# COMMODORE MAILINK

NEWSLETTER OF —
MEETING 64/128 USERS
THROUGH THE MAIL

MARCH 1997
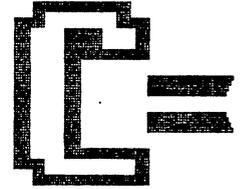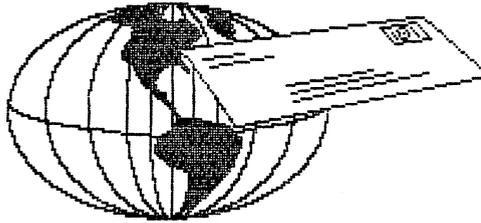
MEETING NEWS

Tom Adams.

In your hands you have the March 1997 edition of the Commodore MaiLink. This issue has the March 1997 membership list. Please take care of this list. It contains the names, address, and some telephone numbers and e-mail addresses. In addition the last pages have information on those that are willing to help others with various software and hardware. These contacts are very valuable. The page also list discounts on some commercial software and the instructions on ordering are printed on these pages. This list is expensive to print and mail. If you lose this there is a Five (5) dollar replacement fee.

There was an error on the post cards sent to those late in renewing their membership. (See "Apology" from Frank Redmond). The card said the dues for 1997 are Ten Dollars ($10.00) in reality the dues are $12.00. I decided that it was too expensive to send the checks back and ask for an additional two bucks. So all those that sent in the ten dollar fee got a bargain. I am asking that if anyone wants to send a donation to the group to help make up for the error please make the check or money order payable to "J.Y. Powell" and mail it to Joseph Powell, 5366 Fieldwood Drive, Houston TX 77056-2708. While we won't go broke and you are assured of getting all six issues of The Commodore MaiLink, it would make our treasurer very happy to know we have a bit left over after mailing.

Another error was that some people slipped through the crack with the clunky system we have for re-newals. See Jean Nance's story about how we handle late renewals. To those that did get their January issue late I humbly apologize. Please, IF YOU DOON'T GET A NEWSLETTER BY ABOUT THE 22ND OF THE MONTH OF ISSUE, LET ME KNOW. If after reading Jean's article you have a better mousetrap please write to me and let the club beat a path tp your door.

I would like to ask all the members that have e-mail addresses either through an Internet Provider or BBS to send me a message. My address book was accidently erased (can you say stupid!). I didn't have a backup. That's another word I have to learn - backup. There are really two reasons for this request, first to get my address book back. Second I would like to publish the e-mail addresses of those that have them. E-mail is the fastest and cheapest communication I know. If you would please send a message to: tomadams@sysnet.net with the subject field that says "Mailink" without the quotes I will know you have no objection to having your e-mail address published.

The Commodore MaiLink is now available in three (3) flavors. First is the hard copy you are holding. Second is a disk version. The disk version contains all the text of the hard copy but no graphics. This is good if you have a sight problem and can use a large type program to read the text on the screen of your Commodore computer. This version will also have a bonus. On the flip side of the 1541 disk will be some great public domain (PD), freeware or shareware programs. Ever since the The Underground merged with the Loadstar Letter I have been asked where Commodore users can get programs like those published in The Underground. Now you can get the latest and greatest programs from the Internet and the online services delivered right to your mailbox. The distribution of the disk version will be

handled by Fred Knerr. Fred says the price of the disk version will be One Dollar ($1.00). Talk about a bargain!! More details are provided on another page. The third flavor is what is called the Hi-Lites. This is a version that omits all references to the buy, sell, trade, new members and other stuff only for members. This version is available to anyone to put on a BBS, online service or on the Internet. The cost of this version will vary from free to $1.00. If you have an Internet address I will be happy to send you the Hi-Lites free. If you need the copy on disk it will cost you $1.00 for the disk and mailer. Send all requests for the Hi-Lites to Tom Adams. Speaking of the Hi-Lites and the Internet check out a story elsewhere in this issue of where the Hi-Lites can be found on the Internet today.

A warm welcome to the new members whose bios appear in the March membership list: Donald Bowman, Ismael Cordeiro, Ed Goodale, Bill Spear, and Ron Wagner.

MEETING 64/128 USERS THROUGH THE MAIL ADDRESSES, OFFICERS, AND POLICIES.

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FRANCIS REDMOND, Vice-president. Rt 7, Box 7614, Palestine, TX 75801.

JOSEPH Y. POWELL, Treasurer. 5366 Fieldwood, Houston, TX 77056. DUES AND DONATIONS.

BRIAN VAUGHAN, 2101 Shoreline Dr. 352, Alameda, CA 94501-6245. MEMBERSHIP ADDRESSES AND BIOGRAPHIES; CORRECTIONS AND CHANGES

JEAN NANCE. 1109 Briarcliff Dr., Urbana, IL 61801. NEWSLETTER MANAGING EDITOR.

COMMODORE MAILINK.

EDITOR'S DESKS

Jolene Ehret and Jean Nance

Jolene was the editor for the March, 1997 MaiLink. She gathered the material, but just after her deadline, when she was ready to put the issue together, she came down with a bad case of bronchitis and was hospitalized for some time. She certainly would have been in no shape to get into the task when she did return home, so her daughter sent a big envelope of submissions to Jean Nance.

Jean put the material together, using the "Illustrator II" version of "The Write Stuff" word processor, a version written by member, Hugh McMenamin. If anything got ignored or lost, we apologize. We both did our best.

As her deadline approached, Jolene did not appear to have enough material for an issue. Jean got busy on the Internet and begged for material from some of the members who were available there. Several complied, and we are very grateful to them.

ROLF MILLER will be the editor of the May MaiLink. His address is: 492 Anacapa St. , Ventura, CA 93001. Email, bal00@lafn.org. His deadline is April 21st. Disk submissions can be in TWS, Pet ASCII sequential or Speedscript. Please label disks with your name and the format of the file. If you explain why it is necessary, Rolf is willing to type material from hard copy.

APOLOGIES

Last month Tom Adams called me and said that there were a number of members that hadn't sent in their 1997 dues. Since I was familiar with the procedure, he asked me to send out the notices. I agreed and duly received the list of unpaid members. I immediately mailed out the notices.

A couple of weeks later, our esteemed Gardian of the Treasure, Joe Powell called me and said that the he was receiving a number of payments for $10.00 and $12, instead of the current rate of $12.00 domestic and $14.00 to our near neighbors.

WHOOPS!! after all my care and proof reading, I got the basic message messed up and sent out the wrong rates. I wish to apologize to all of you folk that I misinformed and to Joe and Tom for causing them additional headaches in addition to their usual problems inn keeping this organization going.

Frank Redmond

The phone number for "Surplus Direct" on page 9 of the January MaiLink was obviously a typo. The correct number is 1-800-753-7877.

Ed Harler

From: Joe Powell   To: All Members

Once again we lucked out. Your treasurer was honored this past year by the American Embezzlers Association as being the member least likely to succeed in 1996. Since I felt a strong conviction to live up to this honor we still have a bank account. Our financial activities are outlined below.

Debits to the account include all costs of printing, collating, and stapling the news letter and membership lists, postage and envelopes. It also covers some of the miscellaneous expenses incurred by your officers from correspondence and phone calls.   Tom Adams stuffs all the envelopes so it may include the cost of all the Raspberry Kool-Aid he consumes while doing this.

Credits include 1996 dues received from late paying members, dues received from new members and 1997 dues received by 31 December 1996.   It also includes donations made by members with their dues.

We maintain the minimum, balance reqired to avoid charges.   Below is a brief summary of the years activities.

Opening balance 1-1-96	$2225.66
Credits (deposits)	3526.34
Debits (checks)	3329.07
Balance on hand 12-31-96	2432.93

The balance as of the date of this report, 2-04-97, was 2845.93. If anyone wants to see the details of the years transactions, send me a SASE and I will provide a copy. Thanks to all those people who made extra donations and who wrote me letters with their checks.

LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT

Tom Adams.

Here is where I share with you some of the mail I receive from members. This letter was not addressed to me but to our treasurer, Joe Powell but I thought all would be interested.

Dear Joseph,
Enclosed is the check for my '97 dues. Back in December I had written to Tom (Adams) about my dropping out of the group, I'm "moving on" to newer systems. Unfortunately one of the newer systems died, I want back in. See my bio for the complete lurid details. Ha!
Sincerely.
(name withheld)

Well we see the "newer" systems are not as great as you would think. A friend of mine saw an article in the local paper that said that owners of the newer Pentiums needed $1400.00 in software just to keep up with the latest and greatest out there. My friend asked if he really needed to spend an additional $1400.00 to get his system up and running. My reply was NO. Since he uses his computer for word processing and a data base for his club, I said after the word processor was loaded, nothing was going to make his two finger typing any faster or better and he still needed the spell checker for his writing.

OUR CLUNKY SYSTEM or WE ARE ONLY HUMAN!

Jean Nance

Recently Tom Adams received an angry letter from a member who had paid his dues promptly, but did not get his January MaiLink. Instead he got a reminder card telling him he had not paid dues. Joe Powell and I received copies. Tom immediately sent the missing MaiLink and a letter of apology and explanation. I also sent the irate member a letter, shown here. I think all members need to understand our system and the occasional problems with it.

Dear ————:

I am sorry to hear that there was an error in our system for collecting dues, recording membership, and sending out January newsletters. I will explain briefly what the system is. It may sound unwieldy, but we haven't been able to figure out a better one.

1) Dues are sent to Joe Powell, who puts the name of the renewing member on a membership list for the coming year, and deposits the check.

2) After the first of the year, Joe sends his list of paid-up members to Tom Adams.

3) About the same time, Brian Vaughan sends Tom a set of address labels for all members from the previous year.

4) Tom takes Joe's list and Brian's labels, and puts a label on an envelope for each person whose name is on the list. The MaiLink is sent in these envelopes.

5) A reminder card goes to each person whose label is "left over" unless they have told Tom they are dropping out. This year, our vice president, Frank Redmond, printed up the cards, put on the left-over labels, and mailed the cards. I see nothing in Frank's card that is threatening or says you have been thrown out of the group. It just says that you have not paid your 1997 dues, and you are urged to send them to Joe Powell as soon as possible. The card reminds a lot of members who forgot to send in their dues. It usually brings in 20 or 30 extra renewals.

This system is designed to manage dues, membership records, and mailings for a lot of people. At times there are slip-ups. This time, Tom made a few errors in comparing the list and the labels. A few people who had paid their dues did not get their address labels on an envelope and so did not get a MaiLink. Their labels were considered "left over", and were sent to Frank.

If you don't get your January MaiLink by about January 21st, it is a good idea to write to Tom Adams. If you had done that, Tom would have checked with Joe Powell, realized the error, and sent you your MaiLink. While I was president, there were usually a few errors in the system each year, but the matter was always speedily set right.

You must remember that the people who do these chores are volunteers. This is not a profit making business. We all have jobs and/or families and other responsibilities. We don't get paid, and generally lay out more money on supplies, postage, phone calls, and so on, than we choose to bill the group for. We spend long hours, week in and week out, year in and year out, keeping this group running. Much of this is tedious work that takes care and concentration. It is hardly suprising that at times, things don't go perfectly. Tom has written to you, with an explanation and an apology. You are a valued and long-time member and we would have hated to have lost you. But please, give us the benefit of the doubt. We are only human and we make mistakes!

THE MAILINK ON DISK

Jean Nance

The Mailink on Disk has been published for about 9 years. Jim Green has been editor for 6 years, but has decided he must drop the responsibility. The disk was started for the benefit of members who had visual handicaps and found it easier to read text material on screen. Some members preferred the disk version because disks are easier to store than paper issues, and you can send disk copies or printouts of MaiLink articles to friends. The March and September disks with files of the membership lists were a great convenience.

Jim programmed an animated graphic introduction for each disk. He filled the back with selections from his great "Jim Green Disks" collection of public domain programs. There will be some changes in the MaiLink on Disk, but it will still be available, thanks to new volunteer editor, Fred Knerr.

ON THE MARCH MAILINK ON DISK

Tom Adams.

The March 97 issue of The Commodore MaiLink on disk is a first for the group. Before the disk version was available to those that had a problem seeing the type and used a large type program to read the text on screen of their Commodore 64. Now we have a disk version that also has the latest and greatest of programs found on the Internet and online services.

The first issue has a program that is very dear to my heart, Bank Accounts. I have used this program since 1989 to keep track of my checkbook. It has many features that are just not found on other checkbook programs, believe me I have looked. This is a Commodore 64 program that runs just as well in 64 mode on the 128. The only thing I have against this program is that it loads very slowly. I have found keeping it on my RamLink speeds up the loading process but it makes backups mandatory.

Here is a brief look at the program. The first menu gives you the choices to Use Your Accounts, Start An Account, Program Information, Program Modifications, Search Your Files, Mailing Labels, Exit To Basic. First you should print the instructions. next you would Start An Account. Here you enter your bank's name, your account number for each account you create. Now you are ready to use the program. You now select Use Your Accounts. The next menu is View Your Register, Make A Deposit, Make A Withdrawal, Your Monthly Bills, Enter Misc. Checks, Printout Register, Balance Your Account, Pervious Months, Edit Your Register, Leave This Account.

View Your Register is just that a view of your register. The very first entry should be a deposit of whatever the last balance in your paper checkbook with a memo of "Balance Forward". Bank Accounts can handle amounts up to $99,999,99. Make A Withdrawal is similar to making a deposit and I use this for ATM withdrawals.

Your Monthly Bills is designed to eliminate entering the same information every month. Here you set up payments for checks you write every month, utility bills, mortgage, rent, loan payments, ect. After you enter this information once all you have to do next time is enter the amount. The program will remember the payee, and the account number to be printed in the memo field on your checks.

Enter Misc. Checks is where you enter checks that are not part of the monthly bills. here you enter the date, payee, amount, memo for the register and a memo for the check if you want to print it.

Balance Your Account is quick and easy using Bank Accounts.

Previous Months is where you save each month after each months checks have cleared the bank.

There is an address and phone number in the documentation where you can order checks. It is Deluxe Check Printers, these are the same people that print the checks you order from your bank. I am not a very good reviewer so I'll leave the rest of the docs for you to read.

HELP WANTED HELP WANTED HELP WANTED

Tom Adams

The Commodore Mailink is looking for someone to review programs for the disk
version. I will be happy to supply the programs but I don't have the time or talent
to do the writing. Please write to me or Fred Knerr if you can volunteer to do some
of the writing. Remember the success or failure of this version is really up to
you!

THE MAILINK MEETS CYBERSPACE

Break out the history books! February 8th, 1997 marked an important date in
MaiLink history; it's the day the Hi-Lites version of MaiLink was launched into the
cyberspace world of the internet. Venture to http://www.lm.com/-qt/hill.htm for
your own personal glimpse of the Commodore-friendly Cyber Hi-Lites. Please note
that beginning with the March issue the URL (or address) will change to
http://www.lm.com/-qt/mailink.htm.

Why did we decide to post our newsletter on the internet? Well there are a
variety of reasons. But number one on the list is the fact that more people can now
be introduced to our group bringing us more publicity and more members to our
family.

For those of you not familiar with the internet, it's definitely time to get
those feet wet. Last year the Commodore World virtually exploded on the internet.
Currently the number of Commodore related web sites are too numerous to even count.
In addition to web sites, there are ftp sites (sites containing archives of
Commodore programs free for the downloading), and several Commodore oriented IRC
channels (#c-64, #c64ntsc, and #qwkrr) where you can chat real-time about the best
computer ever invented! The first stop in cyberspace for any Commodore devotee is
easy... visit Jim Brain's famous Commodore Web Site (http://www.msen.com/-brain/).
You'll find Jim's latest addition — CaBooM (http://www.jbrain.com/caboom/) — a
Commodore Search Engine specifically designed to help you easily locate almost any
Commodore information you could possibly need. Simply type in a keyword and CaBooM
produces an index of keyword-related sites!

The internet contains a whole host of specific topic-related sites sure to
please even the most out-of-the world interests. And the best thing about the
internet is the fact that any computer-platform has access to this virtual endless
world of information and entertainment; even the Commodore! All you need to get
those tootsies wet is your Commodore, a VT-100 (VT-102 and VT-52 will also work)
emulating terminal program (Novaterm — for the C-64, and Desterm or Dialogue 128 for
the C-128), and a 2400 baud (or greater) modem, along with a shell account
subscription from an Internet Service Provider. There is plenty of help available.
In fact, this newsletter is a perfect tool for requesting assistance.

In conclusion, we'd love to hear your comments on the new Cyber version of Hi-
Lites. In the future, we'll use these comments to update and maintain the pages of
Hi-Lites. In the meantime, enjoy this issue of theMaiLink.

[Note: the character — should be replaced with the "tilde" character. In Desterm
it is the shifted up arrow combination, in Dialogue 129 it is the shifted asterisk
(*) combination and with Novaterm it is the shifted up arrow combination.]

Comments or questions to Tom Adams.

KOALA TO PRINTSHOP MAGIC.

Roger Detaille

This procedure involves the use of a monitor, either a separate program, or the one built into the Super Snapshot V5 cartridge. When you use the cartridge, press DEL when you are presented with the startup menu. When your normal screen appears, press the cartridge button. Now select the Monitor option from the menu. You'll see a line of numbers and a prompt. The same will happen when you use a monitor program and run it.

Put a disk with a Koala picture in drive 8, and make sure you know its exact name. Now enter the following lines:

```
L "name of picture",08
T 6000 7F3F 4000
S "new filename",08,4000,5F3F
```

That's it! If you use a monitor other than the Super Snapshot one, you may have to precede your command letter by a period.

Here is an explanation of those three lines above. The first line loadsthe picture from drive 8. Make sure you have the name entered correctly, including the spade in Koala picture files. The second line transfers memory from 6000-7F3F to memory location 4000. The third line saves the picture back to disk in Printshop Magic format with the name you specify. Make sure you have enough disk space to save the picture.

Although the monitor may show that the picture goes all the way from 6000 to 8711, all we need is the picture information from 6000-7F3F.

One thing to keep in mind is that Koala pictures are in med-res format while PS Magic is in hi-res format. The result are some funny jagged edges around some objects. This is normal when converting between the two formats.

This method is useful when you don't have a graphics converter program handy, or the one you have doesn't convert between these formats.

WARNING

Larry Schafer.

In regard to changing chips, or even plugging in a joystick or mouse <u>Watch out for static electricity!</u> I speak from experience. Always turn off the computer before plugging anything into one of the ports. (The likely alternative that I've seen is a fat blue spark and a blown chip.) And when disconnecting or connecting a chip, be darn sure you and the machine are well grounded. Installed chips are fairly resistant to static charges, but an exposed circuit is very vulnerable and it's surprising how much static charge can appear out of nowhere.

USING THE SPREADSHEET FOR TAXES
(A compilation of articles from CIVIC 64/128 GAZETTE)

Submitted by Rolf Miller

Do you prefer to do your own taxes? Do you fill out the forms by hand?   If so, you know this can be a lot of work.   Besides all that's involved in the tax stuff, the effort is seldom completed without making mistakes that need correction. And when you change a figure on one line of a tax form, odds are it will require changing the figures on other lines. That's the way it is with tax forms.

If you don't know, the spreadsheet can really make life easier at this time of year for those who fill out tax forms by hand.   The reason is because the calculation procedures required by tax forms can be imitated on a spreadsheet: figures can be entered, formulas written to utilize them, and the results used in other calculations. Once a spreadsheet is set up, it will automatically recalculate the results of any changes entered. So, when all the numbers are in place, all that is then left to do is hit the recalculation key and copy the numbers onto the forms.

Spreadsheets consist of a matrix of columns and rows. The columns are usually labeled with letters and the rows (lines) with numbers.   The intersection of a column and row is called a cell and is identified by referring to its column letter(s) and row number.   A1, then, refers to the column A row 1 cell, the home cell.

```
     A      B      C      D      E      F
 1 home
 2
 3
```

When a spreadsheet is first run, it comes up blank with
the cell cursor at the top left home cell position.   This cursor is moved with the cursor keys.   Text, numbers, and formulas are entered into cells by moving the selector to the desired cell, typing, and pressing RETURN.   The syntax for formulas and other program specifics will be found in the program's manual.

It is usually best to lay out a spreadsheet similar to the proposed task. This normally involves labeling various columns and lines to identify the cells where entries will be made.   However, tax forms are pretty straightforward and detailed. And as mentioned, most spreadsheets use letters for rows.   Tax forms use letters to identify several of the most used schedules: A, B, C, D, E, F, and numbered lines.   Therefore, a column on the spreadsheet can be viewed as a form, and the row reference numbers can be the form's line numbers.   In other words, no further labeling is necessary. Just start entering amounts and formulas in the columns and rows as indicated by the forms' letters and line numbers. By using the tax forms to guide the effort, you can set up your entire tax return on the spreadsheet.

Using this method, then, columns A, B, C, D, E, and F of the spreadsheet are mentally assigned to correspond to those schedules as used.   Form 1040 could be assigned to column G or other unused column, and other forms, including any required state returns, can use various columns as desired.   Of course, only those schedules and forms that pertain to your particular situation need be used.

So, if your situation requires an entry on line 1 of schedule A, it is entered in cell A1 of the spreadsheet.   Entries in other cells are likewise made as they correspond to the forms.   To get an idea of this, form 1040 line 32 is merely a restatement of the amount on line 31.   If column G is used for form 1040, the formula written in cell G32 is simply =G31.   Another example is form 1040 line 34 where the total itemized deductions from line 28 of schedule A is placed.   If column

G is used for form 1040, the formula written in cell G34 is simply =A28. If, instead, the standard deduction is used, merely type the amount in the cell and it will replace the formula. Then there is form 1040 line 36 where calculation is made for the personal exemption. Form 1040 line 6e is where the total number of exemptions is recorded. If column G is used for form 1040 and cell G6 is used for the total number of exemptions, the formula written in cell G36 is =G6*2500 for 1995 (=G6*2550 for 1996).

Where multiple entries for a line are required, the entries can be placed in cells that won't otherwise be used for a form and a SUM formula referencing them placed in the cell corresponding to the line number. For instance, line 1 of schedule B allows for 14 items. The B schedule uses but 10 lines for numeric entries. So, the line 1 entries can be placed in cells B11 through B24 and cell B1 given the formula SUM(B11:B24). The formula references remind you where the entries are to be made. Forms that require multiple column entries, such as schedule E, can be handled in the same way. Or, additional sheet columns can be assigned to them.

It is noted that when formulas are written in cells, they do not appear in the cell. Instead, the cell displays the results of the formula. Formulas in cells are usually revealed in an input line at the top of the sheet when the cell cursor in placed on the cell. Also, some spreadsheets produce errors when formulas reference blank cells. If that is the case with the spreadsheet you are using, it's suggested that zeros be supplied because an error will also occur if a formula is written incorrectly. Supplying the zeros in the referenced cells will tell if the formula syntax is correct. (Use decimal multiplication in place of division to avoid dividing by zero errors. In other words, use *.25 instead of /4.)

Beginning the effort by setting up the spreadsheet based on the previous year's actual return will be found helpful and provides a basis for judging the accuracy of the work. When the results come up the same, save the sheet, then revise it for the current year. Since tax forms can change from year to year, each line of the previous year's sheet should be compared with the new forms, checking formulas for any changes, especially values such as percentages and fixed amounts like the personal exemption on 1040 line 36.

You will find that the few hours you spend setting up a spreadsheet are later saved in the reduction of actual work. The time savings are compounded in future years because tax forms seldom undergo radical changes, making revision a quick process. Tax instruction booklets usually highlight major changes.

ISDN MODEMS AND THE COMMODORE 128
Ed Harler

A query on comp.sys.cbm about using an ISDN modem with a Commodore 128 brought the following answer from Matthias Matting <mmatting@cube.net>:

"Yes, you can use an ISDN-MODEM. Make sure you really get an ISDN Modem, not an external ISDN Adapter. It has to be able to be controlled by Modem commands (like the ZyXEL and US Robotics models). For your C128, that's just like using a normal modem. Of course, Swiftlink or another RS232 cartridge is a must. Beware of ISDN adapters that can only be used with special software drivers (like all the internal models)."

ISDN has been around a long time, but it is rather costly and has not promoted by the phone companies. Nevertheless, this news shows what our "orphans" can do with the right software and hardware.

UNIX THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT
Joe Fenn   (**** kilroy ****)

Having been on the internet via a local server now for one year I will pass on
some things I call "secrets".   Why call it that?   Because I had to dig like heck
to get the answers from guys like Jim Brain, Monty Python, Bob Masse and the
Canadians who are a bunch of very savvy CBM users yet.   I couldn't even get many of
these solved by going straight to the source known as "unix.com".   They publish the
series of books called "???? for dummies". You fill in the question marks.   I
understand why, 'cause to make any money, they must cater to the masses (read that
IBM/MAC) and we 8 bit types are now a minority.   What we need most is a book "UNIX
FOR REAL DUMMIES".

As most of you know by now, your "home dir" on any server is where you live if
you're on a shell account (and most CBM'ers are). If you wish to transfer CBM files
via the net as part of your "EMAIL" its done through the "ATTACHMENT" feature of
your "EMAIL".   First you must upload the file to your HOME DIR before it can be
carried as part of a message.   For now, pretend that your "HOME DIR" is an old
fashioned BBS as we had for so many years.   Soon as you get logged on, you will be
in that home dir. Just type "ls", or "la" (this depends on which type of SHELL your
server provides).   In all the above I am referring to the most common shell which
is called "csh" (nicknamed seashell) or a later version called "tcsh" which uses
almost all the same cmd syntax.

DETAILS.   sz filename (think of this as meaning "server sends to me" I/E so
you're actually going to download a file from home dir to your little C64 or C128).
This might be a file someone sent you as part of an email letter.   You will know as
the text in the letter told you the file is part of your email msg even though you
can't see it from the area where you read your email. In "Dialogue" one of our last
and best TERM programs for the 128, you type sz filename (cr). You will see a short
burst of unreadable data. Next use the download cmd "C= D" and up pops your y modem
prompt screen. It shows the default setting as y/modem transfer.   Tap your run/stop
key once and the crsr will jump to the top of that screen and waits. Next tap
'run/stop' once more and the screen prompts you to choose either "SEQ or PRG" type
of file transfer.   Once you do that you will see the transfer begin and the packets
of data (unreadable) on your screen which looks like a lot of "garbage".   Just sit
back and enjoy the view. If its a long file, get some coffee and sip.   Once the
transfer is finished, you will get about 3 lines of what looks a little less like
junk.   Also you will get bells from your "server" until you tap your (cr) key. Hint
if the file is an .sda or .sfx type archived file, you must choose "prg" as the file
type 'cause thats what they are till they are planted on your disk and run. If your
email letter said the file is an ASCII text file then you can choose the "SEQ" as
filetype.   Okay, now for the other routine "rz" (think of it as "server receives"
from your machine") thus you would do an upload to the HOME DIR but here it gets a
little trickey.   First you must type   "rz filename" (cr).   You will see a short
line of stuff burst on your screen (unreadable). Now hit "C= U" (cr), which is the
"Dialogue" upload command.   Again the default transfer protocol is shown as 'y
modem' which is what you must use, so tap the run/stop key once, and the crsr jumps
up top of the screen.   Tap it again and the "seq or prg" prompt awaits your choice.
Same rules apply as for choosing the file type as shown above when receiving a file
from server. For some reason unknown to me the "uploading file to server" process is
not as bullet-proof as the "downloading from server".   I/E it doesn't always take
off like its supposed to. Just go through the same routine 2 or 3 times.

Sooner or later it will take and you see your file packets in the screen window transferring. One of the secrets here is that even though your server sysop may have told you that you must have the "z" modem transfer capability in your TERM software, you don't really. The "z/modem" choice will work flawlessly most of the time for both uploading or downloading albeit "uploading" is as I said a little shaky sometimes. I recently got all my FGM V5 software upgraded this way to V6.5 and it took 3 lengthy files (.sda) to do it. Ron Hackley didn't even bill me for the upgrade. said "as long as we can do it to your email address as a email attached file, no charge"!!!. Hows that for "hogs heaven" sport fans.

Once you have files in your "home dir" then you marry them to your email letter as an "attachment" by just cursoring to that line on top of your email letter, and typing in the "filename" of the file. It happens in a blink of your eye (even lengthy files). P.S. There is another way to get those CBM type native files to another place, and its called "FTP" or "file transfer protocol" in UNIX. But will dwell on that at another time. Aloha from the Isles.

HEWLET PACKARD DESKJET 500

Larry Schafer

I have a Hewlet Packard DeskJet 500 that is producing excellent results. It's driven by a Xetec interface in 1525 emulation and works fine as-is for Geos, but I had to buy a cartridge to emulate an Epson FX-80 to use it with BASIC and TWS. Cartridges for it can be re-inked IF you remember to do it before they run dry. I've had it for a few years now. With the cartridge, there are two fonts, Pica and Elite, but also italic,bold,proportional,and condensed, with spacing from 5 to 17 characters per inch, and most of the control codes that work with TWS.

As-is, the printer handles Geos well, except that the driver I use won't print about 0.3 inch at the right margin - generally no problem. I'm using Geos 128 2.0 for graphics and text, and I've accumulated several hundred fonts and many graphics.
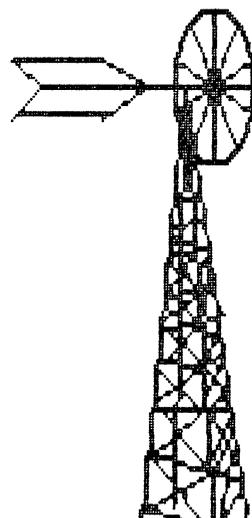
'TIS AN ILL
MARCH WIND
THAT BLOWS
NOBODY GOOD.

OFFLINE MAIL READING

Norris Elwood.

The other day I was corresponding with Tom Adams via internet e-mail and casually mentioned that I had started using an offline mail reader for the first time. He asked me if I'd be willing to write an article for Mailink about using an offline mail reader (OLR). So, this is my attempt at such an article.

First, you may ask, "What is an offline mail reader and why would I want to use one?" In short, an OLR is software that allows you to read and reply to messages on a bulletin board system (bbs) at your leisure while not being online (connected) to the bbs! Reasons to use one vary. Some people simply don't have enough alotted access time to their bbs to be able to read and/or reply to their messages while online. Some bbs operators (sysops) would prefer you to use an OLR to avoid keeping the phone line tied up for extended periods of time. In my case, what used to be a local call to access my favorite bbs is now a long distance call. So, I need to be able to call, download my messages and get off the line in a hurry!

There are 3 OLR programs available for use with our Commodores that I know about. One is a CP/M mode program, another called QWKIE is for the C64, and the last is called QWKRR128 which is for the C128. Since I use a 128D, QWKRR128 is my OLR of choice and the one that I'll write about.

QWKRR128 was written by Rod Gasson of Reynella, South Australia. He and his wife, Gaelyne, frequent the FIDO CBM message areas all the time and are always offering assistance to those who might have a problem in using the program. But QWKRR128 has an excellent manual that can (and should) be printed out and read before you do anything else. This should eliminate alot of questions right from the start! I had no trouble at all getting everything working properly by following the easy to understand manual.

There are basically 5 steps involved in a "normal" mail reading session. These are logon to bbs and download packet, de-archive packet, read/reply to messages, archive the replies, and re-logon to bbs and upload reply packet. To begin, logon to the bbs using whatever terminal program that you are comfortable with using. I currently use Dialogue. Other good choices are Desterm and Novaterm 9.6, especially if you are using a high speed modem. (That is anything above 2400 baud rate.) Lower speed modems will work too, just at a slower rate, which can make online sessions expensive if you are calling long distance. Anyway, the first step then is to download a QWK mail packet from the bbs. The bbs will give you options as to which message areas are to be included, how many messages from each area, the total size limit (in bytes) of the mail packet, etc. Ideally, all of these options should be setup beforehand to your liking so that when you subsequently logon to "grab your packet", time won't be wasted doing it then. The bbs takes all of the messages that you've pre-selected and "packs" (archives) them into a single file that you then download just like you download any other file. This file will be called <bbs-id.qwk>, where bbs-id is the name of the bbs. In my case, the bbs is called the PrivyLedged BBS, so my downloaded mail packets are always called privy.qwk. Now, logoff from the bbs. The offline part of offline mail reading is next.

Since your mail packet was archived into a single file, step 2 involves "unpacking" (or de-archiving) it into the files that QWKRR128 uses. Just as there are several forms of archiving that may be used by the bbs to archive the file, there are also several forms of de-archivers that may be used to dissolve the file into its separated files. Each archive type requires a specific de-arc method to dissolve the file. All of the various types are explained in the manual. Since I selected PKPAK as the archiver on my bbs, I use a program called QPE (QWK Packet Extractor), which handles this type of archiving. When running QPE, you are asked for options such as input drive number, output drive number, filename of mail packet, etc.

Again, you should run the program beforehand and choose your preferred settings and save them as the default. Then each time you run QPE, it will be ready to go and you won't have to take the time to configure it. If your needs change, you can redo the settings and make them the default settings. When all is set correctly, QPE then proceeds to extract (separate) several files to the output drive. Of these, only 2 are actually needed by QWKRR128. These are called control.dat and messages.dat. After QPE has finished, it can be set to automatically load and run QWKRR128! I have this feature enabled on my setup.

Next, QWKRR128 allows you to read through, and if you'd like, to reply to any of the messages. As with the other programs, you can configure QWKRR128 to your particular needs and save these settings as the default. There are many features that can be utilized when reading/replying to messages. I won't go into detail here as there are just too many options available to describe each individually. Again, everything is well documented in the manual, and in my opinion, should be read about BEFORE using the program for the first time! If you do have some replies to the messages, QWKRR128 automatically keeps track of them for you, numbering them as you go. Once all of your replies are done, it is time to exit QWKRR128. Again, there are a couple of options here, and as before you should consult the manual to assist in which option to choose. In my case, I choose <L>ink replies, which creates a file called privy.msg on my output drive, then exits QWKRR128 and resets the computer.

Step 4 (we're almost done!) involves archiving your replies into a single file. Once again, there are several different types of archivers that can be used, but more importantly which type MUST be used for your particular bbs. I use the program called QPA (QWK Packet Archiver). Just as with QPE, your chosen preferences can be saved as your default settings to save you from having to select them each time you run the program. QPA quickly saves a file to the output drive called (in my case) PRIVY.REP. You'll notice this filename is in uppercase. This is very important! The bbs requires this filename to be a certain way...uppercase, lowercase, possibly even a combination of the two. The manual talks about this, too, so it should be fairly easy to understand. Remember, you can always check with the sysop to find out about any particulars you might need to know!

Now, step 5 is just the opposite of step 1. Instead of downloading a file, you will upload one. Logon as usual, go to the message area, and select "upload mail packet" (or similar, as each bbs might be a bit different). Simply upload your <bbs-id.rep> (mine is PRIVY.REP) file as you would any other file. After uploading, my bbs responds that the upload was successful then shows me a listing of who my replies were to, the subject of each message, and in which conference they were posted. Yes, the replies will automatically be placed in their proper message conferences! Now, you can logoff and wait until it is time for your next mail reading session!

I know that this whole process probably sounds complicated and must be much harder to do than I've let on. I used to think the same thing... But it isn't hard to do at all! In fact, I've had a harder time trying to write about the process than actually doing it! I think my only regret is that I wasn't using QWKRR128 even when my bbs call was a local one. Once you use an offline mail reader for the first time, you'll wonder how you got along without one. I highly recommend offline mail reading to anyone that accesses bulletin board systems to participate in the message areas. Chances are, your sysop will appreciate it, too!

Finally, these programs should be available on any of the good Commodore related bulletin boards. A couple of these are Computer Country BBS at (904) 769-9431 and 221B Baker St. BBS at (904) 862-8643. You can call either of these and logon as "Commodore Caller" with a password of "CBM". (Don't include the quotation marks in name or password!) This will take you directly to the Commodore file areas where you can download the desired files.

Look for these filenames for QWKRR128:

                QWKRR43.TXT
                QWKRR43A.SFX
                QWKRR43B.SFX
                QWKRRUT.SFX

Also, the freeware version of QWKIE for the C64 is available as:

                QWKIEFRE.SFX

I hope that this article has helped answer some of your questions about offline
mail readers. More importantly, I hope it has persuaded some of you into trying one
out! Perhaps I will soon see many of you online via your OLR programs. Until then,
happy computing!
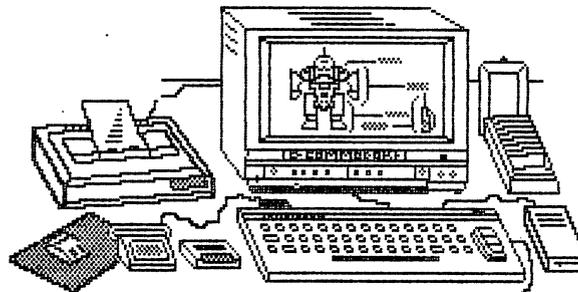
PHOTO TO GEOPAINT WITH GEOFAX

Larry Schafer

I wanted to put a photo image into a GeoPaint file. A friend had a fax machine and GeoFax that did the job nicely. He converted the GeoPaint image into a self-dissolving archive, sent it to me over our BBS, and I downloaded it and de-archived it with no problems. He sent images at different densities and I was able to retouch them with Pixel Edit. If I can find an inexpensive fax machine and GeoFax, I can scan photos and convert them to GeoPaint images myself. Another entry on the wish list.

BOSTON COMMODORE USER GROUP

Larry Schafer.

The Commodore User Group, here in Boston, is no longer holding meetings, but we are held together, rather precariously, by an Amiga/Commodore BBS that may last the year. The board carries both local and foreign traffic, via FIDO, and has almost as large an audience as MaiLink.

SCARY THOUGHT

Max Watson <zero@phoenix.net>

Here is an Internet message left on "comp.sys.cbm" newsgroup on February 12, 1997.

"Here's a scary thought I had, I'd like to share with you guys... The other day I was showing my new Win95 box to an old friend. Now my old friend is an original die-hard C64'er. Anyway, he wasn't very impressed with my machine. So I started telling him all the wonderful things it could do. He just kept shaking his head. To make a long story short, I continued to try to convince him until I actually heard myself say, "My windows 95 machine can do everything your 64 can do."
!!! It was a real shock when I suddenly realized that I just paid $3000+ for my new computer, when everything I use it for can STILL be done on the old C128 I have gathering dust in the closet. Scary thought, huh? Dusting off the C= !

KEEP SMILING

FEEDBACK
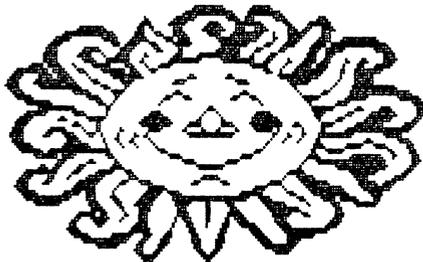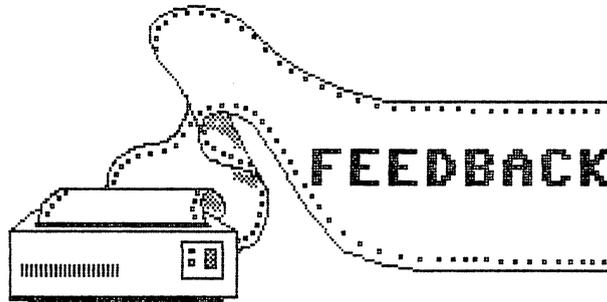
I compliment Rolf L. Miller on his article in the January 1997 newsletter regarding spreadsheets. The article is timely since income tax time is coming around, and the spreadsheet is an excellent use use not only to compute the tax schedule but also for computing estimated taxes. I could not find if Mr.Miller mentioned that any portion of the spreadsheet may be printed.

Vincent S.W. Dymek

In November's Commodore MailLink, Tom Adams asks if anyone has a macro for TWS that will read the Real Time Clock in a RAMLink, and place the date in a letter.

I have been doing this for years with Digital Solution's Pocket Writer 3. In the hope that the same procedure is applicable for TWS, and other programs,, here is how I do it: Whenever Pocket Writer 3 is selected from the startup menu, a short Basic program runs. This program reads the RTC, translates the date into "January 5, 1997" format, and writes it into a one line SEQ file called TODAY.DAT.

The Basic routine then pokes values into the keyboard buffer which will LOAD and then RUN a Pocket Writer macro, once Pocket Writer is running, and concludes by booting Pocket Writer. (This is necessary, since Pocket Writer has no provision to automatically load, nor run any of its macros when it boots. Other programs, like BobsTermPro, Dialogue 128, have this capability.) The above sounds like a lot of activity, but actually takes about 1 or 2 seconds, at most.

The macro that the keyboard buffer runs, among other startup routines, loads the date file into the program buffer, converts it into ASCII, and saves the new format to the REU using the same name, TODAY.DAT. The remainder is easy:

All the forms (or templates) which will have a date inserted, have a provision to "import" an external file called TODAY.DAT from the REU, onto the specified line. The forms which use a date include, letter, memo, and invoice. It is so easy to use that I can include the file TODAY.DAT within other forms, as needed.

The use of the "keyboard buffer" to store key presses until after Pocket Writer has fully loaded has turned out to be a convenience. This may or may not work with other commercial programs. The "keyboard buffer" is also used to boot into Pocket Filer 2 and Pocket Planner 2. Neither of these two programs offer macros. However, the keyboard buffer offers ample keystrokes to do some routine startup chores at boot time. For example, with Pocket Filer it selects the program's mode (F1, F3, F5, or F7), opening a RAMLink partition and directory where databases are stored, for easy copying to the REU, for faster access.

I am hoping to find the time to write more fully about these procedures, and include a listing of keyboard buffer values for the Pocket programs, and custom macros. As one example, there is no provision within Pocket Writer to chain macros, so that one can follow another. However, with an editing buffer like that in BobsTermPro, macros can be edited, and chained to run with virtually no limits. Hope some of this has been helpful.

Howard Herman

BUY/SELL/TRADE.

WANTED: Hayes 2400 Smartmodem. VINCENT DYMEK

WANTED: I am looking for a CAD (Computer Aided Design) program for the Commodore. "Home Design" for the 128, and/or any 64 CAD program. Willing to pay any reasonable price. DOROTHY COX

FOR SALE
C=128 computers complete $25 each
C=1902 Monitor $25
MPS803 printer complete $10
RS-232 Interface $1G-Wiz printer interface $10
Epyx Fast load cartrige $6
Partner 128 Cartrige $6
C=128 Financial Planner $10
C=128 Cadpak(keyboard ver) $3
C=128 Swiftcalc $3
C=128 Datamanager $10
C=128 Troubleshooting book $5
C=64: Flight Simulator, Tetris, ReRun Prod. Pak2, Newsroom w. manual, newsroom clipart, The Lotto Program, Speedscript, Better Working Bus. Forms, 7 Gazette disks, Kids and the C-64, Basic Computer Games. Programmers Ref.Guide, C-64. Priced at $1 to $5.
Prices do not include postage. Call CLIFF ERICKSON 520 782-9107 or make an offer.

WANTED: Super 81 Utilities Disk. ROGER DETAILLE.

WANTED. Technical info and programs on converting 64/128 graphics to and from GIF, for porting same to clone. (See my bio). Info and programs for both sides on alternative ways to transfer stuff between 128 and "clone land". Big Blue Reader and similar products don't help. My 5.2 inch DOS drive is high density and anything it writes to low density disks has added garbage characters on it. What places that have stuff for C64/128 CP/M are still in business? If anyone wants to get rid of alternative language products they bought long ago but no longer use, I want them. C, Pascal, PROMAL, all of them for both 64/128 and CP/M. KEITH KELLER.

Editor's Note: "What places that have stuff for C64/128 are still in business?" We try to run information in "Vendor Watch" on this but can't cover everybody. Ask Donald Ayers about his "Grassroots" disk. Roger Long, 320 Northeast C St., Apt.A, College Place, WA 99324 also puts out a disk with lists of suppliers and other information. $2.

WANTED. Back issues of all magazines for Commodore computers except Compute's! Gazette. Send list identifying date or issue #'s offered and price. I have about 70 issues available for trade. Need owner's manual or copy and tractor feed for MPS-803 printer. Automotive programs wanted - Quarter or Quarter Jr. (Racing Systems Analysis), Engine Jr. 1.1 & Fourlink 1.0 (Performance Trends), Engine Analyzer 1.1, Drag Race Analyzer 1.1, PC Tree Plus, & THE MUSCLEBUILDER (Ford V8) or similar for Commodore computers. Programs for Commodore 1520 printer-plotter. 512K or larger REU for 128. Abacus book on CP/M. Instructions for Jack Nicklaus - Greatest 18 Holes of Major Championship Golf (Accolade - 1988) game. My disk is original but I have no documentation. DOUG WAGONER

WANTED - FD-4000 disk drive. BRIAN VAUGHAN

VENDOR WATCH

WALTER JOHNSON sent a flyer from "The Vintage Computer" company. Walter says "This company was mentioned in Loadstar #152." The flyer offers Commodore computer, disk drives, monitors. Also software, utility cartridges, music keyboard, and books. The prices sound VERY LOW.

Vintage Computers, 520 Silverbrook Drive, El Cajon, CA 92019. Phone 619-445-8432.

Walter also suggests National Parts Depot, 31 Elkay Drive, Chester, NY 10918. Phones 914-460-4800 or 800-524-8338, for old printer and computer parts.

The following items were provided by DONALD AYERS:

CALOKE PD. Caloke, Dept. JK, Box 18477, Kansas City, MO 64133, a long time, dependable supplier of PD yet operates. Among its offerings: the Jim Green collection, pd ware fully documented, menued, and user friendly.

64 DISK CONNECTION reports a change of address to 3312 Brookbridge Rd., Virginia Beach, VA 23452-5205. It continues to offer PD ware. Ignore reports to the contrary.

CATS PD & SERVICES. William K. Robblets operates CATS, 259 W. Granby Rd, POB 073, West Granby, CT 06090 0273. Printing services, article research, instruction in spreadsheet use, and public domain ware is available. CATS sells a large PD disk catalog, too. While Mr. Robblets is a Commodore enthusiast, a branch of CATS supports PC's, too. Mr. Robblets is a disabled Vet, a devoted supporter of Commodores, and a competent writer about the subjects he researches. Got a question? Try him. Send a SASE when inquiring, as a courtesy.

RAMLINK SPEEDSEARCH. Speedsearch, May '87 Compute's Gazette Speedscript utility, scans a whole disk of text files for a pharase. AND, it works the same way to search all Speedscript or Write Stuff text files in RamLink memory...in seconds.

COMMODORE HOME SCHOOLERS? State associations of home schoolers have online sites. Think none have members using Commodores? Why not see if association newsletters would mention the availablity of support from CMD and MaiLink?

CYBERSPACE CENSORSHIP GLITCH. Cyber Patrol locks out Jim Brain's web site from Internet access. Some libraries use it to provide child safe Internet access. That it bumps Jim's site is a defect, not an admonition.

Library staff can report the defect to the company with a built-in Site Inspection Option, or override it by putting Jim's site on a Parental Approval lists, or can deactivate Cyber Patrol with the Deputy Password option. Why not check to see if your library can access Jim's site? Yahoo can find it by targeting his name. You might open this door for hobbyists in your area.

INTERNET ACCESS. Watch your up front money because lots of providers will have to leave by the back door OR simply fail to deliver unlimited access. Some users interpret that as CONSTANT access and won't hang up. Why? To avoid busy signals. Low, flat rates can't sustain that degree of access. It's like leaving the water running.

QUESTION

I have on one of my collection of GEOS disks a Desktop application called "WORD PWP v. 1.0. It is supposed to be an "ultrafast, full-featured Geos-based word processor". Also on the disk is a 2K VLIR program called "Font file" for WORD PWP, v. 1.0, dated 10/1/87. "Word PWP" runs but does not do anything. The file info says, "See manual for details". Does anyone know what these are , what "manual" I'm supposed to see, and if these programs are any good?

ALAN BROWN.

ADDRESS CHANGE

LAWRENCE WILKE   A12 Pal Park, Palmyra, WI 53156-9640

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