The Zero Page
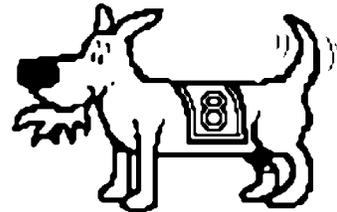
The newsletter of the Commodore Users of Wichita
"For the sharing, learning, and love of Commodore computers"

Number 24, October 1995

Eight-bit keeps takin' a byte
out of Commodore computing

Random Access
by Dale Lutes

Fall is upon us, and although many think of this as the end of the growing season, it is the time of year when our club begins to really blossom. With the weather turning cool and darkness coming earlier, it is a good time to power up that computer that has been neglected in favor of vacations, gardening, and such. We can always expect a few extra visitors at our monthly meetings, so here's a gentle reminder to greet any newcomers that you see. Ask what they like to do with their system and, if you can, steer them toward a club member with similar interests. If you're not sure what to do, watch our unofficial goodwill ambassador, Mr. Fred Earley, who always knows how to make someone feel welcome. And don't forget to wear your badge so that visitors and new members can learn your name.

Here's a look at some of the ways the CUW continues to grow as we begin our third year together:

☆ At the last meeting, the club approved a plan to allow non-members to subscribe to the Disk O'Quarter by mail. The steering committee will have worked out the details by the October meeting. This, together with our existing newsletter-only membership, will help to make Commodore users everywhere aware of our club.

☆ You'll notice that this newsletter includes a catalog of CUW products and services. Often, us old-timers take these for granted and forget that new members aren't always aware of all that the club has to offer. Check out the catalog -- you may be surprised at what you've been missing.

☆ The steering committee has been discussing ways to foster the growth of Special Interest Groups (SIGs) within the club. We would like your input during the October business meeting. Please let us know what you think.

Next CUW Meeting:
Saturday, October 14
1:00 - 5:00 pm
1411 South Oliver

This month, Morris Shouse will give us a demonstration of **Partner 128**, a cartridge-based set of utilities for the C-64.

If publication of this newsletter follows its usual schedule, it will have gone into the mailbox on October 8, a very important day for the CUW. It was on this day, two years ago, that the charter members of our club severed their ties with the C&AUGW to form an independent club, the Commodore Users of Wichita! I think we can all give ourselves a big pat on the back for a great second year.

I have a confession to make. I recently bought a MacIntosh system at a garage sale bargain price that was just too good to pass up. "Whoa!" you may be saying, "Does this mean Dale is going to abandon us?" Let me assure you that the answer is no. For better or for worse, the CUW is stuck with me for a while longer. I have **so** much software for my C-128 (and so little money to spend on Mac software) that I'd have to be crazy to dump my Commodore. I may mention my Mac in future columns (sharing files between Macs and Commdores might be interesting to explore) but for now let me make just one observation: GEOS and the Mac operating system resemble each other so much that it's spooky!

I want to apologize in advance for missing the October meeting. As some of you already know, this is my first year as a football official. Like most 1st-year officials, I am gaining experience and "paying my dues" by working grade school contests on Saturday mornings. This is something I've been wanting to do for a very long time. I'm looking forward to the day when I'll be working varsity games on Friday nights, but this weekend, I'll be blowing the whistle in El Dorado. So, enjoy the meeting. I'll see you all again in November!

"I conclude that there are two ways of constructing a software design: One way is to make it so simple that there are obviously no deficiencies and the other way is to make it so complicated that there are no obvious deficiencies."

C. A. R. Hoare, ACM Turing Award Lecture, 1980

Commodore Outlets in Oklahoma City

Reprinted from the *Tulsa Area Commodore Users Group* newsletter

by Gil Parrish

I must admit, I enjoy poking around looking for obscure computer stuff. Of course, nothing is more frustrating than spending a lot of time looking for and not finding anything. That's why I don't hit garage sales -- too big a haystack for too small a needle! It's nice instead to go to locations that specialize in used computer hardware and software; they've done the legwork for you. Prices in these places may be higher than you want to pay, but you might find an overlooked bargain, or an item you've had trouble finding elsewhere. Besides, it's fun to just browse!

Oklahoma City seems to have an abundance of these kind of places, both stores and flea markets, some of which I've visited and some I haven't. Luckily, OKC isn't so far away that you couldn't do a ''day trip'' there some Saturday to go to the races, visit the Capitol, take in some museums, and -- not incidentally -- visit some computer merchants! Below is a list of some possible places for Commodore enthusiasts to go. As you'll note, the stores (though not the flea markets) are clustered on north MacArthur Blvd., a main street in OKC, so you don't have to drive large distances to visit them all. Two notes of caution. First the stores are kind of ''mom and pop'' operations, and don't always open or close at the exact time stated. Second, I mentioned a few of these places at the April meeting, an another member recalled a very bad experience with one of these stores refusing to take back a completely defective item of merchandise. So (a) be sure you know what your merchant's return policy is (and bear in mind the hassle of having to drive all the way over to Oklahoma City, even if it is returnable), (b) test the item before you leave if at all possible (you might even want to take your own equipment with you, to make sure your stuff and the new item work together), and/or (c) make sure you're paying an ''as-is'' price if the item does not come with any warranty. Here goes:

Second Hand Software (''SHS''), 2332 N. MacArthur, phone 405-946-2888. Has Commodore hardware and software, as well as IBM, Amiga, Apple II, and other classic computer and game machine items. The store was expanding when I visited there in mid-May. Hours Wednesday 10-6, otherwise Monday through Saturday 10-7. (You might also want to walk over to the thrift store in the same shopping center, which always seems to have a few computer things -- from people who could not sell them to SHS, perhaps?)

Computer Surplus, 4020 N. MacArthur, phone 405-787-2900. This place is mostly oriented to old PC hardware, but also has miscellaneous hardware for all sorts of classic systems. Hours Monday through Saturday 10-6.

Software & Computer Exchange, 4810 N. MacArthur, phone 405-495-4999. This place has so many hardware and software items (Commodore, Amiga, PC, Mac, Atari, TRS-80, etc), they recently moved next door and kept their previous storefront as

storage. My main complaint here is that many items aren't labeled with price (the counter help always tells you the items were just brought in and they haven't gotten around to labeling them yet -- yeah, right), so you may have to kick your negotiating skills into high gear if you want to purchase something. Hours Tuesday through Friday 1-6, Saturday 11-5.

Software Plus, 6411 N. MacArthur, phone 405-720-7587. Again, IBM oriented, but with some Mac, Commodore and Apple software, and various hardware items. Takes computer stuff on consignment. Hours Monday through Saturday 10-6. (A thrift store is next to this one too, but my one and only trip there yielded nothing computer related except a dead Apple III monitor.)

Computer Flea Market, 9600 S. Sunnylane. They operate the second Saturday of the month ONLY. I've never attended, but their advertisements indicate they're indoors so the show goes on rain or shine, and you can buy, sell or trade. (Vendor tables are $30.)

Computer Auction, 9600 S. Sunnylane (yes, same address). Starts at 10 the third Saturday of the month ONLY. I've never been there.

Computer and Electronics Market, 23rd & Villa (Shepherd Mall). They operate the fourth Saturday of the month ONLY, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Their ad indicates the market is in the former location of the Streets store in the Shepherd Mall (if that helps anybody), so they too operate rain or shine. The ad also indicates they have 10,000 square feet of deals (!) for an admission charge of $1 (kids under 12 free). I've been there and didn't see much of exclusive interest for a Commodore enthusiast, but various odds and ends (like old monitors) could be put to Commodore use.

## Superscript User Looking for Help

by Dale Lutes

Our club recently received a letter from a Commodore user in Hedgesville, WV. David Benda is using the Superscript word processor on his C-64 with a Panasonic KX-P1091i printer and Micrografix MW 350 interface. His letter reads, in part:

''The problem I am having concerns the line spacing of the printer. I am using the Epson printer definition, supplied by Superscript, and when using it unmodified, it prints OK, but double spaces the print lines... If I change the linefeeds code in the Epson printer definition to '0' instead of the '1' that is supplied, the printing is now single-spaced, but the printing has become oversized... The DIP switches on my printer are all set OFF, except for SW1, which is set ON.''

If any CUW members out there can help David, I am certain he would be most appreciative.

David P. Benda
5 Boy Scout Road
Hedgesville, WV 25427-9611
phone: 304-754-8129
e-mail: Newheights@delphi.com
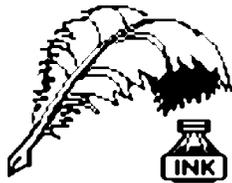
Don's Digest
by Don McManamey

Many of you know by now that our club chairman, Arlen Gould, has moved to Penalosa. With Arlen traveling about 60 miles to attend the meetings I do believe he drives farther on a regular basis than any other member. He moved there to be a full time preacher. We wish him well. At our last steering committee meeting Arlen told that the church in Penalosa has an IBM compatible and GEOS! GEOS, written by Berkley Softworks, was an attempt to make the operation of the computer easier.

All computers have some sort of "operating system". The operating system will allow you to do things such as have a monitor, a keyboard or save to a disk drive. Most home computers have the operating system on disk, while we have ours on a chip. Each one has some advantages. For example, when we turn our machines on we get a cursor and the familiar "ready" prompt. On a disk based system we must boot up its operating system from disk. Most have this on hard disk these days so you don't have to remember to have the boot disk in your drive when you power up. You are probably familiar with the term MS-DOS. MS stands for Microsoft, the company who wrote the program. DOS stands for Disk Operating System. Microsoft also wrote the basic language for the Commodore 64 and 128. Windows 95 is their product too. One review stated that Windows 95 was an IBM trying to be a Mac. This might be a bit unfair but Windows is not cutting edge either. Both Windows and Mac OS are patterned after GEOS.

So why a new operating system anyway? Here is a good example. One of my favorite programs is The Write Stuff. To load TWS on the 64 you type LOAD"*",8 and press RETURN. The disk drive will spin for a moment or so and then you must type RUN and press RETURN again. This archaic way of loading a program goes back to the days when most people had tape units, not disk drives. Here is the disadvantage to having your operating system on a chip. If TWS would run under GEOS then all we would have to do is click on the proper icon and *voila!* Unfortunately TWS won't run under GEOS. Not only that but you would have to load GEOS first. Now if we replaced our operating system chip that would solve the loading of GEOS but TWS still would not run under it. This is much the same problem with Windows and Windows 95. Not every program for the IBM will run under them. Our answer to this problem has been the fast load cartridge. Yes, we have had problems there too. Probably the best answer for Commodore has been Jiffy DOS but it too has had compatibility problems. All in all, despite our limitations, we still have a pretty good machine.

If the support is out there, we hope to dedicate the back side of all future Disks O'Quarter to GEOS. Remember, the DOQ is dependent upon people like you for submissions. If you haven't made a submission or if it has been a long time since you have please dig around and find some good public domain or shareware software and pass it along to me. If you are unfamiliar with GEOS, come see us at our regular meeting or at the GEOS SIG meeting and see what it is all about.

geoSIG News
by Dwayne Howard

Hello SIG people. Well, here it is another month, and I would like to say that I'm

sorry I didn't get to the meeting in September. I was going to come, but things didn't work out. OK, in September I said I would take you step by step through what we learned at the geoSIG meeting:

1. Set up your computer and two drives if you have them.
2. Put in your system disk, type LOAD "*",8,1 and press return.
3. Click the pointer on the icon to close out system disk and put in the work disk. If you don't have a work disk you need to make one.
4. To make a work disk, format a blank disk, naming it "work disk" or something else you want to call it.
5. Then you may want to make a separate data disk to go with the work disk.

We have about 40 members in the club and 20 signed up for the SIG. This is good, but the 20 have been like me, I guess, not enough time in the day or hour. I would like to hear what *all* club members would like from the SIG Group, yes all 40.

Yours truly, Dwayne
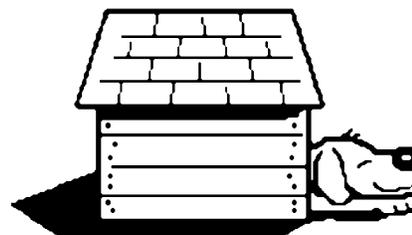
The geoSIG has a new home!
Join us on October 19 at 7:00pm in the Kincaid Park club house, 410 Marion (see map).
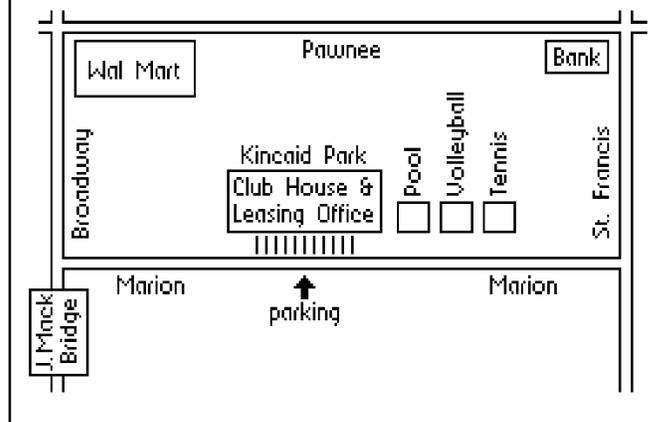
Don McManamey is looking for contributions to the Disk O'Quarter. Public domain software from any category is welcome: Utilities, Music, Art, whatever. We all have a collection of neat or useful "stuff" that makes working with our Commodores easier. Come on and share it! Look for Don at the next meeting or give him a call at 265-2560.

Your CUW Steering Committee members are:

Arlen Gould	Chair
Marie Both	Vice-Chair
Robert Bales	BBS Representative
Francis Catudal	Public Domain Librarian
Nate Dannenberg	BBS Representative
Shaun Halstead	Internet Representative
Dwayne Howard	geoSIG Chairman
Dale Lutes	Newsletter Editor
Don McManamey	Disk Editor
Jerry Shook	Quartermaster

The *Helping Hand* will be back in its usual location next month.

The Commodore Users of Wichita is a club dedicated to "the sharing, learning, and love of Commodore computers." Meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month from 1-5pm. Anyone who owns or uses a Commodore computer system is welcome to attend. Family memberships cost $15 per year. Members receive a monthly newsletter, a quarterly disk publication, access to an extensive library of public-domain software, and the right to vote on matters of club policy. A newsletter-only membership is available for $5 per year. Contact any of the officers (listed elsewhere in this newsletter) for more information. We are looking forward to seeing **you** at our next meeting!
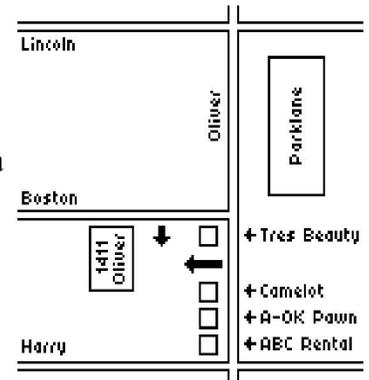
You may join or renew your membership by mail.
Complete this form and mail with a check payable to:

Marie Both
Commodore Users of Wichita
351 E Marion CT, #2
Wichita, KS 67216

What Commodore systems do you use? (please check all that apply)
❏ VIC-20 ❏ C-64 ❏ C-128 ❏ C-16 ❏ Plus/4 ❏ Other

Type of membership: ❏ Family ($15) ❏ Newsletter-only ($5)

Name: _____

Address: _____
_____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____

List additional family members who are interested in participating:
_____
_____