blocks to save.

A. First, the idea that a 1K program save would use only 4 disk blocks no doubt came from the fact that each disk block consumes 256 bytes ($256*4=1024$ which is 1K). However, the first 2 bytes of a disk block store the track and sector of the next data block. Hence, each disk block stores only 254 bytes of data. Thus, a 1K program would require 5 blocks (4 full blocks plus 8 bytes of another).

Since you got the program down to where eliminating 2 characters would save in 4 disk blocks, it is clear that you accomplished your goal of less than a 1K program ($4*254+2=1018$ bytes).

As for the puzzle, actually the two lines of code consume exactly the same program memory: 15 bytes each. The reason is that keywords like IF, THEN, and ABS are tokenized in program memory and consume only 1 byte each.

For those interested, `L=1+L*(ABS(L<12))` works this way. `L<12` returns -1 if true and zero if false. So, if L is less than 12, the value is -1. The effect of ABS makes negative numbers positive, so the -1 becomes 1, and 1 times the value of L is added. But if L is 12, the value of `L<12` is zero. ABS doesn't act on zero, and zero times the value of L yields zero, adding nothing.

---R.L.M.---

C = CAT

{Lord Ronin from Q-Link}

Ever try to write on the C= with a loving cat in your lap? That is what happens to me in the shop when I do my writing for different reasons and places. Ah, perhaps I should back up a moment.

Several months ago, the shop and the Users Group took in a stray black feline and named her A500 (since she liked to sleep on the broken A500 keyboard). After 7 weeks she was stolen from us and that led to depression on our side.

Three days later, a Maine coon arrived. He had also been a neighborhood stray. In short, he claimed us. Having experienced the pain of losing the one cat, we were hesitant to risk losing another one when we took him in. Well, when a cat decides that you are his 'pet human,' there isn't much you can do about it, and so here he stayed.

What to name him? Jokingly, we called him "Shave-ed tail" last year because he had been picked up in a feral cat round up. In this round up, he was taken to the vet and neutered. They also shaved off his matted fur from ribs to tail, and then they released him back "into the wild."

In jest, frustration, or meloncholy (feeling the loss of the stolen cat), I called him "Commodore Kitty." Why is he the "Commodore Kitty"? He likes the Commodore. (Yet I hope that I have been able to remove all of his "input" to this article.) But he has *a thing* for the F keys on my flat 128. An obviously cultured cat, he likes listening to Bach SID music and sits by the computer purring softly while it plays. He also loves to watch a red cursor on the screen but gets annoyed when he can't catch it.

He is very skilled in the C= use of the back of my 64C. I have an Aprotech port expander there with a 1750 REU plugged into it. There is a reset button between the REU and the back of the 64C which I have difficulty reaching with my fingers.

No problem for Commodore Kitty. Because I was stroking the keys of the 64C, rather than his fur, he knocked over a stack of 1581 disks with a swipe of his paw. Yipes! You can guess what happened. As if on purpose, one of those disks flew right toward the reset button. BANG! I lost several paragraphs of the story I was writing. I had to pet him a bit, then reload the writer software and start again.

Since then I have learned to pet first and type second. That way he doesn't get so jealous and "attack" my Commodore. (Now if I can just keep him away from the F-keys.)

Lord Ronin (a.k.a. David Mohr)

What is a Cat?

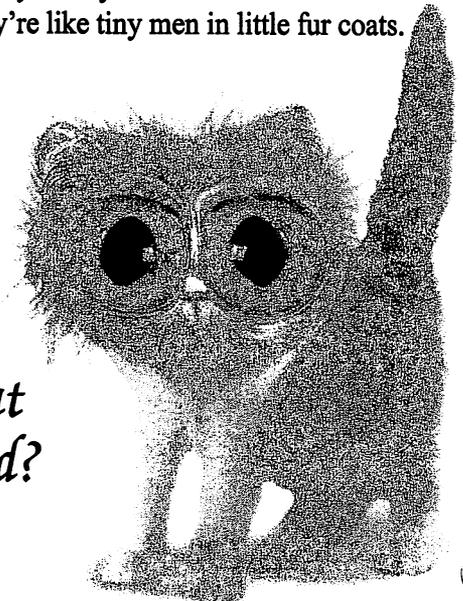
(Author Unknown)

Cats do what they want.
They rarely listen to you.
They're totally unpredictable.
When you want to play, they want to be alone.
When you want to be alone, they want to play.
They expect you to cater to their every whim.
They're *very* moody.
They leave hair everywhere.
They drive you nuts and cost an arm and a leg.
Conclusion: They're like tiny women in litte fur coats.

What is a Dog?

Dogs lie around all day, sprawled on the most comfortable piece of furniture in the house.
They can hear a package of food being opened half a block away, but don't hear you when you're in the same room.
They can look dumb and lovable at the same time.
They growl when they are not happy.
When you want to play, they want to play.
When you want to be alone, they want to play.
They will love you forever if you rub their tummies.
They leave their toys everywhere.
Conclusion: They're like tiny men in little fur coats.

What happens when a cat is neutered? Really?



Contratulations MUTTM!



It's official. My doctor told me last Thursday (Sept. 1) that I have cancer again. This is the third time in the last twelve years. Needless to say, I am getting a little tired of it. Been there, done that, and not anxious to go back and do it again!

Regardless, reality swings a heavy bat. Because of my increasing health problems, I have increasingly shied away from any positions of responsibility in the Commodore community. This year, for the first time in twenty years, the LUCKI Club (of which I am president) is not producing a newsletter. For the last nine years, I have enjoyed being its editor. But alas, no more.

For the last seven years, I have been LUCKI President, but as I have decided to retire, the board of directors have decided to retire with me. We will continue to be a Commodore club, but we have gone from 80 members (2004) to 40 members (2005) expect only about 10-20 members next year.

In fact, I was just walking out the door when when someone grabbed me by the collar and said, "Not so fast, Buster!" It was your President, Linda Tanner, reminding me, "In the past, I have done some favors for you. Now I would like you to do a small favor for me...like edit the Commodore MaiLink for a month. September would be nice." (And you know she was smiling sweetly as she said it. ;-)

It may be a secret, but I have supported MUTTM (which I prefer to call MaiLink) as a member for many years. As LUCKI has become less active, I have pushed hard to encourage our members to join MUTTM. Last year, dozen or more new members were added to MaiLink through these efforts. As other clubs dwindle in numbers and activities, it is nice to know that MUTTM has increasingly become the

premiere place for Commodore lovers to meet (through the mail).

All of which begs the question..."How big is your umbrella?" As recently as four years ago, it seemed to me that your umbrella was rather small...that it covered only the traditional or "stock" Commodore user. If CBM didn't make it, MUTTM didn't support it.

Today, I am proud and relieved to say that your umbrella looks much bigger! You also provide support (tacit or otherwise) for those who use 64 Emulators or third-party hardware specifically designed to enhance the 64/128's performance. (Creative Micro Design [CMD] is probably the best known example.) You now allow color photos from time to time, and Bruce Thomas was invited to publish an in-depth tutorial discussing the intricacies of geoPublish (Commodore's only DTP software).

And so I want to say, "Congratulations MUTTM!" You have outlasted all your competitors and grown wise in the process. But this new growth comes at a price. I am told that MUTTM has lost some members because they just want the umbrella to remain small. They don't want to broaden the club's support to cover other diverse interests.

I am reminded of a story told by a very successful minister in the Louisville KY area who shepherds a 20,000 member church. Some parishoners complained that they were not pleased by all selections of church music. He replied that that was okay since not all the church music was for them. Before they had time to get too angry, he explained that there were many types of people in the church, and that not all the music was going to please everybody.

The Commodore community needs a national (or international) club with enough room under the umbrella to fit allow for diversity.

continued on page 9

BASICALLY SPEAKING

by Linda Tanner

This lesson for the C128 in 40 columns will show a little more about sprite creation and manipulation, in fact, an easier way to create sprites than we have done in the past. Remember when we created sprites for the C64 where we had to POKE all kinds of numbers in all kinds of registers? Well, with BASIC 7.0, we have a number of new commands which can make a programmer lazy.

Here we learn about **SPRDEF** mode. It was new to me until a few weeks ago so don't feel alone. To create a batch of 8 sprites, turn on your C128 in 40 columns, and type **SPRDEF**. You will be presented with the screen on which you create the sprites, one at a time. Instructions for this are found in both the C128 Programmer's Reference Guide and the Commodore 128 System Guide. After creating your sprites you need to save them to disk for permanent storage. To do this, immediately after creating your sprites, type the following command in direct mode: **BSAVE"filename",B0,P3584TOP4096** and you will have saved all your sprite data as one binary file.

For our two little programs on page six, I have already created the sprite data files for you. With our first program, "**BOOMERANG**", we have our sprite data in the binary file "**SPRITEBOOM1**" and for our second program, called (**LOST IN THE**) "**NEUTRAL ZONE**", our sprite data is in "**SPACEOBJ1**". The programs each call for the sprite data files, freeing the programmer for more challenging tasks.

In "**Boomerang**", a guy basically (pun intended) throws a boomerang and it whizzes back to hit him in the head. It took two sprites to make the guy, two more sprites--one for each position of his throwing arm, a fifth sprite representing the boomerang, and a sixth sprite which shows text describing the sound effects, which aren't exactly impressive. (Steven Spielberg won't be calling me anytime soon). "**Boomerang**" is only six statements long and two of those are mostly housekeeping, such as setting colors, clearing the screen, etc. Statement 12 directs the movement of our boomerang. You can experiment by changing the variables and/or numbers to see how else the boomerang can be made to move. In a nutshell, the sprites are turned on and assigned a color with, for example, **SPRITE5,1,3** and then moved with, for example, **MOVSPR5, 112,132**, which tells the computer to move sprite #5 to a position whose X co-ordinate is 112, and whose Y co-ordinate is 132. For more movement than merely placing a sprite at 112,132, for example, we can resurrect our "circle" information when we want the sprite to move in a curve. Notice in line 12, we first define X and Y: $X=162+164*\text{COS}(AN)$ and $Y=110+4*\text{SIN}(AN)$. Now we can merely say **MOVSPR1,X,Y** and our Commodore does all the thinking and you won't need to drag out math books or trig tables.

In (**Lost In The**) "**Neutral Zone**", I created and used all eight sprites, including sprite #1 which is actually another version of our "**InterGalactic CosmoBile**" (**IGCB**), which was inadvertently referred to as **IGCM** when it was introduced in January of this year. Trekkies know the "**Neutral Zone**" to be much more complex than this little program can show, but remember we are only using 8 sprites and are only allotted two pages in **CML**.

One purpose of this program is to show many types of movement, such as clockwise, counter-clockwise, straight lines, and sharp turns. For those out there with "math anxiety", do not be alarmed by the use of **SIN** or **COS**. Remember this: in the term **MOVSPR#,X,Y**, nearly any formula can be substituted for X or Y, as long as the value of that expression falls within the allowable limits. For example, page 117 of the SYSTEM GUIDE shows a graphic representation of where the visible sprite co-ordinates are and where sprites, even when turned "on", will be invisible on the computer screen. Thus **MOVSPR2,0,0** will move sprite #2 to the 0,0 position, which is outside of the sprite viewing area. Try all you might, you will never see sprite two as long as it is at 0,0 co-ordinates.

In (**Lost In The**) **Neutral Zone**, the sprites are all first placed on screen so the new programmer can see what little is involved in these first steps of turning on, applying color, and placing sprites on screen in lines 9 and 12.

Line 13 is what disables **SCPU**'s "**TurboSpeed**" down to 1 MHz for the duration of sprite movement, then line 20 re-enables **SCPU**'s speed to 20 MHz. I confess to accidentally reading the **SCPU** manual and discovering those two **POKES** have been there all along just begging to be read and used. But I also confess to not disconnecting **SCPU** and trying the program without **SCPU**, but with the two **POKES** still in place in lines 13 and 20.

In **NEUTRAL ZONE**, I purposely tweaked the the "**X**" and "**Y**" expressions. Compare them to those in **Boomerang**.. Remember, here we are not working math problems--rather we are moving sprites who need only some legitimate values to serve temporarily as "**X**" and "**Y**". **IMPORTANT**: Turn up your volumn control!

BOOMERANG1

(for C128 in 40 columns)

```
6 SCNCLR:COLOR4,2:COLOR1,1:COLOR0,2:COLOR5,1:GRAPHIC1,1:%"SPRITEBOOM1",8
10 SPRITE3,1,3:MOVSPR3,90,150:SPRITE7,1,3:MOVSPR7,90,130:SPRITE4,1,3:
MOVSPR4,109,148:SPRITE1,1:MOVSPR1,117,139:SLEEP2
12 SPRITE4,0:SPRITE5,1,3:MOVSPR5,112,132:MOVSPR1,122,126:FORAN=0TO2STEP.1:
X=162+164*COS(AN):Y=110+4*SIN(AN):MOVSPR1,X,Y:NEXT:SPRITE6,1,7:MOVSPR6,150,100
17 SOUND1,4000,4,1,20000,1,3,0
20 GETQ$:IFQ$=""THEN20
49 FORA=1TO8:SPRITEA,0:NEXT:COLOR4,1:COLOR0,1:COLOR5,2:GRAPHICCLR:SCNCLR:
LIST:REM-BOOMERANG1 C128/40COL-TURN OFFSCPU--CML-SEPT05-BY L.TANNER
```

(LOST IN THE) NEUTRAL ZONE

(for C128 in 40 columns)

```
8 SCNCLR:COLOR4,1:COLOR1,16:COLOR0,1:COLOR5,2:GRAPHIC1,1:%"SPACEOBJ1",8
9 SPRITE1,1,2:SPRITE2,1,9:SPRITE3,1,2:FORA=4TO8:SPRITEA,1:NEXT:
FORA=1TO8:MOVSPRA,35*A,100:NEXT:SLEEP2
12 MOVSPR1,24,208:MOVSPR2,50,80:MOVSPR3,50,77:MOVSPR4,140,60:MOVSPR5,220,100:
MOVSPR6,175,228:MOVSPR7,280,170:MOVSPR8,320,229:SLEEP2
13 POKE53370,0
14 B=10:SOUND1,18000,1000,0,1000,3,3,0:FORC=24TO344STEP50:MOVSPR1,C,208-B:
B=B+20:NEXT
15 FORA=320TO224STEP-1:MOVSPR1,A,58:NEXT:AA=2
16 FORAN=0TO30:X=224+(AA+AN)*SIN(AN):Y=58+(AA+AN)*COS(AN):MOVSPR1,X,Y:NEXT:
FORAN=275TO0STEP-10:MOVSPR1,X+SIN(AN),Y+COS(AN):NEXT
17 FORAN=0TO20STEP0.5:MOVSPR1,X+10*SIN(AN),Y+20*COS(AN):NEXT:
FORAN=0TO30:MOVSPR1,X+25*SIN(AN),Y+4*COS(AN):NEXT
18 FORAN=0TO40:MOVSPR1,X+2*SIN(AN),Y+10*COS(AN):NEXT:FORA=0TO100STEP4:
MOVSPR1,X-A,Y+A:NEXT:X=X-A:Y=Y+A:FORA=0TO90STEP4:MOVSPR1,X+A,Y+0.5*A:NEXT
19 X=X+A:Y=Y+0.5*A:FORA=0TO30:MOVSPR1,X+A,Y-A:NEXT:X=X+A:Y=Y-A:
FORA=0TO60STEP2:MOVSPR1,X+A,Y+A:NEXT
20 POKE53371,0
48 SLEEP3
49 FORA=1TO8:SPRITEA,0:NEXT:COLOR0,2:COLOR1,2:COLOR5,1:COLOR4,2:
GRAPHICCLR:SCNCLR:LIST
50 STOP:REM-(LOST IN THE)NEUTRAL ZONE-C128/40COL 9-05 CML BY L.TANNER
```

BACK-TO-THE-FUTURE TRANSFER SOLUTIONS

by Rolf L. Miller

I gave up my Commodore internet connection because the wife wanted AOL for her PC. That she likes AOL is fortunate because their out of date software still works on aging PC's for email. This allows the use of older machines (my favorite is a 486 laptop running Windows 3.1) for cross-platform data transfers.

The preference for older PC's has to do with the use of the Star Commander MS-DOS program and accompanying X1541 cable hooked to a Commodore drive for the transfers. Star Commander runs on PC's that can start in MS-DOS -- it won't run properly from the Windows MS-DOS prompt -- and newer Windows machines won't start in MS-DOS. Besides, the older PC's invariably have floppy drives (another transfer option) whereas newer machines mostly do not.

In the July 2005 issue, Linda Tanner lamented the latter. And because her online machine "bears the name of a fruit," she also lacks the Star Commander option. Consequently, she said, "I know of no way to access those files for transport to my favorite computer."

Schemes from bygone days may provide a solution. After all, the need to share data between various computer platforms presented itself during the early years. A couple of methods devised utilize a common thread still in use: telecommunications.

Consider, and for most that means, recall, BBS use. Connecting to a BBS basically involves a computer, whether a Commodore or otherwise, using a simple terminal program and modem to phone another computer which is running BBS software. Actually, the internet is but an extension of this in which the computer contacted in turn connects to others that make up the web.

Before the use of email as constituted today, not a few utilized the BBS platform to exchange data with others -- some still do: one uploads to the BBS and the other then downloads. In fact, it became a means for those with both Commodore and PC's to share data between the two.

Former days also saw some bypass the BBS and instead directly phone other computers via modem to transfer data. This is still quite easy to accomplish since even newer PC's provide for simple terminal applications. It just requires a little more attention to terminal program settings. Indeed, one who has two telephone lines reported using this procedure to transfer material between the Commodore and his wife's PC.

The same thing can be accomplished between two computers sitting side by side without the need of modems and telephone. This method, which came about early on, utilizes RS-232 connections via what is called a null-modem cable to access the terminal programs. (And there are newer nonmodem RS-232 transfer applications available.) However, RS-232 connections require accommodating the porting available which often varies from machine to machine.

To avoid this possible snag prompted developing a way to use the modems and their common telephone connections, but sans the telephone. It involves constructing an easy-to-make device which in effect simulates a regular telephone hookup. It consists of just two female telephone jacks and a 9 volt battery, and can be achieved without any soldering.

Regular telephone lines operate on 9VDC, and the standard connection uses but two wires: one red, which carries the voltage, and one green -- the black and yellow wires often present are not used in regular hookups. To create a pseudo telephone connection, therefore, just join the green wires from both jacks, then connect the red wire of one jack to the positive (+) side of the 9 volt battery and the red wire of the other jack to the negative (-) side. Now plug the telephone wire from one computer's modem into one jack and likewise for the other. Voila!

Obtaining a 9 volt battery connector with pigtailed wires and a wall-mount assembly containing two female telephone jacks makes this project easy. On the back side of the assembly, unscrew to disconnect the green wire from one jack module and connect it to the green wire screw terminal of the other. Attach one of the pigtail wires of the 9 volt battery connector to the red wire screw terminal of one jack and the other pigtail to the red wire screw terminal of the second jack. Add the battery to use.

The exact procedure for getting the two computers "talking" to each other depends somewhat upon the terminal programs used and will no doubt require some experimentation (consult the terminal program manuals). A key aspect in establishing a workable connection is setting the same parameters on both machines: Baud Rate, Terminal Emulation, Flow Control, etc. Most Commodore terminal programs are very flexible in this regard, making it fairly easy to match what PC applications offer. (It is noted that 8 Data Bits with 1 Stop Bit and Parity set to none is usual on PC's.)

GAMEOVERview

{Lord Ronin from Q-Link}

To check if the modems are working, type +++ followed by ATZ in terminal mode (in the terminal window) and press the RETURN/ENTER key to execute it. The modem should respond with OK. A common way to get things started is to execute ATD (dial) in the terminal on one machine, then do a corresponding ATA (answer) on the other. (Consult the modem manuals for various other AT commands which may be needed.) Once a connection is established, use the terminal program functions to send and receive data.

---R.L.M.---

A friend of mine, who does PAL to NTSC fixes for our local User Group, brought me the disk of a new magazine. It is called GAMEOVERview. At the time I write this blurb, *Life in Hell* (the creator's happy handle) has produced 18 issues from Australia. The disk mag is dedicated to reviewing current games and demos for games.

Pros: The mag is small in block size. Some are under 50 blocks. Life in Hell gives a rating system and his own opinion of the game. Sometimes there are 7 or more games reviewed. Occasionally someone else reviews a game. When possible the information on where to obtain the game/demo is included in the review.

Cons: This is a PAL mag and it is very touchy on the joystick. You are to scroll the short list of the entries. Press the fire button to read the more in-depth report. When he used a new routine for the animated background and a long issue, this messed up the NTSC users. You must go slow when scrolling through the full text, or it will jump back to the short listing.

As he uses the handle "alifh" when he appears in the weekly IRC chat, I had to comment to him on this and the other major problem with his magazine. I refer to his fanatical use of a certain four letter Anglo-Saxon word that rhymes with 'truck.' Also almost all of his reviews are exceptionally negative and his editorials are scathing. He seems to have a "thing" against Richard Bayliss of TND in the U.K. He was a bit better in his comments about SceneWorld, where he was reviewed by Merman. I talked to *alifh* about that also in the chat room, since I am SceneWorld's NTSC English editor and retro columnist.

Summation: As source of information on where to collect the games plus what has come out (such as Paul Pank's entry to the 4k competition), then this is great for that information. Biased opinions and abundant profanities will turn off many readers. As will some of the self-effacing comments. I do not have a stable URL to print for the mag's address at this time. Seems that it changed recently, but I will try to get that out to you as soon as I locate it.

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR, continued from page 5

MUTTM will no doubt continue to support traditional or stock 64 users very strongly. They were first and continue to be the central core of this organization. But since MUTTM is the only large club with a national (even international) membership, it needs to maintain a broad base, if only to provide a place where Commodore users of all types can find a cozy and friendly place to *meet through the mail*. ;-)

Special Announcements

Christopher Ryan has announced that he has decided to discontinue his Commodore Gazette after the September 2005 issue. He says that he has been publishing CG for 10 years, producing 99 issues. He may continue to November 2005, just to end evenly at 100. But he wants everyone to be informed that he will not be accepting subscriptions for the future.

Robert Synder has changed his email address. It is now <arsnyder92@netscape.net>. Please update your records.

"Whose Baby Is It?" This article which begins on page 18 explains how I feel about Commodores. I like to think of us as privileged people who have received a gift, much as parents feel who have adopted a child. But we didn't actually adopt the 64. It was virtually abandoned, and we are challenged to find its virtues and correct its faults. I hope it makes you laugh and provides food for thought.

All pages (other than 11-16) were created by Todd Elliott's GeoPublish 1.1 and Maurice Randall's PostPrint 3 using a system composed of a 128D and CMD add-ons like a SuperCPU, RAMLink, and HD/Zip drive. My Lexmark Optra SC1275 is a color laser PostScript printer.

K. Dale Sidebottom, September editor

Lord Ronin (a.k.a. David Mohr)

Commodore MaiLink, September 2005, pg. 9

CommVEx or Bust!

*Dave Ross, President of the SWRAP group,
reports on the Las Vegas Expo for 2005*

We got to the Expo room a little bit ahead of time, but Robert Bernardo and a few others were already there ready to set up. The meeting room was small, well less than 1000 square feet. But that turned out to be plenty for the 40 or so people that showed up.

Robert had a table set up in the middle of the room for presentations with a 128D (with SuperCPU, etc.) and a Postscript printer. There were also tables along the walls for people to set up demos, play games, and sell their wares. Earl Williams was there with t-shirts, of course, specifically designed for the occasion.

We only had four demos on Saturday...really. Two were actually PowerPoint presentations: I spoke on RSS & Podcasting, and Nightlord (Bilgem Cakir) gave a talk promoting the demo scene in Europe.

Cameron Kaiser showed off three programs of his. First was HyperLink. Next, he booted up Mah-Gong Special Edition, a Shanghai-type game written in HyperLink and showing this application's power to do more than just surf the web. Finally, he played the Geotrope trailer and gave everybody a sneak peek at the 3D engine that will power this game. It was simply amazing to see this game in action on a stock C64 system. I can't wait to play it.

Lastly, we were treated to the official debut of Retro64's new game, "Spork64." The game is kind of like the old Whack-a-Mole in the arcades, except the player has to spear rampaging vegetables coming out of holes in the ground. (Notice that this game is also programmed for a stock 64.)

Since neither could make the trip from the East coast, Dave Haynie and Bill Herd (members of the original development team that created the original 128) sent a DVD for us to view. Their presentation featured some rare Commodore equipment, including the original prototype C128 and some TED-series computers. The high point of their presentation was the Commodore "LCD Machine," a prototype which is rumored to have never existed.

Throughout the day, people got a chance to try out Robert Bernardo's copy of the new Protovision game called

"Metal Dust." For those who haven't been following the game's development over the last four years, this is the first game designed to take full advantage of the SuperCPU's speed and power. The game features incredible graphics and a magnificent techno SID soundtrack by Welle:Erdball. The game is tricky to play, but this R-Type style game is beautiful both technically and artistically.

Sunday, we had the prize drawings for the raffle and another presentation from Nightlord. This time, he was using VICE on a laptop to show to us some European demos in PAL mode. He explained why certain effects weren't just pretty graphics, but represented impressive technical feats.

When CommVEx ended, I had an uneventful flight home. I planned to do some unpacking & cleaning last night, but I ended up just taking a bath, snuggling with my wife, and then passing out on the basement floor. What a weekend!

---D.R.---

CommVEX was a BUST!

by K. Dale Sidebottom

With sincere apologies to Robert Bernardo and Bruce Thomas who valiantly worked to organize this puppy from hundreds of miles away, the first Commodore Las Vegas Expo (usually known as *CommVEx*) was a disappointment.

Due to financial constraints, it was decided to hold it where the 5C's (Clark County Commodore Computer Club) of Las Vegas normally meet. They meet in a free meeting room located in the Nevada Power Station. Unfortunately, the 5C's didn't have a single member who had ever attended an Expo. They didn't know what to expect from us, whether they would even like us, or if we "wild" expositioners might do something to endanger their status with the Nevada Power Company.

I personally believe that future expos in Las Vegas will never reach their full potential without better support from the "locals." Hopefully, with one CommVEx under their belts, the 5C'ers have discovered that we're just good people who love to interface and network with like-minded Commodore "crazies."

That said, the locals (5C'ers) were wonderful to us, gracious as could be, and I truly appreciated their hospitality during the Expo. Las Vegas is important to our future because it is the only place my wife will agree to go with me to attend a Commodore Expo. So I hope future expos there will be more successful and draw ever larger crowds! *Viva Las Vegas!*

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

Why I Use ZED128.V0.77

By: Kenneth Barsky

What I do with my Commodore time is MAKE LISTS. First I make a Table of Contents (like LOADSTAR has) of all my Mailink, RUN, Ahoy, Compute!s Gazette, Commodore Gazette disks.. Then I make a compiled list of all these, and my music files, my Print Shop images, of what's on my collection of Computer magazines.

For many Mailink issues now, Richard Savoy has been writing articles about The Write Stuff. Now Write Stuff is fine. I like the built in control letters. I like the idea that you can seek and replace control letters and returns. I like the append and merge features. I like that you can LOAD and SAVE in Screen Code (aka SpeedScript), ASC II or PETSCII..

But what I use is ZED128.V0.77.00 by Craig Bruce (1993), which appeared on Mailink May 1998.. What's so special about ZED? It has its faults...it was a project in progress And is incomplete as is. It does not have word wrap. As you type a line it rings a bell at the end of a line like an old typewriter. It has no append and merge files.

So what's it got? SIZE!!! Text files (with a 1756 RAM expander) up to 629432 bytes BIG (that's about 2450 blocks BIG over 10X the capacity of The Write Stuff); Lightning fast (and selective) SEARCH, SEEK and REPLACE. LOAD and SAVE to SpeedScript, ASC-CL, ASC-Lf, ASC-Cf, or NONE (PSCII).

Deleted lines, paragraphs or even complete files go to a huge buffer where they stay even if a file is closed. This makes appending and merging of what's in buffer to what's currently on screen possible.

I use ZED as a DATA BASE. It is the first program on any of my data disks. It is 67 blocks long.

Let us take a tour of ZED. LOAD ZED (Z* will do) from the 128 80-column screen.

[CTRL]-U (both keys pressed together) has the User select the device number.

[CTRL]-L (both keys pressed together) will LOAD a file from disk. Note that the program checks to see if you are finished with the file you have been working on before it loads another file.

[CTRL]-S (both keys pressed together) will SAVE a file to disk. Note; unlike The Write Stuff the save is not selective. Two ways to prevent accidental SAVE, Load the file initially using an abbreviated form, or take the disk out of drive while working on a file.

[CTRL]-N (both keys pressed together) to give a new Name to a file.

[CTRL]-O (both keys pressed together) takes you to the Options Screen. Here you select the type of file (as I mentioned above) using cursor and RETURN keys, and the Text Line Length. using cursor, RETURN delete, and numerical keys. Never mind the function keys. That feature doesn't work. Press back arrow and ESC to return to edit screen,

SEARCH, and FIND and SEARCH and REPLACE:

[CTRL]-H (both keys pressed together) Hunt for ????. Not case selective.

[CTRL]- F (both keys pressed together) Find occurrence, Not case selective.

[CTRL]-Y (both keys pressed together) REPLACE (Y because only letter not otherwise used). Case selective. Also otherwise selective: NO, YES or ALL. For mass delete enter nothing. If you are replacing or deleting ALL watch ZED zip-zip through an entire file.

Continued on Page 12

Continued from page 11

DELETE or REJUSTIFY A SECTION

[CTRL]-M (both keys pressed together) to Mark to top of a section to be deleted or rejustified.

[CTRL]-D (both keys pressed together) mark end of section to be deleted AND SENT TO BUFFER

[CTRL]-K (both keys pressed together) delete (Kill) one line and SEND TO BUFFER.

Both above delete anything already in buffer.

[CTRL]-J (both keys pressed together) on A BLANK LINE to mark the end of a section you need to rejustify (assuming you have sent a new line measure in Options.)

APPEND and MERGE.

LOAD file 1,. Send a line or section to buffer as described above. Bring cursor to position of file on disk or load a new file and position cursor and

[CTRL]-R (both keys pressed together) insert or merge what's in buffer to what's on screen.

PRINTER CODES

[CTRL]-B (both keys pressed together) to enter your printer codes, one CHR+ RETURN] at a time.

For more I refer you to this CHEAT SHEET

ZED-128 Command Key Summary:

Control Commands:

[CTRL]

KEY ACTION

--- -----

[CTRL]-@ Exchange cursor position with mark position

[CTRL]-A Alter case of letter under cursor
[CTRL]-B Byte value input
[CTRL]-D Delete range
[CTRL]-E Exit with save
[CTRL]-F Find next occurrence of hunt string
[CTRL]-H Set Hunt string
[CTRL]-J Juggle range of lines for text formatting
[CTRL]-K Kill current line
[CTRL]-L Load file
[CTRL]-M Set Mark for range operations
[CTRL]-N Set Name of current file
[CTRL]-O Set Options: input/output translation/tab-expansion, etc.
[CTRL]-P Print current file
[CTRL]-Q Quit without save
[CTRL]-R Recall text from buffer
[CTRL]-S Save file
[CTRL]-U Use new disk device number
[CTRL]-X Exchange cursor character with next character
[CTRL]-Y Replace (all the other letters were taken!)
[CTRL]-[Toggle insert mode
[CTRL]-\ Toggle modified flag
[CTRL]-] Toggle indent mode (Indent / No indent / Word-Wrap)
[CTRL]-^ Enter [C=]mmmodore DOS [C=]mmand

Key [C=]mmands:

SH-TAB Backtab
STOP <stop some operations>
[CTRL]-2 Clear buffer
SH-LEFT Word left
[C=]-DEL Rubout
TAB Tab
SH-RIGHT Word right
[C=]-UP Go to top of document
RETURN Split current line (indent not yet implemented)
[C=]-DOWN Go to bottom of document
[C=]-LEFT Go to beginning of line
DOWN Cursor down
[CTRL]-9 Reverse screen on
DELETE Delete character
[C=]-RIGHT Go to end of line
[CTRL]-UP Page up
[CTRL]-DOWN Page down
RIGHT Cursor right
[C=]-1 Set display to 25 lines
[CTRL]-1 Clear document

Continued on Page 13

Continued from Page 12

UP Cursor up
[CTRL]-0 Screen reverse off
SH-HOME Cursor home

[C=]-2 Set display to 27 lines
[C=]-3 Set display to 30 lines
[C=]-4 Set display to 45 lines
[C=]-5 Set display to 51 lines
[C=]-6 Set display to 29 lines
LEFT Cursor left
[CTRL]-4 Display directory with byte
[C=]unts

Craig Bruce program ZED128.V0.77 and documents will be on the September disk version on page 2. For members who do not purchase the disk version send a dollar to Richard Savoy address in the BIO's.

**GEPUBLISH TUTORIAL PART 12
PROOF READING
By: Bruce Thomas**

I half mentioned this a few times already but we are really going to focus on the topic this time. To ensure that your publication will be anticipated, read and enjoyed you need to be extremely careful with your spelling, typing and grammar.

So how was that? Maybe try reading that first paragraph again. Do you feel like continuing to read this column? What if every article was written with such an obvious lack of caring and attention? Would you pay to subscribe to such a publication? There are a few simple steps to follow to make sure you don't send out your publication in such poor condition.

For starters, print off your geoWrite documents and then grab a red pen or a highlighter. By printing off your documents you will get a general idea of the length and how much space you need to allow in your geoPublish document. Take the red pen and your printout to a comfort-

able location and read each article through. Circle any typos or spelling mistakes that you find. Then go back into geoWrite and, as you fix the mistakes, draw a line through each circle on your printouts.

Once you have done that print off the files again and do the same thing. If you have a spouse, friend or child nearby give them the red pen and ask them to read the articles and highlight any errors they find. The reason for getting someone else to read the articles is that we are too familiar with the material and often don't really read what we have written. After reading a piece a number of times we will skim as we read and can skip right over obvious errors.

The next thing that you should do is leave the articles on the shelf for a few days and then come back to them again with your red pen. This helps to lessen the familiarity and you will be surprised at how many times you will see an error you hadn't noticed before.

After all of your reading and re-reading and getting someone else to check the articles make sure that you run each and every piece through geoSpell. Keep a real dictionary close by so you can look up any flagged words that you aren't sure of.

While geoSpell is not the best spell checker around it is the only one for geoWrite articles. There are two main reasons for using geoSpell. I consider myself a very good speller and typer but the familiarity issue rears its head at times and I miss things in spite of all of my proof-reading. The other point is that importing articles from other word processors is not a perfect process. As is evident in the first paragraph (and far too many publications) the spacing between words can often get lost which results in some odd combinations.

When you are satisfied that you have corrected all of the mistakes continue with the creation of your geoPublish document.

Continued on Page 14

Continued from Page 13

When the entire project is complete print it off again and read everything all over again. This time pay particular attention to the headlines, picture captions and any other special text you have added.

Once you have gone over everything and made all of these corrections you are ready to print off your publication and prepare it for distribution.

You may think that proofreading and spell checking is something that you can do quite quickly but to do it right takes time. Don't underestimate the returns it will pay. People need to know that the person they rely on for information cares enough to invest the time to present the news in a clear, concise and error free manner. If that is not the case any paying subscribers will not continue to invest their money in your efforts.

This point also fits in with article #8. If you edit an article that you received from someone else you should send it back to them for approval to ensure you haven't cut in the wrong places. You could also request that the author cut the article down to size for you and then you will be assured not to affect the tone of the piece.

Next time we will look at another method for importing graphics into our geoPublish documents.

Until then, enGEOy your Commodore!
Bruce Thomas

#####

CLIPART IS FROM
C=MAILINK DISK
VERSION 3/04

LOWEEZY



BARNEY GOOGLE

THE WRITE STUFF WORD PROCESSOR COLUMN By: Richard Savoy

ARTICLE NO. 14

Margins 47

You can use the Print Menu to set margins, but if you want to make sure that all future copies you make are identical, define the margins using embedded RVS format commands.

The numbers (i.e.,) refer to the number of characters (15) from the edge of the paper. The size of the page can be defined using the page width and page length commands.

The letters of a format command must be in reverse video, but the numbers need not be. This allows you to change margin settings by simply overtyping the numbers.

Relative values may also be used, such as lm15:lm-5:lm+2; This would result in a left margin of 12.

For columns, define a column margin greater than 0.

Misc. Commands 48

pp4 Print Page #4: Skip to and print page #4.

sa7 Change the secondary address to 7 during printing.

of10 Offset all text to the right by 10. Offset only on odd # pages.

a15 or ai+5 Auto-indent paragraphs by 5.
ai -3 Outdent paragraphs by 3.

mr4 or ma4 or Margin Release: Subtract 4 from left margin. (Next line only.)

Continued on page 15

m Margin Release: No left margin at all.

f Forced Page: Start a new page. Force only if less than 5 line from bottom margin.

Page Numbering 49

Whenever a RVS # is encountered, the current page number is printed. This command is best used as part of a header or footer (e.g. he5;rPage #).

Page numbering usually begins at 1. To begin at some other number, use the page number command. (pn5 would cause the first page printed to be numbered with a 5.)

Printer Macros 50

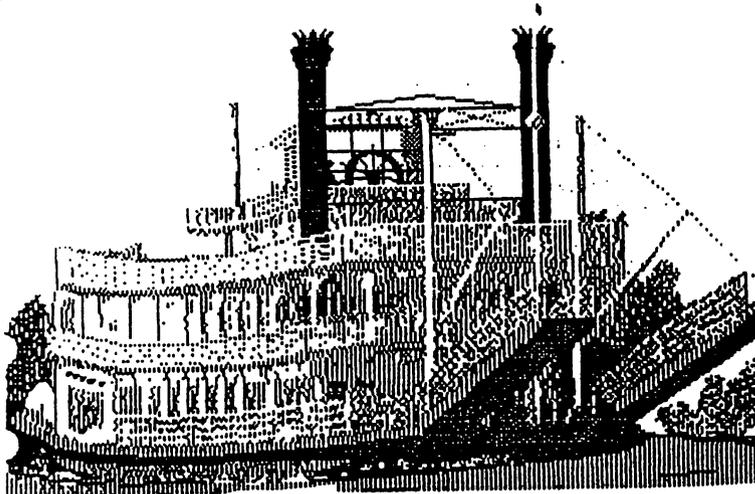
To access certain printer features you may want to send a series of control codes to the printer. The characters 0-9 and !"#\$%&'()[] can be defined to equal up to 8 control codes: CHR\$(x1)...CHR\$(x8)

0 is a special macro. Its value, if any, is used to initialize the printer.

On a Commodore 1525/MPS-801 printer you can design your own characters. The following would define 1 to equal the Commodore logo.

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RIVERBOAT



More about TWS
By: Kenneth Barsky

For the past few years almost every issue of MAILINK and MAILINK on Disk contains an article by Richard Savoy about The Write Stuff and several Clipart images by and for Fun Graphics Machine and TWS Illustrator II.

Over the past month or so I finally got around to printing out these images. With the proper issue of TWS the procedure is simple.

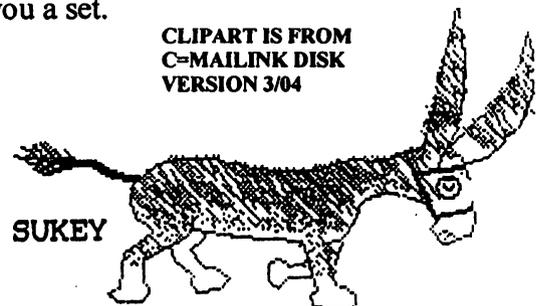
The first thing was to load a select directory into TWS (did you know you can do that with TWS?) of all files that start with two periods or in some cases one period. I use seek and replace to delete **usr**, number of blocks, quotes and spaces; then add a reverse **mo** before the name of the files. The images will print out if the disk with the images is in drive.

The reverse **mo** serves a double function. A reverse **mo** followed by a non reverse plus causes the image to be printed, then reverse lead to the starting point. A reverse **mo** followed by a non-reverse minus cancels this feature.

Note that there is another TWS version ILLUSTRATOR128V4 that works in a similar way with PRINT SHOP and RUN-PAINT images but not with FGM and TWS Clipart; and visa versa.

Anyway, as I mentioned I have printed out all the images. If you want a hard copy of images send a self addressed stamped envelop and I will send you a set.

CLIPART IS FROM
C=MAILINK DISK
VERSION 3/04



SUKEY

WHICH PLUG FITS MY PORTS

Source: Five "C's"

When you wish to connect external devices to your computer, you must have the correct plug for the port you are working with.

Continued from Column one:

The round connectors used for power and the serial port are often called 'DIN' connectors, after the German standards organization which designed them. These types can often be found in use on audio equipment as well, thus they can be found at RADIO SHACK. A good plug for the 5 pin audio/video monitor socket is RADIO SHACK #274-003. The 6 and 7 pin plugs for the disk/printer and power supply plugs are also available at electronics stores which carry the Switchcraft PREH line of connectors. The 6 pin is Switchcraft #12BL6M and the 7 pin is #15GM7M. The control ports which accept the joystick or paddle is available thru RADIO SHACK as part #276-1538 and there is also #276-1539 which is a protective hood for the plug to give it a professional appearance.

The video connector takes what is called an RCA phono plug also available at RADIO SHACK. The connectors which plug in to the user port, modem port and expansion port are also available thru electronic repair outlets should the need arise.

#####

COMING IN NOVEMBER!

Ken Barsky will tell about his discovery going through TWS/FGM disks with all the images that start with one and two periods. Those with A. he couldn't copy! He will not only tell you about it, but will supply the programs needed!

THE NEW YEAR WILL BRING ON A NEW DISK EDITOR FOR THE COMMODORE MAILINK

I was just informed, a short time ago by Linda Tanner our president, that **Kenneth Barsky** will be our new **disk editor** officially the beginning of the year 2006. I was happy to hear of his appointment and quickly, let him know I would do everything possible to make it a orderly transition.

I've known Ken for ten years, January 29, 1996, I introduced myself to Ken in a "Welcome To New Members To MUTTM" letter. At that time he was 64 coordinator of the Bronx Users Group in New York and I guess the closest group to us at CRCCC in Vernon Connecticut. We have not ever met in person, but both have exchanged pictures with each other and have talked more than once on the telephone. But, we have often exchange Commodore related items. We are in the middle of it again now.

Ken has Collected and transcribed SID music over the years, in fact he would make Monthly Calendars monthly, with Music to go with holidays and have it on their club disk as a lead program. I was CRCCC disk editor and keeper of the Library so we would trade our DOM like so many other groups did.

Ken has his sleeve rolled up ready to go on a new adventure. I hope you give Ken your support when it's time to renew your subscription in November. Remember you must be a member of MUTTM to buy the Disk Version.

Richard Savoy, Current Disk Editor

Please Note:

Pages 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 & 16 of this issue were created with MS PUB, (from the internet) printed with a HP Desk Jet 940 C and converted with C-128 40 column to TWS using BBR and 1571 & FD 2000 drives

New Faces at CommVEx

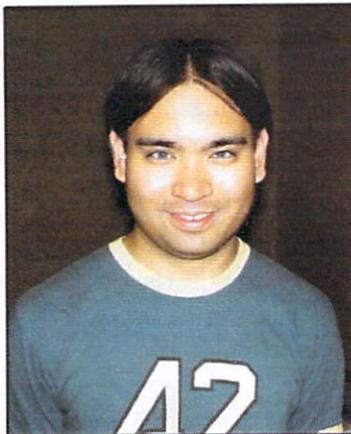
by K. Dale Sidebottom

One of the original purposes of having an expo as far west as Las Vegas was to attract folks who might never travel to Expos in the midwest. This part of the plan worked superbly.

One of the things I enjoyed most at CommVEx was the opportunity to meet and chat with users that I might not have ever met otherwise. Some of them I will share with you.

Brian Czapiga

His dad bought a C128 back in 1985 when Brian was only 5. He remembers typing in commands even before he could read! His dad got him a special book (which I was able to purchase cheaply from a sales table) called "Instant Activities for your Commodore."



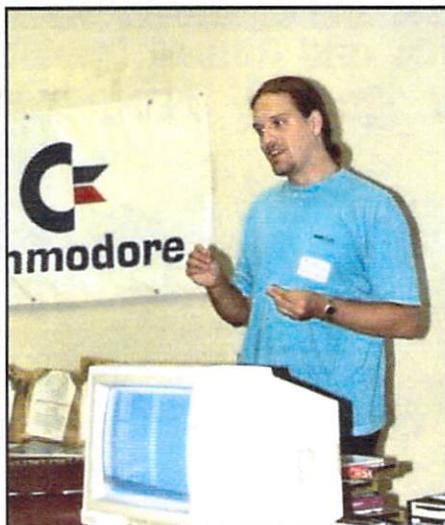
It is an activity book for young users which has quick type-in programs that demonstrate one or more of the Commodore's neat features. This was back in the days before disk storage, and these programs were intended to be used, enjoyed, and then discarded.

He was soon able to modify games by putting together portions of different games. This became a valued opportunity for father and son to interact. Later, his Dad pushed him toward the PC around the 7th grade, and today he is a UNIX system administrator for a nationwide financial institution.

These days he participates in C64 Friends IRC chat and enjoys working with Jeri's 64DTV. He hopes to create a special board for it with ports available so that it will function more like a real 64.

Bilgem Cakir (Nightlord)

Only 28 years old, he hopes soon to emigrate to the U.S. from his home in Turkey in order to pursue a career in programming for a consumer electronics firm. He mentioned to me that he felt he could learn so much more, and more quickly, were he employed with a company in Silicon Valley.



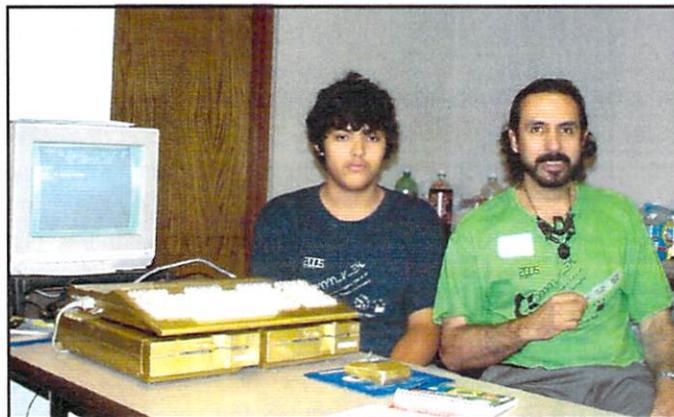
He began to use a 64 in 1990 when he was in the 6th grade. He started coding Basic adventure games. He found them hard to complete, but fun to work on anyway! In 1994, a friend got him interested in demo coding.

He came to the Las Vegas Expo to elicit support for the European Demo Scene. He shared with us the history of demo coding in Europe and challenged us to participate as involved spectators. The problem is...and I don't think he fully appreciated this before he arrived...unless you have a PAL compatible system, you can't even watch them! So he is now going to try to see if he can create a PAL compatible system here in America, and then show the rest of us how it is done! ;-)

Yul Haasmann

When Yul first arrived in America around 1993-94, he compared different computers and decided that the Commodore 64 offered the best value. He bought a complete system for \$300. He loved playing helicopter-type games, like Gunship.

He moved to Las Vegas in 1999 and found the 5 C's group. Yul is pursuing a music education even as he earns a living as a Spanish-speaking judicial interpreter. Yul is pictured here with his son. He was the lucky winner of the deck-out, "gold-plated" C128 that was the top raffle prize at the Expo.



David Holz (short bio)

I was always fascinated with video games and computers as long as I could remember. Early in elementary school, they had some PET machines which I figured out and showed the teachers how to use. :) Later on, we finally got a VIC-20 at home with a datasette, and I spent most of my time fiddling with BASIC. A couple of years after that, my cousin-in-law was selling his SX-64 which became my main machine for years to come (and I still have it). I mostly played games and wrote BASIC programs (utilities, animations, and simple games). Although I really wanted to learn assembly language, I didn't have any decent reference material to work from, so I was pretty much on my own.

continued on page 20



Whose Baby Is It?

by K. Dale Sidebottom

One of my most embarrassing experiences as a mailman happened the day I was approached by a sweet, young thing who wanted to know about sending letters to her boyfriend. I believe I was explaining to her that those fat letters require extra postage, when her mother popped out from a nearby house and shouted, "Whatcha talkin' to him for?"

Perhaps, not wanting to be grilled by a mother on the subject of a boyfriend, the buxom young lass shouted back, "He says he ain't my Daddy!"

Needless to say, this exchange made me uncomfortable. Even though we often joke about it, **parenting is serious business**. It implies a two-fold process... both creating new life and then nurturing it to maturity.

We praise parents when they create new life, but they may lose parental privileges if they fail to parent properly. For example, during my first marriage, we adopted two children who had been abused. They became adoptable because, after their birth parents had proven to be unfit, the courts terminated their parental rights.

"The Commodore...who's baby is it anyway?"

I have often wondered, if I were the judge and it came before my court, would I have terminated CBM's parental rights. Try to look at it from a *legal* standpoint. (Well... okay...then use your imagination.)

The Commodore 64 (and later the 128) began with such promise and much fanfare. It took the cyberworld by storm and was so popular that even CBM seemed surprised by it all. Then CBM had a change of heart. "Let's compete with IBM and the Macintosh," they declared.

So they left the 64 in an abandoned and impoverished condition. It's like Cinderella in reverse! Once the *belle of the ball*, now the 64 was relegated to the role of a menial servant with no glass slipper in sight!

A Vow of Poverty?

Talk about getting "the short end of the stick!" It's younger sibling, the Amiga, was given every possible advantage by CBM while the 64 was pushed aside and neglected. The Amiga was given a 7 MHz processor with 256K, as compared to 1 MHz and 64K in the C64. The Amiga 500 soon followed looking much like a flat 128, and it boasted 512K of memory.

Amiga was given access to IDE and SCSI hard drives. The 64, we assume, was given a *vow of poverty*. The Commodore never had more than 16 colors while CBM blessed the Amiga with a video card displaying 256!

What really rankles me is that CBM always pretended that the 1 to 2 MHz speed of the C64/128 was all Commodore users wanted. CBM was satisfied to leave it at that. Meanwhile, many of us cried out against such discrimination. It's like giving one child money to attend Harvard while the other must choose between secretarial school and beauty college.

I expressed my rage over the situation back in the summer of 1990 by reprinting an article in the LUCKY newsletter written by Joe Tom Collins entitled, "Let's Go FASTER!" He explained that many of

the things that had held the C64/128 back were being addressed.

"As the 64 puches towards its tenth anniversary, we've seen a lot of yeasteryear's problems start to fade. The Creative Micro Design's (CMD) product, JiffyDOS, as well as other products have speeded up the drive access. Commodore, in some of its brightest decisions made the 1571 and 1581 disk drives with larger storage capacity and the ability to write MS-DOS format disks, and CMD is now producing a full fledged set of hard drives with the SCSI standard used in almost every computer. CMD is also making a RAM expansion unit offering 128K, 256K, and 512K. And there is rumor of RAM units offering as much as 16 megabytes in the not so far distant futuer.

"This brings us to the last big inadequacy of the Commodore 8-bit line...processor speed. The Commodore can only plod along a 1 to 2 MHz, while the super compters of today zip along at speeds from 7 to 33 MHz! [*Obviously, the discrepancy has increased a bit in the last 14 years! Ed.Note*] But just like anv barrier the C64 and C128 have run into, this one, too, can be solved."

I drew this geoPaint cartoon while "Days of Thunder," a NASCAR race movie, was in the theaters. Obviously, I hoped that one day the turtle might be allowed to use a "faster engine." ;-)



Indeed *it has been resolved*, but no thanks to CBM! It took CMD to develop the answer in the form of a SuperCPU (SCPU). Finally, the 64 is able to zip along twenty times faster than originally possible. But figuratively and literally, not everyone is *buying it!*

Alan Reed is a user who recently purchased a new 64HDD to boost his Commodore's computing power. I suggested to him that he also add a SCPU to increase its speed, as well. He emailed me to explain his thoughts on the matter.

"I'm not sure how I feel about the SuperCPU. It seems to me that you don't have a real C64 anymore. Not meaning to judge those who have them. Anything that keeps people interested in their Commodores is OK with me.

"I guess I'm more of a hobbyist. I enjoy seeing what people can do with the original hardware. Seems like the SuperCPU makes it almost a different computer...

"Storage devices are another story. Having to deal with those old floppy drives and the disks is just too much hassle for my lifestyle these days. The disks are getting hard to find and they don't work very well. They don't have much storage capacity, they're slow, and they were junk even when they were brand new.

I admire Alan's candor, but *even he sees* that some modification is necessary in order for him to continue to enjoy the Commodore. For some, it's storage. For others, it's speed! For me, it's BOTH!

Apparently, CBM had no scruples about adding speed to the Amiga. In fact, CBM manufacture four or five different accelerator cards which increased its speed and power significantly.

Roger Lawhorn tells me that his favorite accelerator card is the 040 which enables the Amiga to run at 40 MHz and could supply up to 32 Megs of RAM. He also smiles to inform me that these Amiga accelerator cards are exactly like the SuperCPU!!!

They plug into the Amiga and essentially replace the original processor with a much faster one, assisted by high-speed RAM chips. They are backwardly compatible (as

is the SCPU), and even have a special switch to disable itself. Thus, these accelerator cards could speed the Amiga up or be switched off and allow the hardware to "return to normal"...just like the SuperCPU.

Kill that Sucker!

Last year, Bryan Pope sent out an email over the Homestead Mail List. I thought it so insightful that I saved it!

Date: Tue, 22 Jul 2003 08:30:00 -0400
From: <bpoppe@wordstock.com>

And thusly Mark Walters spake...

Back in the late 1980's or early 1990's, CBM's CEO Irving Gould visited Australia to present at the World Of Commodore Show at Sydney. In an off-stage interview with a local Commodore print magazine, when asked about the success of the 64, he stated, **"We've been trying to kill that sucker for years."**

(...to which Bryan Pope replied...)

"Commodore probably could have done better business if they had supported both the 64 and Amiga, instead of pushing 64 owners to "upgrade" to the Amiga.

[Amen! I could not have expressed it any better than that! Editor's Note.]

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Jury, What is your Verdict?

Do you agree with me or not that Commodore Business Machines should have treated this *baby* better than it did? And if you agree that the 64 was short-changed by a greedy, short-sighted parent company, then who should be its guardian today?

Yeahronimo may claim that the "child" is theirs. They alone have a legal right to determine its future. But what have they done to support it?

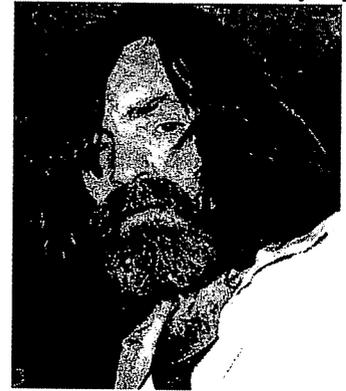
In my opinion, the Commodore community is responsible for keeping it alive! Thus, we have every right to provide for its future as we see fit.

Father Knows Best?

Now some will balk at this and declare that, if Commodores were meant to have

modern peripherals, then CBM would have provided them. Their mantra is, *"If it ain't CBM, then it ain't Commodore!"*

But this defies good logic. Imagine for a moment that you had access to all things. Would you let Charles Manson babysit your kids?



Would the Marquis de Sade be asked to teach employees how to avoid sexual misconduct?



Would you let Usama bin Laden help you set up a chain of strip clubs in Kabul?



These choices would be self-defeating, would they not? Then why in the world would we ever give someone who wanted to KILL the 64 the power to DECIDE ITS FUTURE?

The Commodore community needs to wean itself away from the "CBM knows best" mindset and let this platform move forward in a positive way. We who love the 64 have no responsibility to enforce the "vows of poverty" instituted by CBM. Let us decide together to make its future as bright as its birth!

What is *your* verdict?

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

David Holz is distinguished by a split beard



At the university I attended, I discovered the internet, learned a lot more about higher level programming, and finally got all the info I could ever want about the 64. I spent a lot more time learning than doing, but I did learn a lot. comp.sys.cbm was my main source of info.

Life happens and it was back to PC land, but I always had a desire to get back on the old 'breadbox' where every byte and clock cycles was under exact control. I eventually started directing more effort to the 64, got back into usenet and started IRCing, found old C64 related books and typed them in for posterity (an amazing way to gain knowledge and understanding, props to the monks), and started working on some ideas that would be releasable, not just basement code for my own entertainment. I fully embrace cross-development, and I've got a SCPU, FD2000, and an RS232 link to the PC which really speeds productivity and testing.

Nowadays I'm usually on IRCnet and EFnet #c-64, NewNet #c64friends, and in the comp.sys.cbm usenet group, but CommVEx was my first C= Expo event. :-)

James L. Dice

He is a member of the 5C's Club. He likes modifying Jeri's Ellsworth's 64DTV to add access to a real power supply, a keyboard, and a floppy drive. Again, he loves to take the 64DTV and make it work more nearly like a stock 64!



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As expressed earlier, the best experiences of any Expo are the people who come to share what they're doing and listen (as though they're interested) in what excites you. This sort of sharing is the backbone of the Expo experience, and in that sense, this year's CommVEx was well worth the investment. :-D

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