

# TPUG Newsletter

Views and News of Toronto Pet Users Group, Inc.

5334 Yonge Street, Box #116

Willowdale, Ontario, M2N 6M2

(416) 253-9637

Volume 5, Number 1

Winter 1992/93

## Words from your President - introductory remarks from our Annual General Meeting.

Welcome

Welcome to the 1992 Annual Business Meeting. Tonight's the night we brag about our accomplishments, confess and mourn our failures, and ask for your guidance for the coming year.

There's enough on the agenda to keep us busy tonight. In fact, one member has so many concerns we've scheduled a General Meeting of the Members in September.

At this meeting, we'd like to present you with lots and lots of reports on how we're doing. In the President's Report, I'll present an overview of our status, including some of our financial strategy, before other reports get into more detail on our situation. One of the most important reports is the Annual Financial Report. Because our fiscal year just ended, the report is not final but should give you a preliminary look at the year just past.

If you have brief questions directly related to a report, please ask them at the end of it. If extensive discussion seems called for, please wait until after the agenda has been covered.

After the reports, we have some proposed changes to the Bylaws for you to consider. Then in theory we will have an election, but in fact since we have fewer nominees (so far) than vacancies the proper word is likely to be acclamation.

Subject to your approval, we will take a brief recess after the election, during which the new Board of Directors will elect its officers.

Finally we will discuss any new business and ask for your questions, opinions, complaints, concerns and suggestions.

... see page 10

For users of all  
Commodore Computers :

\* PET/CBM

\* SuperPet

\* B-128

\* VIC 20

\* Commodore 64

\* PLUS-4

\* C-16

\* Commodore C - 128

\* AMIGA

\* PC/MS-DOS

\* Registered products of  
Commodore Business  
Machines, International

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## Member Information

### Voice Info (416) 253-9637

Please leave a message

### Membership Rates

Canada . . . . .	\$25
USA . . . . .	US \$25
International . . . . .	US \$30

### Board of Directors

President . . . . .	Ian McIntosh
Vice President . . . . .	Ernie Chorny
Secretary . . . . .	John Easton
Treasurer . . . . .	Al Farquharson
Director . . . . .	Carl Bannenberg
Director . . . . .	Hermann Hartmann
Director . . . . .	Tim Hyland
Director . . . . .	Jean Paul Joly
Director . . . . .	Paul Kreppenhofer
Director . . . . .	Dug Rodger
Director . . . . .	George Skinner

### Librarians

Head Librarian . . . . .	Ian McIntosh
Amiga . . . . .	George Skinner and Paul Kreppenhofer
C128 & CPM . . . . .	John Milligan
GEOS . . . . .	Tim Hyland
C64 . . . . .	Dug Rodger
C64 Education . . . . .	Bill Cumberland
Vic 20 and COMAL . . . . .	Ennio Cellucci
Plus/4 . . . . .	Al Weinstein
PET/CBM/SuperPET . . . . .	John Easton
PET&C64 Education . . . . .	John Easton
MS-DOS . . . . .	Hermann Hartmann

### Support

Mail . . . . .	George Skinner
Telephone . . . . .	Gus Gikas
Disk Orders . . . . .	Librarians
Asst Treasurer . . . . .	Carl Bannenberg
Member Records . . . . .	Carl Bannenberg
Meetings . . . . .	Wilf Meissner and Ernie Chorny
Shows . . . . .	Ian and Dug
Publicity . . . . .	George Skinner
BBS 1 SysOp . . . . .	Sylvia Gallus
BBS 2 SysOp . . . . .	George Skinner
Q-Link SysOp . . . . .	Dug Rodger
CRS SysOp . . . . .	Dug Rodger

### Newsletter

Editor . . . . . John Easton 251-1511

## Meeting Schedule

Central	C128	<b>First Tuesday</b> of the month, 7:30 pm (no meetings July and August) Ray Whidden - 297-0763 John Milligan - 694-1636
Central	Amiga	<b>Second Tuesday</b> of the month, 7:30 pm (no meetings July and August) George Skinner - 225-8538
Central	GEOS	<b>Third Tuesday</b> of the month, 7:30 pm Dug Rodger - 588-9071
Central	C64	<b>Fourth Tuesday</b> of the month, 7:30 pm Dr. Wilf Meissner - 789-4335

The Central Meetings are in the **York Public Library Main Branch, 1745 Eglinton Ave West** (one block east of Dufferin), downstairs in the Story Hour Room or Auditorium.

Westside	C64 / C128	<b>Third Thursday</b> of the month, 7:30 pm (no meetings in July, August, and December) Ernie Chorny - 279-2730
Westside	Amiga	<b>Third Thursday</b> of the month, 7:30 pm (no meetings in July, August, and December) Hermann Hartmann - 459-9436

The Westside C64/C128 and Amiga Meetings are downstairs in **Alderwood United Church, 44 Delma Drive, Etobicoke.**

Delma Drive is just west of and parallel to Browns Line, south of the Queen Elizabeth Way, north of Horner Avenue. From the west, exit QEW at Evans Ave, east on Evans to second stoplight, south on Gair to Delma. From the north or east, exit QEW or Hwy 427 to Browns Line/ Evans Ave ramp, exit right to Evans, west on Evans to first stoplight, south on Gair to Delma.

### TPUG BBSes

Both 300 / 1200 / 2400 bps  
8 data bits, 1 stop, no parity  
Password not required

**BBS 1 273-6300**

PunterNet Node 2  
Type "?" at prompts for help

**BBS 2 733-4880**

Type "H" for help  
8am-11pm

### Quantumlink

The TPUG SIG is located in the  
Commodore Information  
Network User Group  
Support Center

TPUG signon is TPUGMAIL

### Canada Remote Systems

TPUG conference via "J 74"  
TPUG signon is TPUG SYSOP

*TPUG Newsletter is published quarterly by the Toronto Pet Users Group (TPUG) Inc., a Commodore computer users club. TPUG is a volunteer non-profit corporation dedicated to the service and support of owners and users of Commodore computers.*

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*Articles, letters, tips, questions, cartoons, etc are welcome. Send hardcopy or disks "Attn: TPUG Newsletter", or use our BBS, PN, Q-Link, or CRS.*

*Advertisements are also welcome. Members' small ads are free. Commercial ads are \$200 per page with a \$25 minimum.*

**BBS Number Change**

In late December the 733-2933 BBS line was discontinued. This number was permanently call forwarded to the main one, 273-6300, and usage was too low to justify the expense. Please change your directory, and if you were one of the few users please accept our apologies.

**Second BBS**

Since early January a new BBS has been available to TPUG members. The sysop is George Skinner and the number is (416) 733-4880. Terminal program settings are 8N1 - 8 data bits, no parity bit, and 1 stop bit. Modem speeds supported are 300, 1200 and 2400. Hours are currently 8 am to 11 pm. If you are unfamiliar with PC Board commands, type "H" for help.

**Annual and General Meetings**

Two new directors were elected at the Annual Meeting in July. We welcome Tim Hyland and J(acute accent)ean Paul Joly to the board, and also thank the retiring Michelle Hyland and Walther Melamet-Vetter for their many contributions.

The previous officers were reelected to the same positions. The complete

board, and most of our volunteers, are listed on page 2.

There was also a General Meeting in September.

Quite a few revisions (mostly minor cleanup) to the TPUG Bylaws were passed at these meetings. A summary is planned for the newsletter, and details are included in the minutes.

Copies of the minutes of both meetings will be mailed soon to those who attended, and are available to other members on request. The Bylaws are also available to members on request.

**TPUG At The Shows**

Since our last newsletter TPUG has had booths at Fall Computer Fest (CNE Better Living Centre in September), two Ontario Computer Fairs (Burlington Central Arena in September and York University in November), Computer Fest East (Metro East Trade Centre in November), Winter Computer Fest (CNE Automotive Building in February), and of course the big one - World of Commodore/Amiga in December.

One highlight of TPUG's presence at the 10th World of Commodore was a draw for a FREE Amiga 600, won by David Bradley.

**Late Disk Orders**

Many disk and other orders are ridiculously late!

The fault is mostly mine - I ended up involved in too many of the club's activities. That was OK until late summer when I got too busy with other things (vacation, changing jobs, also family obligations, replacing a broken computer, and all those miscellaneous things that eat time) to give TPUG the time it needed. Things slipped badly.

My life has settled down a bit so I have more time again. More importantly, we've juggled some of the volunteers' jobs recently so I'm doing less. Thank you John, Gus, Carl, Dug, George, Al, Hermann and Paul for taking on extra or new jobs. We certainly haven't eliminated all the problems and never will, but the chaos has been reduced.

Please accept TPUG's and my apologies for the delays. All outstanding orders should be filled soon.

- Ian McIntosh

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**Wonders of PC DOS**

Having examined an ancient program called CP/M, and noted its means of handling Disk Drives and Input/Output, I have also looked at MS DOS. The original system was great. Early computers such as the APPLE II lacked systems smarts to talk to disk drives. CP/M was fine. Then came IBM and its limited PC. They needed a disk operating system. Microsoft reworked CP/M and thus MSDOS was borne. (PCDOS) IBM put out a machine with no Video system on board and no disk drive board.

So the IBM PC needed more to operate. No standard video. We have EGA, VGA, SuperVGA ... and more to come. All manner of drives, SCSI, EDI, etc., etc. come in many sizes. 5.25, 3.5 floppy drives and multitudes of hard drives and controller boards to work the hard drives.

I predict that some system will replace the PC DOS and their simple minded machine. One which has built-in

sound and built-in video handling capabilities is sure to follow. Both the MACs and AMIGAs perform better in this regard. Yes, one can run across the IBM/AMIGA, IBM/MAC combinations. PC's only claim to fame is a large following which follows the software vendors unceasing demand for more memory and more hardware to shore up a klutzy artifact, PC's! The more I work with this ilk, the angrier I get.

A recent advertisement by Apple makes fun of the PC and the difficulty in loading all that stuff. I respond well to the ad although I have never owned a MAC or any Apple at all.

I have GEOS. It loads and runs with no problem. And it doesn't demand ten magabytes of RAM and umpty something sized hard drive! Only megabucks. Lots a luck folks!

Al Farquharson

## **Upgrading the A1000 for Kickstart ROMs Review: KwikStart II**

Wanting to use my A1000 with the new Workbench 2.0, I decided to purchase the KwikStart II board by DKB Software. It is a small printed circuit board that allows the switching of ROMs or switching to the old Kickstart disk based operating system.

On opening the box you see the KwikStart II board, and a smaller box which contains a replacement PAL chip plus a socket for the chip. For the do-it-yourselfer, they list the required tools. Although it is not a major modification, this job should not be attempted by someone who hasn't had previous circuit board experience.

Installation instructions are fully described in the included manual, and the step by step instructions are well written. Basically the computer has to be turned over and all the cover screws removed to get access to the inside of the computer, the interior RF shield has to be removed, and the floppy drive removed or at least moved to one side. The daughterboard, which is positioned upside down above the motherboard on multiple pins, has to be removed. The PAL chip to be replaced on the daughterboard is on the one corner and will be soldered in place.

The hardest part of the modification is the PAL chip replacement, and this is where printed circuit board experience is a must! A damaged daughterboard would have to be replaced or repaired as an added expense. I cut the leads on the PAL chip with a small pair of wire cutters, and using pliers and a soldering iron pulled the chip connections from the daughterboard, using a desoldering bulb. I then removed the solder from the circuit board. Having installed and soldered the new socket in place, I removed the 68000 CPU chip and installed the KwikStart II PC board. The 68000 is then installed on the KwikStart board. There are sockets for the ROM chip(s), on the KwikStart board. I installed the Workbench 2.0 chip in the default socket, and WB 1.3 chip in the alternate socket. There is a jumper on the board, which would be used to set the alternate as a disk based Kickstart DOS. There are two wires on the KwikStart II board which have to be connected to the daughterboard, and soldered in place. Having accomplished all this I was ready to put my A1000 back together. But, I had a problem and nothing worked! A five minute call to DKB solved the problem, and in fact the problem was solved while I was still on the phone. The new Kickstart 2.0 chip supplied by Commodore has a short jumper wire soldered in place on the chip. This jumper has to be cut or removed. Problem solved. I cut the wire in the middle and turned on the computer, and it WORKED!

This was explained to me as a modification by Commodore to get certain revisions of A500/2000 computers to work with the new Workbench. This jumper is not required on the KwikStart II or the Multistart II boards.

Since adding KwikStart to my A1000, I have been very happy with the results. The cost is approximately \$80 Canadian, but this does not include the Kickstart chips.

**DKB Software 50240 West Pontiac Trail Wixom  
Michigan USA 48393**

## **Review: MultiStart II**

Although I don't own an A500 or A2000 Amiga, I thought I would mention this product by DKB called MultiStart which allows the above computers to have a switchable ROM based computer. Since there are still some software incompatibilities with Workbench 2.0 and up, the idea of having switchable ROMs appeals to me. When I mentioned to DKB my involvement with the club, I asked for and received a copy of the installation manual for the MultiStart II hardware modification.

The manual is laid out in a similar appearance to the KwikStart II manual, with descriptions for installing the board in the A500 and A2000 in separate sections.

Installation seems to be very simple, with the removal of the 68000 chip, the MultiStart board installed in that socket, and the 68000 installed on the MultiStart board. The Kickstart chips are then installed in their appropriate locations. The MultiStart II board has room for a third Kickstart ROM chip, but a switch is required to switch between the two alternate ROMs. This would have to be wired and the case of the A500 or A2000 modified. A non-soldered wire has to be connected to pin #41 of the Gary chip. In my estimation, the dismantling of the A500 or A2000 would take more time than the actual installation of the MultiStart II board.

The switching of the ROM chips is accomplished using the appropriate three-fingered salute, {control} {left Amiga} and {right Amiga} keys, but held for approximately five seconds.

The MultiStart II board retails for about \$80 Canadian.

**DKB Software 50240 West Pontiac Trail Wixom,  
Michigan USA 48393**

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**TPUG always has a complete  
update of current FISH and  
AMICUS Disks in the Library**

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The rise of the compact disc as a mass media storage medium in the CD-ROM format brings with it some interesting trends in on-line databases, many of which are now available on disc, for instance *Wilson's Scientific Abstracts* contain a wealth of BBS-related information. H.W. Wilson products (they are the people who make "Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature") are available in libraries in major centres.

In Ontario, major funding from the Ministry of Culture and Communications has seen the library catalogue placed on disc. Some libraries offer products such as the Toronto Star newspaper (full text), Magazine Index Plus, and, of special interest to Commodore users, the *Canadian Business and Current Affairs (CBCA)* database.

CBCA does not provide full text, but instead gives bibliographic references to material in the databases it covers. It contains hundreds of thousands of records on virtually every topic. Looking for Commodore Business Machines or BBS-related information is easy: you simply begin to type a keyword (Commo...) and a proximity index of related terms shows up on the screen. Picking the big multinational's various corporate names and then re-requesting just the titles produces an interesting chronolog of the years:

Commodore teams up with Kawai (to facilitate sales and purchasing of computerized music systems) (autumn 1991)  
 Commodore rethinks positioning of Amiga products  
 Commodore earnings soar  
 CDTV finally arrives (May 1991)  
 Commodore inks deal with Revenue Canada  
 Commodore, Big Blue court fallen Apples in US  
 Sophistication marks newest TV battle: compact disc displays audio and video programs  
 Commodore cuts won't affect Canada  
 Commodore sets new course with lightweight notebook  
 Commodore extends its Amiga PC lineup  
 Commodore expects Amiga to lead in PC multi-tasking  
 Commodore wants to boost presence in Quebec  
 Commodore fine is largest levied by Canadian court  
 Commodore fined \$95,000 for competition violations  
 A chat with James Dionne, president of Commodore Canada  
 Commodore to revamp line of PC compatibles  
 Gould's the boss: but can he save Commodore? (that's from June 1987)  
 Commodore dismisses executives; Rattigan, former chief, sues firm  
 New computer for back-to-school market (1986)  
 Homing back in on home computer sales (story names Richard McIntyre)  
 Commodore to post a loss for last quarter of 1985  
 Atari, Commodore go for broke on upscale models  
 Will the Amiga save Commodore?  
 Ground-breaking push for Amiga (Oct. 14, 1985)  
 Commodore fails loan test, holds new talks with banks

Commodore attempts comeback in personal computer field (June)  
 Commodore shows new 128: CP/M and faster drives for C-64 replacement (January, 1985)

...and so on and so forth. CBCA goes back ten years (1982) in the standard version, so the articles at the bottom of this list may produce a wistful smile, eg. in 1982 the SuperPET was strong enough to warrant a mention in *Canadian Datasystems* magazine! CBCA does contain magazine references: it is a compilation of several databases including the *Canadian News Index*, a reference to many articles in several daily newspapers, and it has the added plus of random abstracts, that is, some articles have a little synopsis with them, an information snapshot which is supposed to give you a quick picture of what the article is all about.

Beginners should be careful when basing important decisions (say, stock purchases) on search results as CD-ROMs are not always logically sorted, and it is possible to miss the boat in many cases. The search term "BBS" is well supported in CBCA for instance, so if you did that one first you might feel confident when approaching Magazine Index Plus... lo and behold, however, M.I.P. yields nothing under the term BBS!! You have to look under computer bulletin boards, where there are dozens of articles including this one:

InfoTrac = Magazine Index + / 1989 = Oct 1992

Heading: COMPUTER BULLETIN BOARDS  
 = Appreciation

1. IBM and Apple aren't the only choices, Commodore user reminds us; but she thinks record-keeping is a gimmick.  
 (Computer and Homesteading) by Jean Nance v74  
 Countryside & Small Stock Journal Sept-Oct '90 p34(2)  
 56C3289

In such cases, (e.g. when you don't know what you are doing) it pays to read the manual. But what an interesting reference, eh?!

To conclude, CD-ROM databases contain a wealth of information and are well worth the time involved in checking them out. If you don't have them in your area, ask your librarian about inter-library searching services, or contact your provincial or state library association, the Canadian Library Association, your local elected representatives, or the Ontario Ministry of Culture and Communications at (416) 325-6200.

*Roman Kowalczyk (TPUG #20207) operates The New Stelex Sector BBS in Toronto and often signs himself with his handle, "Oscar". He served as a director of TPUG Inc. for a year during 1991-92.*

### Super Box

*Roger Lawhorn  
Reprinted from The Commodore  
Compendium, June 1992, V6#6*

More powerful than the GEOS kernel! Faster than a speeding Turbo code! Able to bypass the normal filebox in a single bound!

Super Box is a new upgrade for GEOS 64 2.0 users who have a RAM expansion; any RAM expansion. Super Box is a patch to the GEOS kernel that will allow you to select from 255 files instead of just the normal GEOS file limit of 15! If that were all it did then that would be great as is! However, there are other things Super Box offers too! For example:

- 1) Super Box is an AUTO\_EXEC file. Just place it on your system disk, and GEOS will automatically load and execute it for you when booting for the first time. You'll never even know it loaded!
- 2) Super Box is FASTER than the normal file box. How much faster? Well, after using it a little while you will notice an increase in speed. The more files you have on the disk the greater the increase.
- 3) Super Box pages forwards and backwards. That means that it will scroll up and down five files at a time, and not just one! When it reaches the top or bottom of the file list it will scroll to the end of the list!
- 4) Super Box will wrap! You can click up to the bottom of the list or click down to the top of the list!
- 5) Super Box now displays the title "SuperBox" to the left of the arrows. That way you will always know when it is installed. The number of the top file name is displayed to the right of the arrows along with the number of files that were found on the disk!
- 6) Super Box supports continuous clicking! Just hold down the mouse button and watch as the top file name number increments at a rapid pace!

Let up on the mouse button and GEOS will redraw the names starting with the current top file number. It took me only four seconds to scroll through 255 file names!

7) Super Box will allow you to set the maximum number of files that will appear in the filebox. You can set it to any number from 1 to 255!

Super Box requires a copy of GEOS 64 2.0 and a RAM expansion. Current REUs that Super Box is known to work with are: 1764, 1750, GeoRAM, and it should work with any REU.

NOTE: If for any reason you cannot get Super Box to work with your setup or software then I will gladly refund your money. How much is Super Box? Just US\$5.00.

### On the Disks

- 1) SUPERBOX
- 2) ROGERSPRINT: Ever get frustrated with Dave Hunt's PhotoPrint? Out of the need to provide an accurate printout to our members ROGERSPRINT was born. It will print out the first 48 PrintShop/PrintMaster size graphics in complete form with numbering and a place for a name. If you use it with the PaintDrivers you can give each printout a special touch.
- 3) PHOTORENAMER: Ever get tired of clicking through photos? Out of the need to provide our members with an easy way to locate a graphic that was numbered and printed with ROGERSPRINT, I created this Desk Accessory. It will rename each graphic (up to the first 60) as 1, 2, 3, etc ... or a, b, c, etc ...
- 4) DIR MANAGER: It will sort a 1541, 1571 or 1581 directory by name, size, type or date, or any combination of name and size, type or date.

If you would like to order this disk or information on other programs by the author then you may write to:

**Roger Lawhorn, 3632 Gray Fox Drive, New Albany IN USA 47150**

### SwiftLink

*Gus Gikas*

Imagine, a late night session logged on to your favourite BBS. You find THE FILE that would change the course of your entire life. But, *Gasp*, it's the Godzilla of program files. In despair and joy, you start downloading and go get a cup of coffee (milk in my case). When you return, you faint from shock: you have been disconnected due to not hitting a keystroke for over a minute!!! Any Commodore 64 or 128 BBSer knows downloading can be a chore. But with the help of SwiftLink, this may be more enjoyable.

SwiftLink is a cartridge-based true RS-232 interface designed to allow the Commodore to communicate at speeds from 300 baud to 38,400 baud. In other words, you can go out to your favourite computer store and buy that high-speed external modem of your dreams, because now the capability exists to connect it to your 8-bit system. You can also attach a null modem cable between the SwiftLink cartridge and your Amiga, PC, or Mac for local file transfers.

For all you Techies out there, the cartridge contains a chip from the same family of chips (65xx/85xx) found in the Commodore 64 and 128. The chip is a 6551 ACIA (Asynchronous Communications Interface Adaptor). SwiftLink also features a male DB-9 serial connector which is compatible with industry standard IBM PC/AT serial cables for interfacing to RS-232 devices. The exact cable you need depends on the device you wish to use. For a Hayes-compatible modem, you need a DB-9 Female to DB-25 Male modem cable.

It's not perfect though. It occupies the same memory address as Super Snapshot, which prohibits you from using both at the same time. It's too bad this can't be changed, because these accessories would create a very powerful system. Not a big deal to many users.

... continued on page 9

**A Helpful Hint For Touch-Typing**

Many computer keyboards now have a little dimple in the F and J keys. These dimples serve much like Braille to help people get their "pointy" F and J fingers in place without peering at the keyboard.

Commodore failed to put these dimples on the PETs, VIC 20s, and C64s. They did catch on with the C128. Here is a simple method to put those helpful dimples on.

Take clear nail polish and apply a tiny dab on the right side of the F key and the left side of the J key. Let the polish dry. Then repeat the dabs several times until noticeable dimples have formed on the keys.

Job done - and touch typing is much easier.

**Can You Help?**

Please write to Bill Cumberland c/o TBUG if you find any bloopers in (C)ED educational programs that you have ordered. Also, if you have suggestions for improvements or for new programs, you input will be appreciated.

We suspect that spelling errors may lurk in these programs. It is a well known fact that Bill is "literarily challenged". The little kids in his school hope to prepare him to receive a spelling certificate before he drifts off into space. If you spot any spelling errors advise Bill - in a plain envelope!

We remain convinced that the C64 is still the best machine available for primary schools.

**Helpful Hint re C64 Keyboards**

If your C64 keyboard is beginning to show signs of fatigue, there is no need for expensive repairs. The VIC 20 keyboard is identical. Look for a VIC 20 in a garage sale. They shouldn't be more than 5 or 10 dollars. A Philips screwdriver and 10 minutes of work will get the VIC 20's keyboard transplanted into your C64. If old Cumberland can do it, anybody can! Then, put the tired old C64 keyboard into the VIC 20 and peace is restored on both fronts.

**Holz Sale**

Holz Computer Supply is discontinuing their distribution of CMD products, and selling their remaining inventory:

JiffyDOS (specify computer & disk drive model and serial number):

- for C64 or 64C with 24 pin Kernal ..... \$50
- for C64 version 4 with 28 pin Kernal ..... \$50
- for SX64 and internal 1541 ..... \$80
- for C128 ..... \$60
- for C128D and internal 1571 ..... \$90
- for 1541 with 24 pin Kernal ..... \$35
- for 1541C with 28 pin Kernal ..... \$35
- for 1541-II ..... \$35
- for 1581 ..... \$35
- for FSD2 ..... \$30
- for MSD ..... \$30

- 20MB HD20 hard drive ..... \$595
- 40MB HD40 hard drive ..... \$795
- 2 MB RAMDrive ..... \$395
- 1 MB SIMMs for RAMLink ..... \$40
- 4 MB SIMMs for RAMLink ..... \$150
- C64/1541 Diagnostician II ..... \$15
- Stereo SID cartridge ..... \$60
- SwiftLink cartridge ..... \$60

- GateWay 64/128 ..... \$50
- GateWay 128 ..... \$35
- JiffyMON ..... \$20
- GeoMake boot utility ..... \$15
- Perfect Print ..... \$65
- 3 foot serial bus cable ..... \$5
- RAMLink hard drive cable ..... \$15
- Navarone 3 cartridge port ..... \$40
- Dialogue 128 terminal program ..... \$25
- Vortex ATonce 286/AT 16MHz PC emulator for A500 ..... \$325
- Intel 287 math coprocessor ..... \$125
- INSITE Floptical 3.5" 720K/1.44MB/21MB disk drive ..... \$500
- Amiga driver for Floptical drive ..... \$75
- 21MB Floptical diskettes (5 pack) ..... \$150

Add \$3 per order shipping and handling, \$5 per order insurance, and 7% GST (but no PST).

**Holz Computer Supply**  
 Box 47008, Dover P.O. Calgary, AB T2B 3B7

### Enter The B-128

I inquired, after reading of the ability of the old PETs to run CP/M, and of the rumoured existence of 8088 co-processor inclusion with the original CBM 700 and "B" series, as to the availability of info on the "B" series, possible "B" sources, etc. Still, few source names were mentioned. CBUG was spoken of kindly in our TPUG group and also the extinct Transactor magazine, so I contacted Norm at CBUG. Yes, I joined CBUG, requested and have since digested the plethora of back-issues, and obtained a B-128 with 8088 co-processor board.

Norm has since supplied me with utilities on disk as well, and we have enjoyed several conversations. The long awaited B-128 lo-profile machine arrived, 8088 co-processor equipped. The addition of 10 K termination resistors on data lines to 5V and ground lines, respectively, eliminated the puzzling, unpredictable (VERY random) system crashes. I have no info on the also proposed Z-80 board available from CBM, back at release time.

The 9090 hard drive is well supported by the system (CP/M) itself, actually automatically formatting the hard drive into two partitioned areas, virtually undetectable from native or CP/M modes. Tony Goceliak has produced many CP/M and 9090 diagnostic and enhancement utilities as well. The 8050 / 8250 drives will back up CP/M-86 disks whilst in native mode!

By the way, the B-128 comes with an IEEE-488 port, Datasette port, separate video and audio ports, cartridge and RS-232C ports. Memory, system and serial expansion is via internal pin-fields.

It is interesting to note that Commodore, unlike its MFM choices with CP/M on the C-128 and 1571 / 1581 drives, uses GCR style disk format-

ing on the B-128 under both CP/M-86 and MS-DOS!! (Each different, too!) They each, however, can be formatted from B-128 "native" mode, as well, but are each single sided. (500 K on SS 5.25" disks - not too bad . . .)

I have experimented with MS-DOS also, and do have version 1.25 on hand. It's NOT 9090 compatible. John Wright informs me the Version 1.25 is rather disk space wasteful, but I feel it's not bad.

Incidentally, I also procured VERY extensive CP/M-80 and -86 documentation and development disks, readable on the 1571 with the C-128 running the "Jugg'ler" program under CP/M 3.0+.

Changes to the "B" itself: with some guidance, I undertook a motherboard RAM upgrade to 256 K, which went through without a hitch. I socketed the additional 128 K, as I planned from the beginning to implement Gary Anderson's memory upgrade board. Also upgraded the internal power supply switching transistor and quieted down the system clock as per Gary's suggestions, and added a mini 12V Radio Shack style fan inside the B-128. I mounted this very quiet fan on the supply itself to further lower the hot supply temperature. After one year plus, I am happy to report this twin-pronged attack on our power supply-come-space heater is a valid and successful approach at upgrade. Remember, I also have various combinations of memory expansion and co-processor boards loading down the supply. So, if it works for me, well . . .

With other CBUG members' help and advice, I further experimented with modifying a second 8088 board to allow the inclusion of the V-20 board and 8087 math chips. I can now report, after buying one V-20 board and building a second, no compatibility problems have been encountered. Engineering data can be supplied on modifying the 8088

board thusly, as well as allowing the CP/M-86 system to access the 1 Meg board. It works! The V20 versions will draw less power than the 8088 CBM board, address the Meg board, install in the lo-profile machine physically, and run faster. In case it's not clear, the original unmodified 8088 CBM co-processor board cannot be used in the lo-profile B-128 in conjunction with the Meg memory upgrade board for two reasons: address incompatibility and physical size. The 8088 board is a very tight fit on its lonesome, requiring spacers between the two halves of the B's outer shell casing. The Meg board alone, which is a very elegant implementation employing rigid SAMTEK pin-field female jacks, is a great fit. The 8088 CBM board has the well-reported capacity and amperage draw problems, the former caused by the long ribbon cables and layout.

The B-1024 (Meg board) expansion board is a superbly crafted piece, and an elegant implementation of the extra memory the "B" can cope with. It is a marvel to behold, first class commercial standards. This board was simple to install and very robust in its support and construction.

I must include Dennis Jarvis and Jas. Springer in the co-operative effort in producing the smooth serial bus adaptor package to the B-128. With the addition of this outboard module and the 24 K RAM cartridge, my "B" is most adept at addressing my fleet of serial drives. How ironic, when you ponder it, an IEEE interface equipped C-128 side by side with our serial bus equipped B-128 computer! In any event, Gary's serial bus expansion peripheral and 24 K RAM / ROM cartridge worked just fine, and are enjoyed. Incidentally, the CP/M-86 mode likes to see no more than about 750 K, as does MS-DOS on the B-128.

This setup was too good to be true, and I wished to eliminate the cable



swapping exercises, so I built up a simple switch box to allow me to manually throw the serial devices over from the C-128 to the B-128. Gary's inclusion of a manual reset switch for the serial drives only is a real boon to those acquainted with the "C" computer, requiring warm starts and system resets to do this operation. I find that often, even with the "B" off, I switch the interface on and reset the serial drives in use with the "C"!

Incidentally, the C-128 and the B-128 here share the IEEE Bus FULL TIME! I found that if I access the bus with the "C" first, no problems occur. Naturally, simultaneous access cannot take place, but simultaneous power-up by both computers is advantageous when sharing files under SUPERScript running on both machines, or porting between them, running basic programs, etc, etc. I see no way that the "B" and "C" can, in like manner, sit on the serial bus at the same time. Hence, my home-made switch!

Dennis Jarvis and Gary have both been tremendously helpful and accessible, I thank them both. As has marvellous John Wright, and his dedicated help with the CP/M-86 project. Incidentally, John uses both a low and high profile "B", the latter a B-256.

I hope to report more successes in sharing C-128 utilities under various Z-80 and 8080 emulators under CP/M-86 on the "B" machine soon, much thanks to monumental work undertaken by John and Dennis.

It appears we are close to having a RAMDISK 1 Meg board implementation for CP/M-86 and a ROM version for the 6 K Meg board socket of the Fast Bus Serial programs!

Tony Goceliak must be included in the group of active people helping us all along with the "B" machine, his utilities and CP/M-86 aids have proven invaluable. His hardware expertise is beyond compare. He has been a great aid in my B-128 education, and a very knowledgeable, accessible tutor.

What a group of superlative people we have! Get more active NOW, and make these efforts pay off... Dennis is poised to complete much needed work on implementation of newer MS-DOS versions, RAMDISK on the Megboard and release of a ROM to allow automatic implementation of the Fast Bus (serial) protocols from the Megboard bank 0 ROM socket, as mentioned above. Also, more utilities to ease MS-DOS, CP/M and C-128 programs / utilities / text from the serial world of the 1571 / 1581. We need the latter programs badly now, as the main hardware stumbling blocks and peripherals are behind us. The initial programs do work, just not as elegantly as they could, as Dennis says so appropriately. Let these valuable people know we are interested, before they quit! Please!!

Sorry for the tirade, but having survived so many CBM support group failures and magazine demises, I cannot imagine this one, the best of all the rest, by the way, go down the same road without speaking out...

Back to B hardware: I use a new Goldstar amber monitor and the 1902A with the "B", and they appear to utilize almost all of the screen. Odd, as I heard so much ill talk of the B and its "scrunching" reaction with various monitors. Hope to access the B-256 character set one day, which I suspect lurks inside our "B"s...

Enjoying Superoffice, Superbase, Superscript, NWM Inventory Control all from North West Music. Bruce also located copies of the blue and grey manuals, and programmers' manuals for me. I was not a Protecto beneficiary, as most are.

Last items: recently, I acquired an 8050 and 8250 dual drive. This is my first experience with REAL CBM co-processing magic, and both the computers love these drives. Each, too, now has front panel reset, 8050 / 8250 and drive 8 through 15 select switches, and are marvels. A spare "B" or three are about.

I suspect the necessity of adding the CBUG Centronics adaptor for MS-DOS and CP/M-86 printing soon (serial native mode printing achieved on the "B" by the serial adaptor to a Centronics adaptor and "IBM" printer!), and hope to fully implement the Datasette port, add a CMD hard-drive to the "C", etc.

Interesting exchanges continue with the above named luminaries of our "B", and their friendly letters, calls and hints roll in.

The Centronics Panasonic printers work fine via the serial interface with the B-128, out of the box. I will try them in CP/M-86 soon, and DOS if applicable. Also will continue to experiment and attempt listing CP/M and MS-DOS programs that I can get to run.

Also trying out alternate system boards in the "B". Well, all for now. Hope to provide more useful info to the newsletter for use as a follow-up article soon. Time will tell. In the meantime, write up your own experiences and submit them to the group!

Sure hope someone out there shares my interests in experimentation with both the "B" and interfacing IEEE devices to the C-128 in ALL modes...

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### ... Swiftlink (continued)

If Commodore BBSers out there want to use the capability of high speed while on a system, then SwiftLink is fine. It's great for downloading or uploading. But for just reading messages, even 2400 baud is enough. I'm not saying don't buy it if you're only reading messages, all I'm saying is that it won't be worth too much to you if you don't download. I think it's a great toy for myself. Being a member of Canada Remote Systems and having the capability to quickly download files from there using SwiftLink is incredible.

### TPUG Annual Business Meeting - July 23, 1992

A year ago we had three serious and interrelated problems. First, our membership was continuing to drop. Second, we were faced with a projected loss of thousands of dollars, seriously eroding our inherited reserves. Perpetual deficit financing is only viable for governments, not clubs. Third, since the *overhead* expenses exceeded the total dues, we were unable to provide the benefits and services our members expected, leading of course to declining membership.

My first action as President was to ask each Director to come up with a concrete plan to improve our financial situation by \$500. Any combination of increased membership, increased disk and other sales, or reduced costs was welcome. Most of the Directors responded to some degree and some very actively. There was some overlap, which was fine - consensus helps. I also suggested that I would be reluctant to support any new non-essential expenses proposed by anyone who had not contributed enough successfully implemented plans to match those expenses, over and above their initial \$500. I took my own advice and produced an 11 page \$2500 to \$3500 list, and until a good portion were underway I avoided recommending new outlays.

This approach generated some heat but was mostly successful. There has been a shift in attitude and there is a more conscious effort to provide you with value for your money. In fact, the Board is now so fiscally responsible they have several times rejected expenditures I thought were important (that's not a complaint).

Change always generates opposition. Some actions were initially controversial but eventually had nearly unanimous support. Achieving consensus sooner would have saved a lot

of volunteer time and at least a thousand dollars, but this is part of the cost of democracy. Some of our decisions are still being argued.

A few examples of changes deserve mention:

- We reused hundreds of surplus disks.

- We bought 2500 disks at a ridiculously low price (3 cents for 5 1/4", 20 cents for 3 1/2").

- We reduced the cost of many disk mailings by \$2 each. -We collected a \$1000 debt.

- We renegotiated our insurance to save \$330 per year (plus a \$90 refund).

- We changed the telephone billing in September (made practical by increasing the BBS from 19 to 24 hours weekdays), saving about \$900 per year.

- We sold excess PET equipment, some of it donated, bringing in \$300.

- We reduced our newsletter printing costs by several hundred dollars per issue.

- We rearranged our storage last July, saving \$1200 per year, and again in May, saving another \$600, and finally this month will reduce it again for a total savings of \$2400 per year.

We considered many other changes but either did not reach agreement or decided on leaving things as they were. Some may be reconsidered next year, and we are still pursuing or investigating others.

The goal, of course, is to avoid wasting any of your money, so it can provide the services and products you expect from the club, instead of just paying for overhead.

The Treasurer's 1991-92 Financial Report will show to what extent this year's results have been improved. The changes were spread throughout the year so the full benefit will occur next year.

The second major goal was to increase membership, after six years of

decline. (Actually, with both members and dollars, breaking even would be considered excellent news.) The Membership Report will show that we did not meet our goal but also did not decline as fast as in most recent years.

We did have some early success - over the first half year we grew. Later the departure of a hard-working volunteer, the loss of borrowed equipment, the failure of other equipment, lack of time, and various other difficulties led to inadequate membership and renewal processing. Renewal notices were delayed up to half a year, leading inevitably to a decline in membership. New members have not received catalogs, hurting both disk sales and member satisfaction. We still have not caught up but the situation is now getting the attention it deserves. I hope this area will soon be operating smoothly. When the renewal notices are sent we should regain most of the recently expired members.

The tradeoff between attracting and retaining members versus solving money woes can be, has been, and undoubtedly will be argued. My belief is that we took the right course but far too slowly. The lost dues revenue is less than the expense reduction, and without these actions we would not have the resources to rebuild. Inaction would have led to losing ALL our members in a year or two.

Now, on to the more interesting part - what we've done for you (and what we haven't). Most of the details have been in the newsletter or will be covered in other reports, but here are a few sample improvements:

- We increased our meetings.

- The Geos meeting started in May a year ago (approved shortly before the last Annual Meeting). We also increased the number of summer meetings, and had a BBS / Telecommunications meeting.

-We attended 5 three day shows and a few one day ones. -We answered lots of queries, including many technical questions.

-We expanded our disk libraries.

-We produced new catalogs for half of our libraries.

-We satisfied all complaints received about the disk subscriptions we temporarily suspended three or four years ago.

-We produced a new information sheet describing the club.

-We produced the usual number of newsletters.

-We produced a variety of information sheets and pamphlets.

-We answered more technical queries, especially from new PET owners.

-We expanded contact with other clubs, Commodore, and vendors.

-We installed menu-driven BBS software to help new and occasional users.

-We started a TPUG conference on CRS.

-We upgraded some of our equipment; for example, the C128 Chapter now has an 80 column colour 1084 monitor instead of the old 1702, one C128's Video RAM has been upgraded from 16 K to 64 K, and the membership database machine now has a monitor.

Of course we maintained all the previous meetings, produced the same number of newsletters as previous years, and continued all previous activities. There's always lots more going on behind the scenes to make the club work for you, and work preparing for the future.

On the other hand, some of our goals have just not gotten done, and we have had a few failures:

-Membership renewals notices are not all mailed promptly.

-Membership cards and catalogs are also late.

-Banking gets behind.

-Phone calls are not always returned promptly and some not at all.

-Many disk orders are filled a couple

of weeks later than they should be. Some problem ones have been months behind.

-Not all the disk subscriptions have been completed - just the ones for which we received complaints.

-We own equipment we don't need and don't own some of what we do need.

-Some of our equipment has been unusable or unreliable for months on end.

-We planned but failed to increase newsletter production this year to more than the twice a year we've averaged for the past four years.

-We still aren't storing equipment at the library, where it is used.

-Some of our disk libraries didn't grow at the expected rate.

-We haven't finished sorting out our debt to Norland, or resolved our financial dispute over the cost of running our office between four and three years ago.

-We mostly computerized our book-keeping, but have not taken the next step to analysis and budget projections.

-We have passed up lots of publicity, much of it free.

-And lots of ideas and plans have not been implemented, causing disappointment or frustration.

Generally these have not been caused by not knowing what needed doing, but rather by lack of volunteer time. We had the usual couple of serious health problems. We also lost some of our key volunteers this year, and need more of you to lend a hand. Most of the jobs require little or no real expertise. They range from a few hours per month to a few hours per day. Some require a local person but others can be done wherever you live. Most of the jobs are even fun. Your help will be appreciated.

This year the Board of Directors has had numerous "vigorous debates" and lived through not just a serious recession but also "interesting times" including three resignations, one requested resignation, one Officer removed from his job, one attempted

removal of a Director from the Board, Directors unwilling to attend meetings that others were at, numerous threats (some carried out) to report our sins and failings to the membership and the government, threatened impeachment and non-confidence motions, accusations of impropriety, fraud, secrecy and censorship, and long arguments over how we should operate. Sometimes it seemed a miracle we did operate at all.

We've scheduled an unusual General Meeting of the Members for September, primarily to discuss one member's numerous complaints and suggestions. We've also been legally required to hand over your names and addresses so he can contact you.

I hope that the next President will either not have to cope with as much dissent and disruption, or will be more successful at controlling it (while retaining democracy) than I have been. An alternative is for some of our members interested in Desk Top Video to turn our story into a soap opera and flog it to the networks (either television or computer). :)

We certainly still have problems but then that's nothing new. Overall I think we've had a better than average year. I look forward to an even better one coming up.

Changes in my job situation will soon reduce my participation as a volunteer. Thank you all for all your support, encouragement, and co-operation, and please extend the same to your next President and Board. I'd like you to join me in giving a special thank you to our volunteers, current and past, who have given so much time and energy to our club, and especially to Al, Walther, and those who helped them preserve the club from collapse so this year's group had a chance to take their turn.

Ian McIntosh, President

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