

Cincinnati Commodore Computer Club

Phone: 513-248-0025 Email: thunderbird@iglou.com
c/o 31 Potowatomie Trail Milford, OH 45150

June, 2007 President's Page

Howdy Fellow Commodore Users!

I just found out that the Toronto Pet User's group announced their expo for 2007, for December 1. If you have been waiting for the official word to start making your plans, start making them now. By the time you read this, probably more information will be on their website at:

<http://www.tpug.ca/>

I had hoped to hear news of the Vintage Computer Festival East by the time I hand in my article to the newsletter editor, but it's not meant to be, I guess. I asked in the Saturday nite chat on #c64friends if anyone was at the VCF East, and a few other folks asked thru the nite, and no responses came forth. So, we will have to wait until the July newsletter to find out the exciting things that happened. I know I was looking forward to heard what Chuck Peddle was going to talk about. For those who missed it last year (because they weren't paying attention?) The 3rd annual Vintage Computer Festival Midwest is being held on Saturday and Sunday, July 14-15, 2007, at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana. More details can be found at:

<http://www.vintage.org/2007/midwest/>

Since I'm mentioning the list of shows, I might as well mention the CommUEx 2007 Commodore Vegas Expo v3.0 July 28th & 29th, 2007 at the Plaza Hotel, Las Vegas, NV:

<http://www.portcommodore.com/commvex/>

Then in September 29, 2007 ECCC Chicago Expo:

<http://starbase.globalpc.net/eccc/>

My calendar is just too full of exciting things to look forward to! Speaking of which, this month's meeting is pushed to the 4th Sunday of June in order to celebrate Father's Day with all the Dads out there. Keep Commodoring!!

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2007 Midwest Gaming Classic Report by Robin Harbron

The 2007 Midwest Gaming Classic (<http://www.midwestgamingclassic.com/>) was again held at the Olympia Resort & Conference Center in Oconomowoc, WI, this year on June 9th and 10th.

The show started several years ago under the title "JagFest", when it was a much smaller affair focused on the Atari Jaguar console which still has a cult following. It was enough of a success that the organizers thought expanding the scope of the show was a good idea. It has steadily grown each year since.

This year's show comprised of three huge rooms, comprising of around 20,000 square feet. Somewhere around 1500 people attended this year.

The biggest hall was filled with vendors selling everything from video game memorabilia and Atari 2600 cartridges, to pinball repair parts and complete 8-bit computer systems. There were also dozens of arcade video games and pinball machines set up for free-play, and almost all the machines were for sale. Vendors are welcome to sell their machines there, but they must set them on free-play.

The second room contained an area where a variety of speakers gave speeches and presentations throughout the day. I particularly enjoyed a demonstration from Marty Goldberg who has been involved in the Atari Flashback projects that have seen huge commercial success. He is currently creating arcade-accurate versions of the classic non-processor arcade video games, such as Pong and Breakout. Many people don't know that these early arcade games don't have a program ROM in them as you might expect. They are completely hard-wired with many separate circuits that combine to make the game.

We also enjoyed attending an open meeting of the Madison chapter of the International Game Developers Association (<http://www.igda.org/>). Several successful Wisconsin area game developers took part in a panel discussion about the ups and downs of independent game development in a part of the country away from the large centers of the industry.

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2007 Midwest Gaming Classic Report by Robin Harbron, Continued

The second room also contained a large cordoned off area where various video game and pinball tournaments took place. An entrance fee allowed the organizers to offer various prizes to the winners. Unfortunately, some of the best games were in this area, off limits to those who didn't participate in the contests.

The third room was a video games and computer museum, with dozens of systems set up and in many cases, ready to play. Just about any system you could name was there, thanks to a couple collectors who made their large collections available for the weekend. It was really cool to be able to see some of the very obscure systems that I stand little chance of ever owning.

Jason & Kati Compton and myself were asked to set up a Commodore display in this room. We set up a 64C with an MMC64 pre-loaded with dozens of games and demos which we showed throughout the day. We also displayed a number of other Commodore computers owned by one of the collectors, just to look at: a Plus/4, Commodore 128, VIC-20, and SX-64.

We had a lot of visitors dropping by. Some of them were Commodore owners and fans themselves. A couple others were in their late teens or early twenties and said they had never used a Commodore 64 before, and were curious.

Considering the emphasis on the "classic" games at this show, it was surprising how many young people were there, trying various computers and consoles that were much older than they were.

We printed and distributed flyers for our upcoming 2007 Emergency Chicagoland Commodore Convention (<http://starbase.globalpc.net/eccc/>). Many people expressed interest in coming out this year.

Here are the details of the show:

Saturday, September 29

Fairfield Inn and Suites (Marriott)

645 West North Ave

Lombard, Illinois 60148 USA

1-630-629-1500

<http://marriott.com/property/propertypage/CHIFS>

The show runs from 8 a.m. Saturday to 1 a.m. Sunday morning.

Hope to see you there!

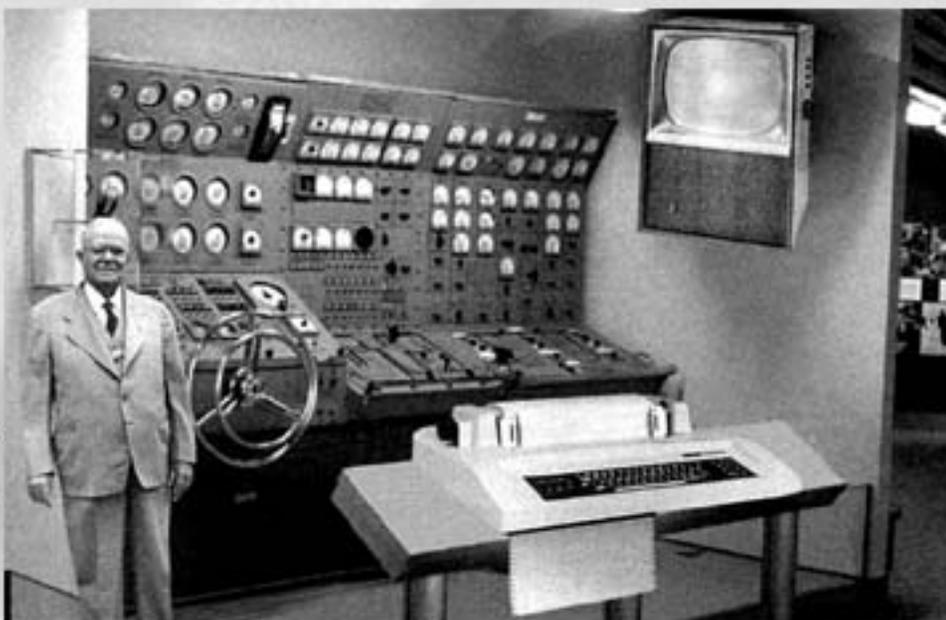
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Wolfgang Hinklegruber And His Marvelous K-64 (From Loadstar 244),
By Dave Moorman, Reprinted here by request of Roger Hoyer

After cousin Norman Moorman's funeral, we were all standing around, talking about nothing in particular, when Adele, cousin Norm's widow, came up from the basement lugging an old apple box full of stuff. "Dave," she said, "You're a computer nut. You might find these things interesting." In the box was a half-completed Altair, six 8-inch floppies (they really flop), twelve or so pounds of assorted electronic components, and an old book. The book was musty with age, its brittle paper flaking off in my fingers as I turned the pages. The text was written in German, and since "Ich sprech Deutch nicht sehr gut, I put it aside -- even though the title, EINS UND NICHT intrigued me. Months later, I was going through the box again and found some hand-written pages stuffed into the half-completed Altair. They were cousin Norm's partial translation of EINS UND NICHT, by Wolfgang Hinklegruber, published in 1968. Hinklegruber turned out to be one of the great dreamers of the home computer world, imagining a day when every home would have a computer. Of course, the computer he imagined was far from micro or electronic. In fact, memory and logic used electro-magnetic solenoids to switch currents "in a klick!" Wolfgang called it a Klickenklicken, a poetic description of the inevitable clatter the unit would make while "clutching numbers." The "foot-print" would be abominable -- 64 square meters. This led to the nick-name: K-64. "Someday soon," he wrote, "(barring a great war or proof of a certain patent clerk's fever-dream) there will be a K-64 in every garage!" Due to the sheer mass of the contraption, Hinklegruber warned that the floor of the garage should be paved with concrete. "Without a hard drive, the unit will not function properly." In the area of input/output, Hinklegruber was a bonafide visionary. While others were still considering toggle switches, he foresaw the necessity of a keyboard. By wiring a switch to each hammer of a typewriter, signals would be sent to the K-64 each time a key was struck. He also predicted the "anti-static mat," except that his specifications called for a thirty centimeter thick pad of vulcanized rubber "for the prevention of electrocution." The output device described in EINS UND NICHT is truly astounding. A magic lantern was to be equipped with a solenoid-operated shutter. A very tight beam was focused on an arrangement of two motorized mirrors -- one pivoted vertically, the other horizontally. By moving the two mirrors in synchronization with the K-64, the light beam could be made to scan the screen in vertical sweeps laid side by side horizontally. The effect, Wolfgang claimed, would be like laying out strips of bacon, which prompted him to call the lines "rashers." As the beam scanned the screen (or any blank, white wall), the shutter would open and close as instructed by the K-64's Cinematic Induction Voltola or CIV. Sound, for Hinklegruber, was also an important part of the K-64 concept. He conceived of installing 88 electro-magnetic valves on the air hoses of a player piano. Instead of a roll of punched paper indicating which notes were to be played, the piano would be controlled by the Solenoid Air Director -- or SAD.

Even as he wrote, Wolfgang was aware of the work of former colleague and now arch-enemy Wilhelm Gateg, whose Mega Strength -- Diesel Operated System -- was being designed to appeal to businesses. Only commercial enterprises with "Open Architecture" (i.e., a spare warehouse) could accommodate such multi-million square meter monstrosities. But Hinklegruber was dedicated to the home computer hobbyist. "Someday," he predicted with amazing insight, "monthly publications will be delivered on reels of paper punch tape to thousands of homes all around the world. The enterprise will be accompanied by the construction of huge, ever-growing, hundred-plus
(Continues on next page)



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Wolfgang Hinklegruber And His Marvelous K-64 (From Loadstar 244),
By Dave Moorman, Reprinted here by request of Roger Hoyer (continued)

storied buildings as symbols of the publisher's wealth and computational potency." This is where cousin Norm's translation of EINS UND NICHT ends. However, I am currently having a friend complete the work, and will report more insights of the great visionary Wolfgang Hinklegruber in upcoming reels of LOADSTAR.

FENDER'S POSTMUMBLE: Our thanks to Dave Moorman for unearthing this little known link to the old country, which, in this case, is Germany. In last month's EURO JUKEBOX, Dave entertained us with tales of a C-64-using traveler through the Netherlands. And in THE DANCE OF THE TOWERS on LSH120 we learned of the Italian connection which brought the magnificent LOADSTAR Tower to the U.S. from the city of Pisa. In the other direction, timewlse, last month's intro screen showed us the future of C-64 computing on a colonized Mars, as pictured by Terry Flynn. It's obvious to all of us here at the Tower that the lore of our beloved 8-bit computer encompasses much more than a dinky decade in the decidedly dull Reagan-Bush-Clinton era. If you have evidence of C-64 activity that will stand up to the rigid scrutiny of LOAPSTAR's fact-checking department (123rd and 124th floors), please send it to us for possible publication. All this quaint history has made me hungry. I'm up for a rasher interrupt. How about you?

IRC #c64friends Report

All has been quiet on IRC, aside from a Chanserv shakeup. #c64friends remains the central gathering point for Commodore talk.

CCCC BBS Report

The BBS is back up after some software switching, and is now running the beta version of RetroBBS, a PC-based Commodore-compatible BBS written by CCCC's own Oliver VieBrooks (Six/Style). All features are functional at this point, and users are welcome to log in to the system with the terminal of their choice. The BBS supports full Commodore Color Graphics, as well as ANSI and plain old ASCII.

C65 Status Report, by Oliver VieBrooks (Six/Style)

Having been fortunate enough to be first in the rotation to use the club's Commodore 65, my first problem was to be how to power the device.

Some investigation on the web led me to the conclusion that it would work with a standard 1581 power supply. However, when we tried this at the May meeting, there were some "issues". Further investigation, and use of a known good 1581 power supply unfortunately revealed these issues to be integral to the unit itself, and not a result of bad power.

Thus far, I have discovered two major issues with the unit. First, the RETURN key does not work. This can be circumvented by using CTRL+M instead of RETURN. This, however, gets very old very fast. Second, the RGB output does not work. For this reason, I have as yet been unable to test the unit in color. (All C65 protos are PAL). I do have a PAL to NTSC color converter that should enable us to view the C65 graphics in color, but I have not yet tested it.

I managed to find and print a manual, which will be included with the C65 when I return the unit at the June meeting. Also, I found a box that perfectly fits the packing material on the C65, and has room for the PSU and manual. This will also come with it when it is returned.

Whatever the final disposition of the unit, I hope it makes a few more rounds before it leaves the club.

Article Submissions

Articles should be submitted to the Editor at the email address: six@darklordsofchaos.com or snail-mailed to 17 Edwards, Walton KY 41094. Articles from members or non-members are welcome, and should cover some retro-computing-related topic.

The 4C-er, June 2007 Issue

Cincinnati Commodore Computer Club

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THE COMMODORE C65 DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

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ENGLISH KEYBOARD
NO EXPANSION RAM

READY.