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<GEOS-TIM> Welcome to the GEOS DEN with special guest JOE BUCKLEY!!!

Tonights presentation will be divided into 6 topics:

- 1) THE BEGINNINGS and the PRESENT - What he did and is doing
- 2) PROGRAMMING - How Joe got into programming.
- 3) FAVORITE PROGRAMS - Programs that Joe likes or uses.
- 4) PROGRAMS CREATED - A discussion of Joe's programs.
- 5) PURCHASING THE PROGRAMS - Where, How much, and how soon.
- 6) ADVICE TO THE NEW PROGRAMMER

Capturing and editing tonight's conference is Cam Stewart, the  
Bandit

<Bandit> Howdy!

<GEOS-TIM> Behind the scenes will be handled by Sherry Freedline, our own  
QT.Pie

<QT> Hiya!

<GEOS-TIM> And our special guest tonight, Programmer of such great and useful  
program such as Wrong is Write, Graphics Storm - Joe Buckley  
Glad to have you here Joe.

<Joe Buckley> I'm happy to accept your invitation to be here, thank you.

<GEOS-TIM> Well, it should be a great evening. One I have been looking forward  
to. You have definitely left your mark with your programming  
skills. I have often wondered as I looked at your programs, how  
someone as talented as yourself got started into computing.  
Could you tell us a little about that?

<Joe Buckley> Well, like anyone else first learning on computers, I did so  
slowly bet you can't wait til tomorrow and with all the little  
bumps you'd expect. (My friend always reminds me of how I put  
the 5.25" floppy into the drive the wrong way.)

<GEOS-TIM> lol

<Joe Buckley> I first started on a Sinclair ZX-81, then quickly moved to a  
Vic-20. But my first true love was the 64. You could do so many  
interesting things when the computer had a whole 64K of RAM!

From that point it was a learning adventure that allowed me to  
actually bump into Jim Butterfield on one occasion. (I'd died

and gone to heaven at that point!) Everything else just seemed to build on that beginning.

<GEOS-TIM> Could you tell us more about your "Jim Butterfield" experience? That sounds like an interesting anecdote.

<Joe Buckley> To be perfectly honest, 'bump' just about describes the experience.

<GEOS-TIM> You didn't knock him down, did you? LOL

<Joe Buckley> I was at WoC Philly, in I believe '88, when two of my friends introduced us. (It really wasn't a bump, but close to it.) They knew him and wound up getting a lesson in programming from him. At the time of the introduction, I didn't know their plans, so I breathlessly excused myself and counted my self lucky.

When they told me what they were up to once I left, I was ready to kill. The bus ride back to Boston was...interesting, let's say. I never did get that one-on-one from the Guru himself.

<GEOS-TIM> Maybe, that was the driving force behind your programs... the disappointment :D

<Joe Buckley> Well, I'd already had my start at that point, but a few hours with Jim would have been priceless.

<GEOS-TIM> Yes, it would have. He is quite a dynamic person. Well, after all those years of using the Commodore. What are you using in the way of computer and hardware now?

<Joe Buckley> I just about split most of my computing time between my 486-box (boo...hsss...) and my Amiga 1200. The 64 system is set up right beside the other two, but unfortunately doesn't get as many miles put on it as it once did.

<GEOS-TIM> Well, I guess, having it still set up means that it is still ticking, and being used.

Okay, lets slip into the Programming topic What got you started into programming, Joe?

<Joe Buckley> What got me started? The novelty of it, I'd have to say. Only one person I knew first hand did any programming and we got a bit competitive on some minor programming issues, so that stoked the fire for me.

<GEOS-TIM> When did you start programming?

<Joe Buckley> Do I really want to date myself? I started in earnest back in the days of the Datasette. Those cassette drives were quite the thing. to make you get a floppy drive.

<GEOS-TIM> LOL that's for sure

<Joe Buckley> Once I had the Vic 20, things started moving. I'd say the Vic got me programming, but it wasn't until I bought my 64 (the one still on my desk) in '83 that I hit my stride.

<GEOS-TIM> Okay, the question the GEOS users have (I'm one) is: When and how did you start your GEOS programming? And what was your first GEOS program?

<Joe Buckley> Three things came together to get me programming for GEOS:

BSw released the second version of geoWrite in Writer's Workshop which had a different data file format than the original version. For what seemed years, people had trouble with using the differing versions of the program. Specifically, I had the original which couldn't read Workshop files. So I set out to get around that limitation by converting the data files - that started the long road to what is now called Wrong is Write.

The second event was Jim Hastings-Trew's MacPaint to geoPaint file converter. I loved it, but it took quite a while to convert an image and only worked with the 1541 drive. That got me to work on the first versions of MacAttack. Jim was instrumental in getting me the information I needed to get it to work.

And third, and probably most important, BSw released geoProgrammer right in the middle of those two projects. That alone improved all of my work by a huge margin.

<GEOS-TIM> John Butler has a question.

<John Butler> How much time did you spend with regular programming before tackling GEOS? Is the addresss still current?

<Joe Buckley> OK, first, the address is still current. As for programming, there were a few small projects that I used for myself and never released. They were really learning projects. I never really tried writing anything as 'extravagant' as a freeware program until I found out that there was a rather large number of users on a local BBS I frequented who were quite eager to use MacAttack. They helped its development along quite a bit.

<GEOS-TIM> BTW Joe, Are you programming at all now and if so, with which computers?

<Joe Buckley> Unfortunately, time has been at a premium lately. I still have geoProgrammer, an assembler for my Amiga and a bright shiny new C compiler for my PC, but no time to use them. All I've been doing is database programming at work, lately.

<GEOS-TIM> We will zip right into Favorite Programs. You have been programming for a number of years, and have produced many great and useful programs. Looking back over them all, what is your favorite program?

<Joe Buckley> Well, there are really two favorites:

MacAttack II, because it became so widely used and I managed to pull a few tricks and add some really special touches to it.

And Wrong is Write, because it was my first major programming effort.

<GEOS-TIM> May I assume that your favorites are also the programs you use the most?

<Joe Buckley> Actually, the two I see most are Wrong is Write and REU Zap. Whenever I boot my 64 into GEOS, REU Zap gets run.

<GEOS-TIM> Oh, good, we will be talking about those two in just a few minutes

I have one Barbara Walters type question.. No, I'm not going to ask you if you were a tree which would you be. If you were going to do anything different in the way you handled your programming projects, what would you change?

<Joe Buckley> I'd probably have to say that I would spend a bit more time

writing and especially debugging my programs. I recall that when I was working on the material which eventually became part of the RUN GEOS Power Pak 1, I wrote five complete applications in about a six week period. Assembly-line programming like that can (and did) lead to some wonderfully horrific bugs to slip by. Rather embarrassing, to say the least.

<GEOS-TIM> Gosh, I'll have to check that disk..

<Joe Buckley> Let's say that you don't! :)

<GEOS-TIM> Okay, we are going into the topic that many are looking forward to. The actual programs created. I have quite a bit on the Storm Systems disk.

I have Disk 1. First of all, how many disks are there that a person could purchase?

<Joe Buckley> That was always one of the big things that I wish I managed to get finished. I only completed one full disk. There were a couple of programs I wrote intending to release a second disk, but I ran out of steam without enough to cover even a single side of a floppy.

I released my one attempt at a game, Parallax, as shareware, and one of the others I finished, a nicely improved version of the previously mentioned REU Zap, which was never released (but I use it all the time).

\_<GEOS-TIM> Is that REU Zap II?

<Joe Buckley> No, REU Zap II appears on my Storm Disk I, but its bigger brother REU Zap III, which could handle RAM1581 drives as well as multiple RAMdrive presets, was never released.\_

<GEOS-TIM> Well, Joe, that sounds like one that should be released. We have a lot of eager GEOS fans. I think this is probably an appropriate time to let John ask about Wrong is Write.

<John Butler> Are all the programs on disk one upgrades to earlier releases such as Power Pak and Geoworld disks? Has the price changed?

<Joe Buckley> Not all programs are upgrades, while certainly many are. The best of the programs, from a programming standpoint, is Font Monster. I wrote that as a response to a brief flurry of font editors that appeared and were in essence clones of one another. I wrote FM to be a bit more unique.

There are also tools to allow you to boot GEOS from within a Quick Brown Box cartridge. That and placing the core of the GEOS DeskTop in the QBB make booting a breeze

<John Butler> What are the improvements to Wrong is Write?

<Joe Buckley> One thing that annoyed me to no end is that parts of the code to Wrong is Write, which had remained unchanged for quite a few revisions turned out to have a few subtle, hard to captivate bugs. I had one that lasted quite a while until I could get someone to demonstrate it consistently. So WiW 8.1 is a combination of minor bug fixes and most importantly, the addition of an 80 column mode for users of GEOS 128. (I had use of a loaner for a while which allowed me to develop 80 column applications.)

<GEOS-TIM> What are some of the other features of Wrong is Write 8.1, Joe?

<Joe Buckley> Well, I think I managed to create a good, general purpose text

conversion tool to allow the import and export of ASCII and PETSCII text into and out of geoWrite, plus the universal data format exchange between any of the three geoWrite file types. That, plus a few text processing features, and the 80 column features, wound up being that version. About all I ever wanted to add to that was a multi-file selection dialog box.

<GEOS-TIM> Wrong is Write is an important part of any active GEOS user. Or probably should be. You were mentioning Font Monster. Could you list the features of it? It uses GeoPaint, doesn't it?

<Joe Buckley> Well, one of the main things I wanted Font Monster to be was different! Art Dahm (I believe) wrote the original geoFont that BSw marketed. Jim Collete followed that up with his amazingly accurate clone of it for the BSw programming contest. At the time, I wanted to try something different, so instead of writing Yet Another \*Editor\*, what I actually wrote was a font grabber.

The original editors were just that: giant pixel editing tools to draw the fonts. I figured that everyone already has more and better tools in geoPaint, so why not base my font images on geoPaint files?

<GEOS-TIM> Seems like a good idea.

<Joe Buckley> I allow a user to select, then scroll through, any geoPaint file and select a small region of the image to be the source for the character image. Any type of image that could be placed in a geoPaint file could be used for fonts: sample font style sheets, pictures, scanned images - just point and grab. Everything up to 48 point fonts could be created.

<GEOS-TIM> I'll have to use mine. I've had that "time" problem myself. That brings us up to another of the programs on Disk 1. And one you have mentioned several times already: REU Zap II. Could you tell us about the features of this program?

<Joe Buckley> Well, REU Zap started due to that most natural of reasons - laziness. While I was working on writing a program, I would have to reload all of my geoProgrammer files from floppy to my RAM disk. That was rather tedious and got me to thinking of an easier way.

I could set the RAM disk up in the manner I wanted, then take a 'snapshot' of it. On booting GEOS, the 'snapshot' would reset the entire RAMdisk, right down to what page you placed a file's icon and where on the page it was placed.

REUZap II would allow you to save a RAM 1541 or a RAM 1571 disk image in a floppy disk image. Then simply double-clicking the icon would reload everything.

<GEOS-TIM> Looking down the list of programs on Disk 1 I see one of the first of your programs I remember seeing. That is Graphic Storm II, actually I think I saw the PD version.

This is a graphic conversion program. It seems to convert similar formats as the Graphics Grabber does. What does your program do better than Graphics Grabber?

<Joe Buckley> I don't recall the entire list of image formats that Graphics Grabber worked with, but I do know that one of the features that \*I\* always liked about Graphic Storm was that the color Koala format image conversion allowed you the choice of three complete dither pattern sets.

It would often occur that one set would do fine on one type of image and do a horrendous job on a different type of image. The availability of three pattern sets allowed you to find one that looked good in the color to grey-scal conversion.

<GEOS-TIM> Koala would be one that Graphics Grabber doesn't do, it coverts PrintMaster, Print Shop, and Newsroom I just got out the book. They say you should always go to the manual before you ask the question. LOL

<Joe Buckley> Yes, that should be posted above everyone's monitor!

<GEOS-TIM> Going down the list of programs I see one called Reprint. What does this program do?

<Joe Buckley> RePrint was always one of my oddest little toys. I recall someone else having written a small utility that would allow you to print multiple copies of geoPaint files - without using geoPaint.

As far as that went, it seemed to do an excelent job. I wanted something a little less restricted.

RePrint will allow you to print multiple copies of a data file, with the catch that it still requires the parent application to handle the actual printing chore. While it works splendidly with the older version of geoPaint, the newer version, as well as geoWrite still require some manual data entry when printing (a single mouse click - but that means it can't be left unattended).

As far as \*this\* program goes, it works fine, just not as well a I had always wished it did.

<GEOS-TIM> Sounds like a handy program. Too bad it can't be left unattended. The next program on my list is called Drive Off. Could you tell us about this program?

<Joe Buckley> Drive Off is another of those 'Joe-you-lazy-slob' programs. When I was writing my programs for RUN, I would usually leave my system on all night (I did manage to get \*some\* sleep) and I hated to leave my 64 with its 1.5MB REU and my 1541 and 1581 drives on too.

I found out quickly that if you turn off your floppy drive, GEOS crashes the next time you access the drive. But there is a way to force GEOS to reload the disk drives buffers with the DOS-turbo code.

What DriveOff does is just sit there. Doing absolutely nothing, while I shut off the drives and shut my eyes for a bit. When I finally drag myself out of bed the next day, I can turn the two floppy drives back on, close Drive Off and be right where I left the night before.

It is an interesting utility, and rather usefull, but unfortunately it is of rather limited appeal.

<GEOS-TIM> Has to be someone that wants to sleep at night. LOL I'll have to keep that one in mind.

<Joe Buckley> Only on occassion.

<GEOS-TIM> The next Disk 1 program I have on my list is Album Reverter + Could you tell us a little about it?

<Joe Buckley> That program grew out of the release of GEOS 2.0. The Photo Album desk accessory data file structure was changed slightly in the newer version. I actually forget the details, but through the fog of years I'll venture to say that they took what was once one of the data image records and placed the list of page names there instead. I can't recall if it was record 1 or 63 they eliminated.

Of course, now the old version of the DA couldn't read the new data files, so in the spirit of Wrong is Write, I wrote a similar tool for photo albums. In this case, the conversion only goes one way, down toward the earlier version.

<GEOS-TIM> I have three programs left on my list: Alarm Flash II, IRQ Viewer, and Font Thief II. Could you tell us about these three programs?

<Joe Buckley> Well, my earlier Alarm Flash allowed you to change the GEOS Alarm Clock ring routine (which was actually a part of the GEOS Kernal, not part of the clock desk accessory) and force the screen border colors to flash when the alarm event occurred.

AF II did that for all known versions of GEOS 64 and GEOS 128.

IRQ Viewer is another of those programmer-type programs that simply allowed you to monitor the current state of the GEOS interrupt request and reset vectors.

Font Thief was a programming tool, as well, but one which nicely complimented the major application Font Monster. Font Thief would allow a programmer to take any single font point size and create a geoProgrammer geoLinker module.

With that, it became easy to add new fonts to any program you might be writing. For instance, I used an earlier version of Font Thief to capture the font data that was used in the version which appears on the disk.

<GEOS-TIM> There are three fonts on the disk: EdFont, Trek24 font, and RainStorm font. I would suppose they are fonts that were made with Font Monster. The old adage that a picture is worth a thousand words would fit when it comes to fonts.

Are there any characteristics with these fonts that a potential buyer might want to know?

<Joe Buckley> I'm not certain what you are asking - Font Thief is really a programming tool to allow the use of any pre-existing font in a new application, while Font Monster allows you to build any new font.

<GEOS-TIM> Actually, I was just asking for any characteristics of the three fonts that were included on the disks that might be noteworthy.

<Joe Buckley> Well, the three fonts were meant as samples. One was essentially a 24 point version of an existing 48 point font which I shrunk with geoPaint. One was a fixed-width font used in an earlier application and the last, RainStorm, was a specially created font to show the potential of custom fonts.

<GEOS-TIM> Fran Kostella created that font which made writing the banner for my original geoWorld disk ad a snap. Wasn't it also Fran Kostella that created the only program on the disk that isn't yours? A game called, Circe?

<Joe Buckley> Actually, there are \*three\* programs on the disk that I did not write. Bill Coleman generously allowed me to include his

Convert 2.5 tool on the disk, plus Fran Kostella contributed both his original 'flat-map' version of his game Circe, as well as a new '3-D globe map' version with a much improved user interface. One of my all-time favorite GEOS games. -end.

<GEOS-TIM> ::::stands corrected:::::

I didn't realize there were two versions. I had opened the 3-D globe map version. It looked like a fun game.could you tell us a little about it?

<Joe Buckley> Yes, Fran floored me with that version.  
The game is essentially a variant of the old board game "Risk", where two opposing sides stake claims on various countries on the map and slowly build up their armies as the game progresses. Since the aggregate number of armies gained per turn depends of the number of countries held, it pay to invade the neighbors. Global domination from your C-64.

<GEOS-TIM> John Butler has a question

<John Butler> Is it possible to get a copy of the actual Geoworld disk or is that the Storm Disk?

<Joe Buckley> Well, I'm not certain about any geoWorld disks that might have been distributed, but my disk is still available.

<GEOS-TIM> Joe, if someone wanted to order, where would he send it, and how much does disk 1 cost?

<Joe Buckley> The shameless plug. eh? Just about any of my GEOS programs should have my address information within it under the GEOS/INFO menu, but to avoid forcing anyone to look it up, I can be reached at: 464 Beale St.- W. Quincy, MA 02169-1307

All of my older information relating to purchasing my disk is now out of date (pricewise, at least). Storm Disk 1 costs \$15 and if you want a list of anything else I have, just send a S.A.S.E. to the same address. Isn't that always the case?

<GEOS-TIM> Joe, If you were going to give the best advice you could to a person just starting into programming, what would it be?

<Joe Buckley> Well, my personal advice may not be the easiest to take: it is simply to look for comments and, yes, criticism of your work. I call this the "programming-by-committee" approach. Many of the best features of programs have been the direct result of letting total strangers try out an early version of a program.

They often suggest things which may be obvious, but overlooked. This type of criticism is rather beneficial.

<GEOS-TIM> I would like to thank Joe Buckley for coming in this evening. It has been very enjoyable and informative.

<Joe Buckley> I'd like to thank you for the invitation and for listening to what I had to say this evening.

<GEOS-TIM> It was great, Joe.

<John Butler> definitely!!

<GEOS-TIM> I will be opening the room up to open forum. Joe can stay for a few minutes, so stand up and stretch.

