The Zero Page
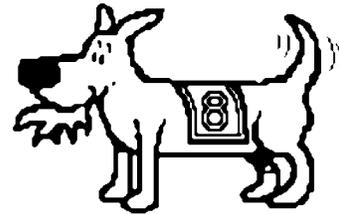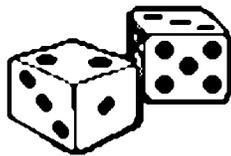
The newsletter of the Commodore Users of Wichita

"For the sharing, learning, and love of Commodore computers"

Number 54, April 1998

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

Random Access
by Dale Lutes

I'd like to open this month's Random Access with just a few words about the Disk O'Quarter. Normally I leave commentary on the DOQ up to its editor, Don McManamey. But issue number 20 of our Disk O'Quarter is an important landmark in the history of the Commodore Users of Wichita. It represents five years of dedication and hard work by Don. The first GEOS programs appeared on issue number 6, and the geoSide became a regular feature of the DOQ starting with issue 10. I am proud to have been a part of the DOQ for the last several years. As a reminder, the Disk O'Quarter is included in the cost of your membership. To get your disk, all you have to do is see me at the next club meeting.

In the four-plus years that I've been writing this column, I have always tried to be up-beat and optimistic. Offhand, I can only think of two times when this was not so. This month, it is time to get serious once again. Back in December, our club was faced with the question, "Is it time to close our doors?" The answer was clear as many renewed their memberships on the spot. My friends, we are now at another critical point in our club's history. Nominations for Chairman and Vice Chair opened at the March meeting. Not only has the response so far been disappointing, it has been non-existent. Our by-laws limit the terms in these offices to two consecutive years. Even if there were no such limit, I would not accept the nomination again, and I know that Jerry Shook our Vice Chairman feels the same. It is time for someone new to accept responsibility for the club. Maybe you are thinking, "Jerry and Dale won't let us down. If no one is nominated, they'll keep things going." Well, it just isn't so and if we have no candidates the consequences for our organization will be very serious indeed.

The future of the CUW is in your hands.

Next CUW Meeting:
Saturday, April 11
1:00 - 4:00 pm
1411 South Oliver

The new **Disk O'Quarter** is ready! Pick up your copy at our next meeting and join Dale Lutes for a review of its contents.

Rear View Mirror
by Moe Shouse

The other day at work, I was cutting some slots with a one half inch diameter end mill. Most of the time I just watched the display on the screen as I moved the machine. Then, I thought I need to get a visual reference, so I turned to look at the cutter. That led me to the thought that some people do not like computers because they don't have a visual reference. After all, if you can't see it, how do you know it's working? This must be why GUIs have been received so well. After all, LOAD, RUN, LIST doesn't really let you see anything. You just have to trust it will work. It is easy to know that a picture of a disk, means go to this disk. On the other hand, I don't like to be insulted when I turn on a computer. If you turn on one of the new machines it just comes on in Windows. What an insult! Maybe I didn't want to be in Windows! It would be like getting in your car and it locks the doors and starts the engine and takes off down the road! All I wanted was to get a box out of the back seat! Well, so much for Moe's soap box.

Last month, I said to not overlook older issues of *Compute!* Well I found an article that caught my eye. Remember the old save-with-replace bug? It infected most, if not all, 1541 disk drives. And it has been the subject of much debate in Commodore circles for years. This article is the best I have found, on the subject. Part one ran in October 1985; part two in November 1985. The article was written by P. A. Slaymaker. He is (or was) the president of Quantum Software, makers of the Peek a Byte disk utility. Other people have worked on the bug, but this is the best research I have seen. Research? You say? Yes! Everyone else just played with it! In the book, *Inside Commodore DOS*, Immers and Neufeld do a great job in showing how Commodore DOS works. And they do say that the save-with-replace command will cause trouble in some cases. Like

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Looking at GEOS
by Mark McGuinnis

[This article was first published in May 1993. It comes to us courtesy of Peter Hunt, geoClub OZ]

Before leaving "Common Features and How They Work", one last parting shot. GEOS shares data between applications by means of files called text scraps or photo scraps. These scraps are saved permanently to album files which in turn are handled by text and photo manager desk accessories. Using these features and features mentioned in past articles, you should have enough to customize your work disks to suit your needs and keep that disk swapping to a minimum. After all, getting the mostest with the leastest is the name of the game.

Yes boys and girls, everything mentioned in all the preceding articles has been leading up to this point. The Tutorial. The object of the tutorial is to familiarize yourself with the Graphic Environmental Operating System, select file icons on the desktop, create a work disk for Geopaint, open a Geopaint document, draw a little, use the bitmap scaling feature and exit.

What you will need: the GEOS system disk and the tutorial disk. What tutorial disk you ask? If you ask that question you have not been reading the articles. To make a tutorial disk, boot the GEOS system disk, open to the desktop, click on the disk menu, then click on the format menu item. Follow the on screen instructions and name your disk "Tutorial". Copy these files to your tutorial: the desktop 2.0, configure 2.0, disk copy, paint drivers, R-Boot, the desk accessories, and the printer drivers. Note: you cannot copy the system or back-up system disk. However, you can try it just for fun to see what does not happen.

Back to the tutorial. Boot GEOS if you have not done so already by entering LOAD "GEOS",8,1 and press return. Close the system disk, insert the tutorial disk and close the drive door. Activate the tutorial disk. Never use an original application disk to create a document. Use the tutorial.

Remove Geowrite from the tutorial by clicking twice (do not double click) on the Geowrite icon and dragging the icon to the waste basket in the lower right of the screen. Generally speaking when you throw something in the waste basket you can kiss it goodbye. If you have a change of heart after you trash something and before you have taken any on screen action, you may be able to recover a trashed item by clicking on the waste basket again. Be sure that you do not toss an item that is irreplaceable, because it's adios amigo.

Go to page two by pressing the number 2 or click on the dog eared corner of the desktop screen. Trash the photo manager and calculator icons in the same manner you did Geowrite. Be sure to save the note pad file.

Go to page three. Toss all the font files on page three by going to the "select" menu and click on select. Click on page files. Move the pointer to one of the highlighted files and click once. The icon becomes a multi-file ghost icon which can be tossed in the usual manner. Everything on page three will disappear. Your work disk for Geopaint is now complete.

Return to page one. Select the Geopaint icon and double click it to open the file. Click on create a new document. Name your document. Enter any name you wish so long as it does not exceed 16 characters. Press return. You are now in a Geopaint document and ready to draw. So draw, partner. Select a tool on the left side of the screen by just clicking on it. Try it out.

Rear View Mirror (continued from page 1)

not enough space on a disk or replacing an unclosed file. But Mr. Slaymaker shows how and when the bug strikes. He has a demo program you can use to see how it strikes. He also lists the code in the DOS, with very detailed information on it. Then he makes a code rewrite and burns it into a ROM chip that fixes the bug! So you want to know what goes wrong with the bug? Well it mostly centers around the five internal buffers and the missing drive. When the DOS tries to get a buffer that isn't free. It steals the wrong buffer that causes the directory to be reassigned to the wrong buffer. From there things just go down hill when the BAM gets in the wrong buffer. The rest is just too gruesome to talk about. But we do have a way to fix it! It's called JiffyDOS, a total DOS replacement by Creative Micro Designs. If you don't know about JiffyDOS, just ask about it at our next club meeting.

Stupid Programming Tricks
by Dale Lutes

C is such a bizarre programming language. Programmers either love it or they hate it. C can be very powerful, but it can also be very cryptic. See if you can figure out what this short program does:

```
main(a){a="main(a){a=%c%s%c;printf(a,34,a,34);}";printf(a,34,a,34);}
```

I'll give the answer in next month's *Zero Page.* I do not claim responsibility for the above program. It has been tested on my C-128 using Spinnaker Software's **Power C**.

The Helping Hand

This column lists those users willing to share their experiences and knowledge with other club members.

Robert Bales   831-0008
trebor@southwind.net
Telecommunications, Internet, CMD HD and FD drives

Dale Lutes   721-0835
lutes@feist.com
GEOS, Programming, Word Processing, Desktop Publishing, CMD FD drives and RAMLink

Don McManamey   265-2560
dmcmanamey@geocities.com
Word Processing, Print Shop, Printing

Jerry Shook   776-2683
jls695@gte.net
Databases, Label Making, Word Processing, Printing

Let us know if we may include your name in future Helping Hand listings. If we don't have a category for you already, we'll add one!

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 at 1411 S. Oliver, one block north of the corner of Harry & Oliver. 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. Other membership options are also available. Contact any of the officers (listed elsewhere in this newsletter) for more information. We are looking forward to seeing **you** at our next meeting!
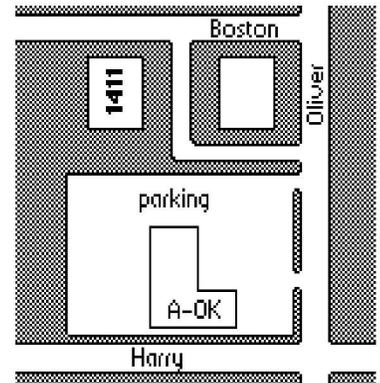
You may join or renew your membership by mail.
Complete this form and mail with a check payable to:

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

Type of membership:
❏ Family - includes Newsletter & Disk O'Quarter ($15 per year)
❏ Newsletter-only ($5 for 12 issues)
❏ Disk O'Quarter by mail ($12 for 4 issues)
❏ Disk O'Quarter by mail plus Newsletter ($15)

Name: _____
Address: _____
_____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____

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

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