

TPUG Newsletter

Views and News of Toronto Pet Users Group, Inc.

5334 Yonge Street, Box #116

Willowdale, Ontario, M2N 6M2

(416) 253-9637

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Summer 1993

President's Comments

One of the things TPUG shares with the education system is a year that ends in June. Like the schools, most of our Chapter Meetings (all but the Central C64) take a summer break. And in both, a lot of work is going on anyway.

Year end is a busy time for most organizations and we are no exception. Summer is also a time to try to catch up with all those things we should have done but didn't get to yet, to finish off some of those millions of loose ends, and to make plans for and prepare for the coming year.

This year we are returning to our traditional fall Annual Business Meetings. We hope this will allow more members to attend, and it will give more time to our volunteers to prepare financial and other reports. The meeting will be at York Public Library Main Branch, where our Central Chapter Meetings are held, on Tuesday October 19 at 7:30 pm. All members are welcome.

Part of the Annual Meeting is the Board of Directors election. If you would like to nominate someone or are willing to serve, please let us know. If you'd like to start smaller, we have other volunteer positions too.

In the meantime summer is here. Enjoy your vacation. Go camping, visit the cottage, laze on your patio or balcony, hit the beach, see a movie, visit a museum, fly a kite, read a book, relax, have a good summer.

Just don't neglect your computer. It gets lonely too (or at least dusty). Those days when you could fry disks on the sidewalk are perfect for curling up with a good game, sorting your software, updating your address list, learning how to write programs, or just fooling around. Have fun, keep cool, and if you come up with anything interesting or unusual please share it with the club.

Ian

For users of all
Commodore Computers

- ★ **Amiga**
- ★ **C128**
- ★ *Plus/4*
- ★ **C16**
- ★ **C64**
- ★ **VIC 20**
- ★ **B128**
- ★ **SuperPET**
- ★ **PET/CBM**
- + **PC/MS-DOS®**

★ Registered trademarks of
**Commodore Business
Machines International**
® Reg. trademark of Microsoft Corporation

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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 & CP/M | 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 and Michael Butler |

Support

| | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Mail | George Skinner |
| 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 | First Tuesday of the month, 7:30 pm <i>(no meetings July and August)</i> John Milligan - 694-1636 |
| Central | Amiga | Second Tuesday of the month, 7:30 pm <i>(no meetings July and August)</i> George Skinner - 225-8538 |
| Central | GEOS | Third Tuesday of the month, 7:30 pm <i>(no meetings July and August)</i> |
| Central | C64 | Fourth Tuesday of the month, 7:30 pm <i>(Third Tuesday in December)</i> Dr. Wilf Meissner - 789-4335 |

1993 Annual Meeting Tuesday October 19, 7:30 pm

The Central Meetings and the 1993 Annual Meeting are in the **York Public Library Main Branch at 1745 Eglinton Ave West** (one block east of Dufferin), downstairs in the Story Hour Room or the Auditorium.

| | | |
|----------|--------------|---|
| Westside | C64/ C128 | Third Thursday of the month, 7:30 pm <i>(no meetings July, August & December)</i> Ernie Chorny - 279-2730 |
| Westside | Amiga | Third Thursday of the month, 7:30 pm <i>(no meetings July, August & December)</i> 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 Inc. (TPUG). TPUG is a volunteer non-profit corporation dedicated to the service and support of owners and users of Commodore computers. All rights to material published in TPUG Newsletter are reserved by TPUG, Inc. and no material may be reprinted without written permission, except where specifically stated. When reprinting is authorized, please credit TPUG Newsletter, the issue date, and the author.

Articles, letters, tips, questions, art, etc are welcome. Send hardcopy or disks "Attn: TPUG Newsletter", or use our BBSs, PCPN, Q-Link, or CRS. Advertisements are also welcome. Members' small ads are free. Commercial ads are \$200 per page with a \$25 minimum.

Commodore Shareholder Movement

BBS: Canada Remote Systems
Date: 06-22-93 (16:47)
From: BILL SIDHIPONG
To: ALLL
Subj: SHAREHOLDER MOVEMENT

Number: 36208
Refer#: NONE
Recvd: NO
Conf: (594) R-AMIGA

This is a repost of Mike Levin's message found on FIDO

THE COMMODORE SHAREHOLDER MOVEMENT: 6/16/93

CALL-TO-ACTION The Commodore Board of Directors was warned at the 1991 shareholder meeting, "If things don't improve, Commodore will go out of business." It's a year-and-a-half later and Commodore's value has plummeted, largely due to lack of leadership and poor management. In response a movement has been organized to replace the Board of Directors. The shareholders and the Commodore community are finally taking action, and it's important for you to participate.

THE PROBLEM Commodore could have turned themselves into a 10 billion dollar-a-year company in 1985. Instead, they went dormant with only sporadic attempts to generate sales. Now, Commodore is on the brink of ruin and a community of people including shareholders, businesses and customers have a stake in Commodore's survival. Irving Gould, the Chairman of the Board and C.E.O. of Commodore International Limited is the greatest barrier to Commodore's survival. Through his mismanagement, Gould along with his right-handman, Medhi Ali has eroded the loyalty of their only reliable revenue source (the customer base), driven Commodore into debt, and brought the company to the edge of collapse (1993 3rd Quarter Report).

Meanwhile, Gould has compensated himself with annual salaries of over 1.7 million dollars, plus stock options and bonuses (1992 Proxy Statement

3). Shareholders who have already lost a great deal of money stand to loose everything. Commodore is also the sole source of Amiga computers, a proprietary product in which many people have invested. These customers will be abandoned and forced to buy products less suited to their needs. A top-caliber engineering team will be broken up, many small companies will loose their market, and potentially successful products will never be developed.

THE SOLUTION The change of top-level management is Commodore's only chance for survival. This can be accomplished through a stock buy-out and the election of new Directors. The upcoming 1993 shareholder meeting presents our chance to break Gould's stranglehold on the company and to replace him with dynamic leadership. We are organizing a grass-roots buy-out and the nomination of new Directors.

Both Irving Gould and Al Haig are up for reelection to the Board of Directors. All shareholders should vote for the alternative candidates who will become known in the following months. We are talking with some very exciting possibilities. With Gould gone, Commodore can start on its path to recovery, being led by capable new Directors. Without Gould, the remaining Directors will likely step down.

BUY STOCK AND VOTE If we are successful, then Commodore stock will have been a smart investment. Many companies have come back from the brink. The purchase of stock will allow you to cast a proxy vote in

the upcoming election, or attend the shareholder meeting (at your own expense). In order to buy stock, contact a discount stockbroker. There will be a transaction fee which shouldn't be over \$50. Order as many shares as you want. You may ask for the stock certificate to be sent to you. Get your friends to buy stock. Ask for it for your birthday. The process is easy and any amount helps. Just remember the risk if we fail (the stock may become worthless). You'll at least have the satisfaction of being involved. Watch for our candidates and vote!

SPREAD THE WORD If you buy or own any Commodore stock, contact us! Send a letter or e-mail (MarcR@cup.portal.com). Let everyone who might care know what's going on. Bring it up at the users' group meetings and write articles for the newsletters. Re-post this announcement. Talk about it on the electronic bulletin boards. Call talk radio stations.

WHO ARE WE? You might remember us as the people who attended the 1991 shareholder meeting to deliver warnings to Commodore. Back then, we were only a few people, but we have grown now to include Commodore developers, dealers, and users across the world. All you have to do is buy stock and contact us to become a part of it. The movement was initiated by the members of Philadelphia Amiga Users' Group and local shareholders. Please write to us at:

Commodore Shareholder Movement P.O. Box 8296 Philadelphia, PA 19101

GEOS! What is it and how do you use it? What are its advantages and disadvantages? Is it totally useless or does it warrant a further look? This what I intend to answer here.

GEOS is an acronym for Graphic Environment Operating System written by Berkeley Softworks from California. It brings a pictorial file handling system to the c64 much like that found on Macintosh computers. Version 2.0 is the final version - copyrighted in 1988.

After booting the system found on your system disk (by LOAD"GEOS",8,1) you the friendly user is presented with the desktop. This is the main file handling application that will be the center of all your disk housekeeping tasks. There now are many desktops - QuikTop, Worm-Desk and GateWay being just a few.

The main attraction of GEOS is that all files are presented with a little picture - called an icon - with the filename underneath. You use something called an input driver which can be a joystick, Koala pad, Inkwell light pen, or 1351 mouse, of which the joystick is the default. This can be changed by typing CBM-I (CBM is the Commodore key) and using the cursor keys to select the type of input device connected to your computer. For best results, I recommend the 1351 mouse. To select a file, click over its icon once and a copy of the file's icon will be attached to your pointer to do with as you wish, say ... move it to the border for duplication to another disk or to the trash bin for deletion. To open a file simply click twice rapidly over its icon and it will be loaded and run. If it is smaller than 22K, GEOS will use its TurboDisk routines. If larger than 22K, normal CBM DOS will be used. If the file selected is application data (like geoPaint or geoWrite files) the parent application will be loaded and run followed by the data file.

Almost all printers and interfaces are supported by GEOS in the form of

printer drivers. To select click on the GEOS menu at the top of the screen, click on the SelectPrinter submenu, and look for the name of your printer in the file dialog box. Or you can flip through the desktop notepad pages and move your printer driver so that it is first among printer drivers. This also works for input drivers as GEOS will assume that the first input/printer drivers found are to be current.

GEOS works with all disk drives. The 1541 (and 1541II), 1571, and 1581 drives are supported as well as the 1750 and 1764 REUs. You must tell GEOS what hardware you have by running the Configure2.0 file. GEORAM is an REU built specially for GEOS and is widely used. It however ONLY works with GEOS and cannot be used with normal BASIC. A GEOS disk is slightly different than a normal disk as it has extra stuff written on track 18/0 and it has an extra sector allocated for the border directory.

GEOS files are also different - to normal CBM DOS they all have a USR filetype. The GEOS directory is downward compatible with normal BASIC disks but there are things the friendly user should be aware of. Extra information is stored in the form of a file header block that contains the icon graphic, loading address, commentary, and pointers to the file proper. A new file structure called VLIR is found. This stands for Variable Length Indexed Records. While normal BASIC files occupy contiguous RAM (as do GEOS SEQ files), VLIR files are divided into pieces EACH occupying contiguous memory. This allows for swapping in and out of executable code which has important ramifications. This is also why you NEVER should validate a GEOS disk with the DOS 'v0:' command! DOS will see only the file header blocks resulting in each of your files being only one sector in length. This is also why you need a file conversion routine for transmission of GEOS files.

There are few disadvantages to GEOS. Since it is a disk-based operating system, if you have only one or two 1541 drives, you are severely limited by the slowness of disk I/O. File housekeeping is slow because you must move a file to the border before copying it to another disk - GateWay from CMD fixes this. Programming in ML with geoProgrammer can be daunting because of a completely different kernel and mindset needed to deal with it. But, modular programming is encouraged and you don't have to re-invent the wheel with every new application.

The advantages to GEOS in my opinion are many! It is a pull-down menu driven system which brings the point/click/drag interface to the c64. It is easy to use and the icons are nice to look at. It brings graphic art (geoPaint) and professional printing with fonts (geoWrite) to the c64. It is very user friendly and you don't have to type in strings of cryptic commands like IBMs. In fact the only use for your keyboard is for filenames and word processing! Data files (usually geoWrite files) are acceptable to most applications. This disk-based operating system which is such a liability on two 1541s becomes its major asset with hardware addons.

Creative Micro Designs (CMD) is the ONLY company creating new hardware and software for the c64. With its two REUs - RamDrive (up to 2MB) and RamLink (up to 16MB) - and its hard drive (expandable to 200MB), and now its FD series of 3 1/2 inch drives (up to 3.2 MB on one disk) they have single handedly revolutionized the c64 and GEOS! I have a RamDrive with 2MB and thus effectively have a 2MB c64. I use it as a work disk and run all my applications from it. This results in an amazing byproduct ... NO waiting for disk I/O! Everything goes ZAP including data file saves! Also with increased RAM

continued on page 10

Screen Colours

Each time your computer is turned on, the screen colours are indicating what is happening inside. The colours displayed are as follows:

DARK GRAY - The 680x0 CPU chip is being tested.

LIGHT GRAY - The software is loading without problems.

WHITE - All initialization tests have passed.

Any problems will produce a different screen colour, and possible screen colours are as follows:

RED - A ROM checksum error.

GREEN - A Chip RAM error.

BLUE - One of the Amiga's custom chips has a problem.

YELLOW - A 680x0 error was discovered before a GURU was started.

GREEN - A Agnes chip problem, the most common being a loose chip.

Caps Lock Flashes

The small light located in the top of the Caps Lock key can also indicate a

problem. The number of flashes indicate problems as follows:

ONE - Keyboard ROM checksum failure.

TWO - Keyboard RAM test failure.

THREE - Keyboard watchdog timer test failure.

FOUR - A short between or on one of the seven special keys (currently not implemented).

Amiga Chips and What They Do

The Amiga has some special chips which make the Amiga unique. They are called Paula, Agnes, and Denise.

Paula is the audio chip which handles digital to analog sound conversions (four voices). Also the Paula handles many of the input/output tasks. Examples are disk and interrupt controls, mouse and joystick ports, and the serial port.

Agnes is the graphics and DMA (Direct Memory Access) chip. Parts of the chip handling the graphics are the Blitter and the Copper. The **Blitter**

coprocessor chip quickly draws and manipulate lines and rectangular parts of graphic images. The **Copper** is the part of the Agnes which synchronizes the screen image and the graphic requests. **DMA** is a controller for the different chips to access system memory. Writing and reading is directed to the proper location, instead of the memory being accessed through CPU instructions.

Denise, the video coprocessor chip, assists the 68000 with screen control functions and handling screen displays and sprites.

Information Sources

Amiga World, *Technical Reference Guide*, Special Edition 1987

Amiga World Tech Journal, *Start-Up Messages*, August/September 1991

CBM, *Service Manual*, A1000 Component Level Repair PN314038-02

DOS 6. Do You Really Need It?**Michael Butler**

These days, people will buy anything that you throw at them if it is an update, or an upgrade. That is no exception with MS-DOS of Redmond, WA. MS-DOS 6 was just released to the public about a month ago. I picked up my copy from Majestic for only \$49.95. The price seemed right, and I thought that the new utilities such as DoubleSpace and MemMaker made the price worth it. Updates to programmes is the biggest scam of the decade, everyone wants something better so why make the best programme with all the features anyone would possibly need, and fix all the bugs? If computer companies did that, there would be no need for upgrades except for the obvious ones for newer processors such as the P5.

I tried it, and I was very impressed with the free memory that it [MemMaker]

gave my computer, and the free space that DoubleSpace gave me. My 82 mb drive nearly doubled in capacity. Certain problems arose however, I had ran MemMaker one day and it changed my files to 10 and my buffers to 8. I had it set up so that I could multitask or do task switching. I had no idea however that it had done that, and it caused my bbs to be down for a couple days before I figured out with the help of a friend what was wrong. I started to have problems with DoubleSpace soon after, it kept finding cross-links and other errors that I continually had to fix. A warning would appear about my damaged files and would not disappear until I hit <ENTER>. This meant that my bbs would not re-boot on it's own. Things degraded until the point that I could not access my computer. What was ironic is that I had

been ready to back-up my system when I re-booted.

There are bugs in DoubleSpace, several papers have spoken about bugs in that programme.

Pros and Cons

I cannot see any pros to running Dos 6, especially if you have utilities such as PC Tools or Norton Utilities. PC Tools offers better delete protection than MS-DOS, and is easier to use than DOS. With DoubleSpace, you lose everything if you take it off. You have to back-up your computer's HD before taking it off. With Stacker you can unstack you computer and get back what was originally on your system at the time of Stacking.

The fates willing, The TORPET will reach its fourth anniversary in December 1984. From small beginnings, there were only 75 subscribers for the first issue. The TORPET has grown to where there are now over sixty thousand on its reader mailing list.

The TORPET has always suffered from an identity crises and since its identity is determined by technological change there is no reason to think that The TORPET will not continue to change.

The TORPET gets its name from the words TORonto, the city where it began, and PET the name of a computer that is no longer made by Commodore Computer. The first readers of what was initially a four page newsletter were the 75 owners of PET computers who had formed the Toronto PET Users Group.

The Toronto club grew very quickly, locally, largely because it had an outstanding guru in Jim Butterfield who through both The TORPET and other Commodore serving magazines became extremely famous to PET users throughout the world.

Mainly because of The TORPET, the contributions of Jim Butterfield, and the efforts of David Hook in building a large public domain library of PET computer programs, the club grew to the point where most of its members no longer lived in Toronto. Indeed it had actually become an international club with members in over thirty different countries throughout the world.

In many ways the history of The TORPET is the history of The Toronto PET Users Group and vice versa. The TORPET was continually sent to the club members until the readership was over twelve thousand at which time The TORPET became a separate publication and the club began to publish its own magazine.

For a while The TORPET became a controlled publication going to Commodore dealers for distribution by them to their customers. It was at this time that its circulation grew to over thirty thousand. The TORPET has now become a requested circulation publication going to highschool students in Canada. At one time over fifty percent of The TORPET's circulation was outside of Canada and now once again over ninety-five percent is inside Canada. All a part of its identity crises.

Initially, the only subject discussed in The TORPET was PET computers. As Commodore phased out the PET and brought in the VIC the subject matter of The TORPET also changed. Now Commodore has discontinued the VIC, and the Commodore 64 and other models have gained a prominence. Changes such as these have often been to the chagrin of older readers of The TORPET who have not bought the new computer models as they became available.

Because of the limitations of space it has never been possible to satisfy the complete spectrum of readers either as to level or to type of equipment. The PET owners eventually became a relatively small minority as millions of VICs and Commodore 64's were sold by Commodore.

The initial readers were more or less rabid computer buffs but this rapidly changed as more and more of the general public began to buy computers and The TORPET. Consequently the editorial content of The TORPET made a similar transition.

The first cumulative volume of The TORPET was called The Whole PET Catalog and it dealt with only the PET and the VIC. The most recent cumulative volume deals almost exclusively with the Commodore 64 although much of what it has to say is relevant to VIC computers and many of the articles are of course applicable to computers in general.

Most new Commodore computer owners, and many older ones, will find More for The Commodore 64 the most important computer book that they own. If a user bought his Commodore 64 computer after the model transition took place and therefore missed out on all the discussion by the original first users then the book More for the Commodore 64 is the book that gives them the chance to catch up.

Even older users find the volume extremely useful because everything is gathered together in one place, and in an orderly manner. In addition to well over one hundred articles on every conceivably related subject there are numerous program listings and descriptions and one of the best and most convenient compilation of computer maps to be found anywhere.

And, if that were not enough, there are descriptions and sources given for what the editor thinks are the 1000 best free public domain programs available anywhere. Many of the articles try to be down right entertaining, if you are into computer stuff, and the book is even liberally sprinkled with cartoons as are most issues of The TORPET.

What are the current trends for The TORPET? Well, its readers are becoming younger, more sophisticated, and more cosmopolitan in their computer interests. Today the interest in robotics is probably at about the same level as was the interest in personal computers five years ago. Whether the public's interest in robotics will grow in the same way as its interest grew in personal computers is something that remains to be seen.

However, robotics seems to be a natural outgrowth of the personal computer and microprocessor and The TORPET will be watching the trend. It could be that in a few years it will be almost entirely devoted to robotics and that there will be a PET robot named TOR. Life is strange that way, and the computer revolution is even stranger.

SOFTWARE FOR THE HANDICAPPED:

via Q-Link, the Commodore BBS.

From DavidS18602/20/93

I have a collection of Commodore 64/128 Public Domain software for use by people with various disabilities (vision, hearing, communication, orthopedic, learning disabilities and others).

As a few examples, the collection includes a "talking" word processor, various single-switch scanners, a telephone dialer/responder, and motorized wheelchair trainers. I am willing to share these programs at modest cost - to cover my copying and shipping expenses. If you or someone you

know is disabled, has access to a C-64 or 128, and is in need of specialized software, contact me as follows:

For two 2-sided disks filled with programs for handicapped as well as primary level children, send \$3.50 to:

DAVID SCHIFF
Reinhardt Road
R.D.1 - Box 953
Middletown, NY, 10940

Attention Educators: You will find lots of useful programs on these disks. I will include a source for additional nearly-free software for handicapped children and adults.

PET Hints

Sylvia Gallus

From : SYLVIA GALLUS

To : ALL

Posted : 1334h on 12-May-93 * CONF 12

Subject: Old PET 2040,4040 disk drives

Was this 2040 Upgraded to 4040?

To find out if a 2040 has received the 4040 upgrade:

1. Try the "Quickload" feature of BASIC 4.0 (any PET that does CATALOG, DLOAD, etc.). Press SHIFT and RUN/STOP at the same time. If the 2040 loads and runs the first program on the disk, it has been upgraded to a 4040.
2. Try to use REL files. A non-upgraded 2040 does not support REL files while a 4040 does.
3. Format a disk (full format) on the 2040. Try and write to this disk with a 1571. If the 1571 will write, the 2040 has been upgraded; otherwise the 2040 has not been upgraded. (It is not a good idea to mix 2040/4040/1541/1571 disks). Explanation: the 1571 checks the "disk status byte", track 18 sector 0 (BAM), byte 2 (bytes are numbered 0, 1, 2...). If it finds DOS 2.0, or "A" (chr\$(65)), it will write. Anything else, like DOS 1.0's "1" (chr\$(49)), and it won't write.

Sylvia Gallus

* TPUG BBS SYSOP *

TPUG (Toronto PET Users Group) BBS

- Mississauga, ONT * Node 2

Next issue will include a list of TPUG members' BBSes. Send us your BBS's info (BBS name, phone number, speed, settings, hours, specialties, cost, network(s), what software and computer it uses, etc) and your name, member number and phone number, marked "Attn: BBS List", TPUG.

From : SYLVIA GALLUS

To : ALL

Posted : 1402h on 12-May-93 * CONF 12

Subject: Initializing disks

Initialization - Reading a disk's BAM or Block Availability Map:

Method: OPEN15,8,15,"I0":CLOSE1 (or "I1" for drive 1)
Different Floppy Disk Drives & Initialize:

2040: You MUST Initialize every time you change a disk. Otherwise you'll get weird errors, like "File Not Found" when it's in the Directory, etc., and you will screw up disks when you write to them, write over existing files, etc.

1541/4040: Will Initialize when they get a "Disk ID Mismatch", so you don't have to. Watch you don't have disks with the same ID though - no "Mismatch", no Initialize!

1571/8050/8250: Initializes when you close the drive door, you never have to. Same ID's won't hurt as these drives ALWAYS initialize. (The 1571 must initialize upon disk changes as it needs to know what mode to run in - single or double sided).

Disk ID:

The two letter "name" you give to a newly formatted disk, like the "XY" in:

OPEN15,8,15,"N0:DISK NAME,XY":CLOSE1 (BASIC 2.0)

HEADER "DISK NAME",U8,D0,IXY (BASIC 4.0, 7)

Sylvia Gallus

* TPUG BBS SYSOP *

Keeping Your Commodore Alive

This document may be distributed in exchange for credit to the staff of Mad Man Software, Inc. who compiled it (Gene Barker, Allan Matsuo, Ryan Vander Stoep)

Mad Man Software, Inc.
The Enterprise Center
1400 East College drive
Cheyenne, WY 82007-3298

Shock Treatment: Protect your Commodore from 'evil' static electricity. Static can easily disable your Commodore. The primary danger lies in shocking your computer through the control (joystick) ports, especially the player 2 port which is located right next to the power switch. The problem is caused because the joystick ports are wired directly into the integrated-circuit chips that control input and output, and these chips are not designed to handle the voltages which cause a static shock. When these chips are shocked, your computer may be affected. They may, however wreak havoc with your Complex Interface Adaptor (CIA), or Video Interface Chip (VIC), or other chips down the line. Results range from your computer resetting, to corrupting RAM, to distorting screen colors, to disabling part or all of your keyboard (temporarily or permanently), to screen lock up, to no power up, etcetera. The best defense is to discharge all static before touching your computer, every time. This can be achieved easily by touching anything that is properly grounded: a metal faceplate on a grounded outlet, most refrigerators, a piece of metal or wire connected to the grounding plug of an outlet. In our office each computer has a piece of conductive foam (available from places like Radio Shack), which is grounded, close by, with a large note reminding everyone to touch the pad before working on the computer.

The other main threats to your Commodore come from the power company in the form of power surges and power losses (brownouts and black-

outs). Low power levels, brownouts, can be just as dangerous to your computer as power surges. Some chips are designed to work with specific voltage levels and can be damaged by low power levels, or cause data stored in them to be corrupted. This can cause malfunctions or disk corruption, when you save to disk. Brownouts and blackouts can cause anything from loss of data (maybe several hours of work) to crashing a program (due to some copy protection schemes, some programs may have to be re-initialized or replaced - especially likely if accessing the disk at time of power loss). The best protection against power surges is to buy a good surge suppressor (available at hardware or computer stores). Make sure to look for surge and transient protection to maximize the life of your Commodore. To protect against brownouts and blackouts, you should decide how important an uninterruptible power supply (UPS) is to your application. If you only use your computer for recreation, a UPS might not be worth the cost. If, however, you are a power user or are doing programming and other sensitive tasks, they may be a godsend. These may seem costly, but may save your equipment or hours of work, in the event of a power loss. Make sure that the UPS you decide on gives you enough power to drive your computer and peripherals long enough to save your work and turn everything off.

Use Your Dollar Vote: The computer industry relies on your money to stay in business. How you spend your dollar tells the programmers and distributors what kinds of products you like. Buy quality products; make sure that the programs that you buy are worth the price, ask if you can sample a product first. Let companies know that you won't settle for inferior products. Don't pirate (copy commercial programs) from your friends. In these hard economic times, every time you pirate software for the Commodore, you are encouraging com-

panies to move to a more profitable market - namely the IBM compatible.

Join a User's Group: This is probably the most important step in keeping your Commodore alive. By joining a user's group you'll meet other Commodore users who might be able to give you insight on problems that you may have come across. You'll be exposed to a wealth of information, find out who to call for technical advice, receive discounts on software and magazines, and much more. It's a great way to stay up-to-date in the Commodore world. To find a user's group near you, scan through the classified ads in your local newspaper, or the listing of user's groups in *Compute Gazette*.

Subscribe to a Magazine: This is your lifeline to the Commodore world (without them the Commodore 64 market will die). Now, more than ever (since Commodore's *RUN* magazine just died), these magazines depend on your subscription or newsstand purchases. Magazines alert you to upcoming releases, connect you to upcoming releases, connect you to software and hardware producers, mail order services, etcetera. There are some excellent magazines out there - *Compute's Gazette* (with editor Tom Netsel and great articles by people like Jim Butterfield each month), *Loadstar* (a quality disk magazine, gives you loads of software every month - they even have a 128 bi-monthly option, don't let the price scare you - you get a lot for your money), *Twin Cities* (one of the favourites for technical users).

Go On-Line: If you're not on-line, you're missing out. Talk to the guys who write your software, or design and build your hardware, directly; talk to other users across the country (ask your hardware distributor or Bulletin Board Service (BBS) operator about additional tolls); enjoy on-line gaming (solo or multiplayer games available in some areas), download public domain software for off-line use, etcetera. Ask

your favourite computer hardware store what on-line services are available in your area (such as Quantum-Link or Compuserve).

Put Your Commodore to Work:

Make your Commodore do menial or distasteful tasks. Make it balance the checkbook, make it do the 'evil' taxes, use it to write letters or papers, make it help with homework. Or you could play games on it (after all, having fun is an important part of life!). If your passion is electronics, use it to control or test your projects (you can take control of your computer's input/output ports through software support). The more you use your Commodore, the more you will realize that it is not obsolete.

Program and Learn: Learn to program your Commodore, write your own programs to make your computer do exactly what you want it to do. There are many reference books and programming languages to choose from. Learn on your own, or take a class, the choice is yours. By learning computer programming, you can see what limitations and abilities your machine possesses. By supporting the Commodore market, you can increase the value of your knowledge: If you found the need for a specific program, chances are that others have run into the same problems and may be willing to pay good money for your program. There are many software companies which review software from independent authors for possible distribution (Mad Man Software, Inc. has just started its own independent author service to help software authors get their programs distributed). Who knows, you might open the door to a new career!

Making Your Commodore Behave

(Repairs): Don't throw your computer away - fix it. If you are knowledgeable about electronics, or at least confident in your ability to define problems then you may be able to save some money by fixing your computer yourself. If not, take it in to a repair shop - check phone book or listing of repair facilities in December 1992

issue of Compute's Gazette. If you do decide to fix your own computer, check the obvious things first. Start with the power supply - stock C-64 power supplies are notorious for overheating. If the problem does lie within the computer, the easiest fix is a chip replacement (what most repair shops do). Each chip has a specific function, and often, a bad chip can be spotted by what symptoms arise. Replacement and upgrade chips are available from a variety of suppliers (look in the classified section of magazines), or may be available locally (from Radio Shack or other electronic supply shops). Be advised, however, that in older models most chips are soldered in place and have to be removed carefully and a new socket, or the new chip, will have to be soldered in place, making sure that all connections are solid. Precautions against static electricity and overheating are necessary to avoid damage to either, or both, the chip(s) and the motherboard. To save the cost of having your disk drive aligned, you can purchase a drive alignment kit and do it yourself. These are available from several mail order shops, and may be available at a local distributor. These usually provide software and documentation on how to adjust drive speed and alignment. None of these repairs are for the faint of heart, as you will void any and all warranties that may apply and there are no guarantees that you will not damage your computer further.

Add Some Hardware: As you can see, if you are still using the Commodore 64 with a single stock 1541 drive and a color monitor (or television) you are in the dark ages. If you are strictly playing games - stay there! If not, you may wish to update your system.

When deciding what device(s) to purchase, you will need to consider several factors including: What improvement(s) do you seek (faster disk access, more convenient storage, increased memory buffer)? How much can you spend? What will best compliment your existing system?

If you program extensively and want fast access to a great deal of information with no disk swapping, an ideal arrangement would include a CMD Hard Disk attached parallel with a CMD RAMLINK. This combination, however, will cost you about \$800. If you can tolerate a little disk swapping and slightly slower access, either of the two CMD FD drives may be an option.

If you only want to increase your memory buffer (more pages in Paper-Clip III, a bigger copy buffer in Maverick, less time for disk access in GEOS, etc.) what you want is a RAM unit. A ram unit is NOT a substitute for a disk drive. Even the CMD RAM-LINK, which has a separate power supply and battery backup, may occasionally lose data when the computer is off. All information accessed through these devices should be backed up frequently on a disk of some kind.

If you generate hundreds of data files (documents, pictures, program files, etc.) and simply want a better place to store them, you will need to weigh your convenience against the price. With a 1571 drive, you will still be using the same size disks as with a 1541; but will double the storage by reading both sides. With the 1581 drive, the increase in space is greater, but it requires another size disk. The two CMD FD drives are capable of storing much more data than even a 1581 drive, but the price reflects the difference as well. For running a BBS, a hard drive will be almost a necessity for access and space requirements.

Finally, if you just want to load programs faster there are a variety of products just for you: Fastload Cartridge, Mach5, Super Snapshot, Warp Speed, Quick Load, Burst ROM, ProDOS, The Final Cartridge II, and JiffyDOS. Prices \$20 to \$60.

See following charts:



DRIVES

| Name | Maker | Capacity | CBM DOS | Jiffy DOS | Real-time Clock | Parallel Port | Device Swapping | True drive Emulation | Partitioning | MS-DOS Subdir. | Estimated Price |
|---------|-------|-------------------------------|---------|-----------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------------|--------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 1541 | COMM | 5.25"DD (174K) | YES | A | NO | NO | NO | N/A | NO | NO | \$60 |
| 1571 | COMM | 5.25"DD (350K) | YES | A | NO | NO | NO | N/A | NO | NO | \$100 |
| 1581 | COMM | 3.5"DD (819K) | YES | A | NO | NO | NO | N/A | YES | NO | \$100 |
| FD-2000 | CMD* | 3.5"DD/HD (819K/1.6M) | YES | YES | YES | NO | YES | YES | YES | YES | \$210 |
| FD-4000 | CMD* | 3.5"DD/HD/ED (819K/1.6M/3.2M) | YES | YES | YES | NO | YES | YES | YES | YES | \$290 |
| HD.xx | CMD* | HARD DISK (20/40/100/200M) | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | \$500 |

Key A: JiffyDos ROM upgrades are available for about \$25.
*: Creative Micro Designs

CBM DOS: Features a Commodore compatible DOS
 JiffyDOS: Features CMD's JiffyDOS (a fast DOS)
 Real-time Clock: Supports time/date stamping of files (also supports GEOS)
 Parallel Port: Can connect to a CMD RAMLink with parallel cable for faster access
 Device Swapping: Allows you to swap its device# to drive #8 or #9
 True drive Emulation: Emulates Commodore 1541/1571/1581 drives .. high software compatibility
 Partitioning: Allows you to organize your disks into manageable partitions
 MS-DOS Subdir.: Allows you to create MS-DOS style subdirectory trees (encourages better file management)
 Estimated Price: Our best guess at the lowest mail-order price (\$US)

RAM Units

| Name | Maker | Capacity | Power Supply | Battery Back-up | Static RAM | Real-time Clock | CBM DOS | True drive Emulation | GEOS | REU Software | Estimated Price |
|-----------------|-------------------------|------------|--------------|-----------------|------------|-----------------|---------|----------------------|------|--------------|-----------------|
| 1764 RAM EXPAN. | COMMODORE | 256K | A | B | B | NO | YES | NO | YES | YES | \$60 |
| 1750 RAM EXPAN. | COMMODORE | 512K | A | B | B | NO | YES | NO | YES | YES | \$125 |
| 1750 CLONE | CHIP LEVEL DESIGN | 512K | NO | B | B | NO | YES | NO | YES | YES | \$100 |
| * RAMLINK | CREATIVE MICRODESIGNS | 1M - 16M | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | NO | \$280 |
| * RAMDRIVE | CREATIVE MICRODESIGNS | 512K/1M/2M | NO | YES | YES | NO | YES | YES | YES | NO | \$200 |
| GEORAM | BERKELEY SOFTWAREWORKS | 512K | NO | B | B | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | N/A |
| BBG RAM | PERFORMANCE PERIPHERALS | 512K/1M/2M | YES | YES | YES | NO | NO | NO | YES | NO | \$80 |

Key A: Commodore 64's require a heavy duty power supply when using this unit
 B: Available through a \$60 Battery Back-up Interface from Performance Peripherals
 *: Includes built in JiffyDOS - for better performance on JiffyDOS equipped drives
 **: Can operate as a stand-alone drive

Power Supply: Unit requires a power supply
 Battery Back-up: Data can be retained during loss of AC power
 Static RAM: Unit's memory stays intact when computer's power is off
 Real-time Clock: Unit supports time/date stamping of files (also supports GEOS)
 CBM Dos: Unit comes with Commodore compatible DOS
 True drive Emulation: Unit emulates Commodore 1541/1571/1581 drives generally the most software compatible of all units
 GEOS: Unit can utilize GEOS
 REU Software: Unit can be utilized by software which expects a 17xx series REU (such as Maverick, Paperclip III, etc.)
 Estimated Price: Our best guess at the lowest mail order price (US\$) on this unit

compiled by Gene Barker

continued from page 4 An Introduction to GEOS

availability and the advent of VLIR files comes another amazing fact ... you can run a program that is effectively BIGGER than your computer! Each VLIR piece of code can be about 20K in size. Multiply this by 128 possible pieces and you get a theoretical maximum size of 2560K for an application! THIS is indeed a major upgrade for our little computer!

Well, this is the end of my little talk. I hope I have answered most of your questions concerning GEOS and related topics. If not, please leave me mail on any of the following BBSs (all in the 416 area) ...

The Old Folks Home ... 271-2692
 Animal House ... 667-9853
 Warp Nine ... 427-9523
 Electric City ... 793-9699
 MidPoint ... 531-5048

Quick Command Summary**System**

H - help with individual commands
 B - Bulletin command, to show list of bulletins
 G - Goodbye, log-off the BBS
 J - Join a conference
 T - Set file transfer protocol, or change it at a later date.
 X - Expert mode, turns off some of the screen prompts ie. more
 A - Abandon conference and rejoin the Main Conference
 NEWS - Reread system News

File Transfers

F - File directory listings
 Z - Zippy directory listing, search file description for key words
 N - New files since last date
 NS - New files Since last on
 FL - FFlag a file, for downloading later
 D - Download a single file, from BBS
 DB - Download a Batch of files, needs batch transfer protocol
 U - Upload a file to BBS
 UB - Upload a Batch of files

Messages

C - leave a Comment (private message) to SYSOP
 E - Enter a message
 R - Read message
 RS - Read messages Since last on
 RY - Read Your private messages
 RYS - Read Your private messages Since you were last on
 RYSA - Read Your private message Since in All conferences Since last time on
 RE - REply to a message, either private or public
 Q - Quick scan (summary) of messages
 QS - Quick Scan since last on
 QSY - Quick Scan of Your private messages
 TS - Text Search, search messages for keywords
 SELECT - select a list of conferences to scan for messages

Transfer Protocols

Non-Batch: X-modem (checksum), X-modem (CRC), 1K-Xmodem, Y-modem,
 ASCII (text files only), X-modem G (no error correction)
 Batch: Y-modem, Y-modem G (no error correction), Z-modem
 Preferred protocols are Xmodem (CRC or Checksum), Y-modem and Z-modem.

An Urgent Appeal from Fred Fish

The following letter from Fred Fish has been distributed thruout the Commodore World since February of this year:

Over the last couple of years, I've noticed a trend where fewer and fewer people are on my direct subscriber list. This last year has seen a particularly sharp decrease, from about an average of 75 subscribers to the current low of 41. That's right, there are only 41 people or organizations in the whole world that receive disks directly from me as of Jan. 17, 1993, with about half of them being outside the United States. During this last year, the amount of time I have had available to spend constructing disks, doing accounting, and otherwise managing the library has also dropped sharply, so that more than ever I depend upon using outside help for things like presorting the submitted material, creating prototype disks which I then use for constructing the final disks, and doing the actual duplication, packaging, and shipping of disks. I cannot expect these people to work for nothing, so I have been paying them reasonable compensation for their time out of the ever dwindling subscription income. It has reached the point where sometime in the next month or two I will make a decision about whether or not to shut down the library, since if there are insufficient incoming funds to meet the operating costs as well as pay for an occasional perk like a trip to an Amiga show once or

twice a year, or some new hardware toy, there is little incentive to continue spending 20-30 hours a month running it. If you are in a position to influence a club, computer store, or other Amiga related organization to maintain a direct subscription for new disks, and thus help fund continued maintenance of the library, and are interested in seeing the library continue to grow, I'd urge you to consider doing what you can to help push the number of direct subscribers back up to more reasonable levels. Thanks.

Fred Fish

1835 E. Belmont Drive

Tempe, AZ 85284

Direct telephone number: 602-491-0048

Update: Fred has now (June '93) picked up subscribers to a number just over 80 .. that has encouraged him to continue (for the moment) with his tremendous help to the AMIGA users of the world. TPUG has joined this group of FISH supporters in recognition of our appreciation, *as should every users group professing AMIGA support.* In these days of take, swipe, hack and break, take time to acknowledge the backbone of our user groups - software support.

Direct from Fred, disks cost \$3.00 per disk, with a suggested minimum of 10 disks per shipment. (\$2.00 per disk in subscription quantities of 100 or more)

TPUG Annual Business Meeting

TO THE MEMBERS:

Notice is hereby given that the 1993 Annual Business Meeting of the members of TPUG (Toronto Pet Users Group Inc.) will be held in York Public Library Main Branch, downstairs, 1745 Eglinton Avenue West, York, on Tuesday October 19th, 1993 at 7:30 pm for the purpose of:

1. receiving the Report of the Directors, including the financial statement for the year ending June 30, 1993, and the final financial statements for the years ending June 30, 1991 and June 30, 1992.
2. election of directors, and
3. transacting such business as may properly come before the meeting.

Normally elected directors' terms expire at the second Annual Business Meeting after their election.

The following directors' terms **continue** for another year:

Carl Bannenberg
Ernie Chorny
John Easton
Jéan Paul Joly
Paul Kreppenhofer
George Skinner

The following are expected to be **nominated** for election to the Board of Directors:

Al Farquharson
Hermann Hartmann
Ian McIntosh
Dug Rodger

Others may be nominated at the meeting or by proxy. You may vote for as many candidates as there are vacancies. The number of vacancies is expected to be 6. The maximum number of directors is 12.

The new executive will be chosen by the new Board, traditionally at a special Board Meeting immediately after or during a recess of the Annual Business Meeting.

You must have a current membership on the date of the meeting to vote at it or any adjournment thereof. Renewals will be accepted at the start of the meeting.

You are entitled and encouraged to vote either in person or by proxy.

If you are unable to attend in person and wish to vote, you must sign, date, and return the instrument of proxy below (or a copy of it) to TPUG's mailing address at least one week before the meeting, or to the Secretary at the start of the meeting. You may optionally attach voting instructions to the proxy form.

By Order of the Board of Directors, TPUG

Ian McIntosh
July 8th, 1993

PROXY

The undersigned, being a current member of TPUG (Toronto Pet Users Group Inc.), hereby appoints _____ as proxy to vote for the undersigned at the Annual Business Meeting on October 19rd, 1993 and at any adjournments thereof.

Dated _____, 1993

Voting Instructions:

Signed _____

Name (print) _____

Member Number _____

This instrument of proxy is only valid if it or a copy is signed and dated and either mailed to TPUG's business address and received at least one week before the meeting, or given to the Secretary at the start of the meeting.