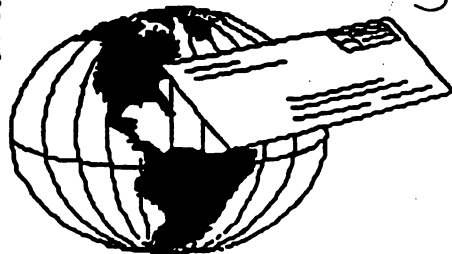


# COMMODORE MAILINK

NEWSLETTER OF —  
MEETING 64/128 USERS  
THROUGH THE MAIL

March 1999



3-12-99

## MEETING NEWS BY TOM ADAMS, PRESIDENT

A hearty welcome to all the new members: Robert Albright, Horst Findeisen, Thomas Gosser, Tim Johnston, Craig LeVay, Horace Mann, Jorge Pedreira, Jon Searle. This issue contains the semi-annual membership list. It also has the Resource & Information pages where you can look for someone that has expertise with a particular piece of software or hardware. This is where to look if you have a problem and need help. Also in this section you will find various discounts on commercial products for your Commodore. And there is a list of E-Mail addresses for those members who have Internet access.

In "Meeting News" for November, I asked for your comments on Geos and laser printing. This is your newsletter and we want to print what you want to read. Your comments help direct our efforts. I received four letters in reply. Here are some excerpts from them.

Thos Ole Friend: As one of the old timers as far as age and length of subscription time I've belonged, I think it is about time to send a few bouquets your way. I've belonged to the club for well over twelve years and for a number of years the Commodore has been maligned, and predictions made that our favorite little computers obsolete, and anybody who uses them is ready for the "Old Age Home." Funny though, when I look at this year's issues of the newsletter, I find a balanced newsletter of some 18 or 20 pages giving well documented articles on everything an average Commodore would want. I feel the news in this little epistle adequately fills the void that we Commodorites feel when we see all the hype and glossy brochures that accompany the happenings in the IBM and MacWorld. I do feel somewhat humbled and in awe every time I receive my newsletter. I know from experience that putting together a newsletter of this quality is not easy. The trend now days is "Let George do it." Unfortunately, there just aren't enough Georges is this

world of ours. Let's all get behind the dedicated people responsible, and drop them a note telling them how much we enjoy the newsletter and the many benefits we receive belonging to the club. Bev Harvey

Hi Tom: I'm finally answering your request. I looked at the July and September issues of the Mailink and could find no reason to complain about them. Was it that someone was upset that you mentioned Geos one time too many? I am not a Geos fan but it didn't seem to me that the issues were "Geos-heavy." With over two hundred members, there is no way each will be satisfied 100%. I would love to see 90% programming hints and tips etc., and 10% other topics. But no magazine would survive like that. I am well aware that each of us has special interests, and we can't expect any publication to exactly match those interests. So, to reiterate, I don't have a problem with either the July or September issues. (Then again, maybe I'm just easy to please because there is so little out there for Commodore users.) Seriously, the issues look O.K. to me. Regards, Linda Tanner

Dear Tom: Your article in the November 1998 issue of Mailink said you wanted some feedback, so here it is. (1) GEOS. I have Geos. I don't like it. The "Why I Don't Like Geos" article in the November Mailink says it better than I can. Usually, people with a basic computer system (one disk drive, no RamLink) don't like Geos because it is too cumbersome. But, Geos works much better for "power users" because they have RAM memory and multiple disk drives. (2) LASER QUALITY PRINTING. My own thoughts are that laser printer quality is overkill. Any half decent quality is fine with me. (3) ABOUT THE TWO LASER QUALITY ISSUES. ... To me, the value of newsworthy articles far outweighs the technical print quality of a newsletter. (4) WHY PEOPLE LEAVE A CLUB. I am an officer of a local Commodore club. My thoughts are that people leave because:

Better grass on the other side of the fence such as "PC" computers and the Internet. They can save money by dropping their membership for a few years. They get ticked off and quit. Like children, they sometimes don't get their way and go into a tantrum and quit. (5) DIRECTION THE CLUB SHOULD TAKE. My thoughts: the club is already on a good track. I think this MaiLink Club is the best deal in town for Commodore owners. What I like most are articles with information that I can use and useful things for sale. Here are three items in the November 1998 issue that caused me to think, "Hey, this is worthy information for the money I spend on dues." The warning about three defunct companies can save me money and time. The announcement of the upcoming availability of the big subject index to past issues of MaiLink. The list of "Sixteen Ways to Use a Commodore", which gives me ideas as to how to get more use out of my computer. I produce a local C=64 newsletter, and I copy good articles from the MaiLink, thus making my work on the local newsletter easier. Sincerely, Chris Fite

response to your editorial in the November MaiLink. The two issues you referred to were truly outstanding. I never, ever, thought I would see a C= produced photo in the MaiLink, I would very much like to see a tutorial on this: what hardware, software was used, what drivers were used, etc. Flat bed scanners are now down to about \$100 and I would buy one in a hot minute if I just knew how to hook it all together and get it running. I have the same problem with laser printers. I'm not sure I need one but as prices have dropped I'm very tempted. Again, the same problem, how to hook it all up and get it running? I have some experience with Geos. The initial learning curve for Geos is pretty steep, and can be frustrating but it soon flattens out and becomes quite intuitive. I guess the bottom line is that Geos on a C=64 without hardware enhancements makes a pretty good small-boat anchor. Add an REU and it becomes quite useful. Add RamLink and it is a darned good, flexible, system. I have never bothered with GeoWrite, because Speedscript plus a few upgrades fits my needs. Keep the Faith. George Hoke.

Greetings, Tom: I'm writing to you in

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MEETING 64/128 USERS THROUGH THE MAIL OFFICERS, ADDRESSES  
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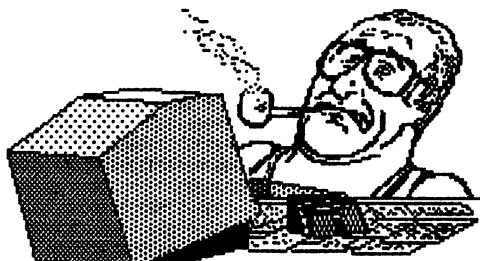
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COMMODORE MAILINK POLICIES  
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**EDITOR'S DESK**  
Rolf L. Miller

=====  
 KNOW-HOW  
 =====

Know-how is the theme for this issue. As way of illustration, nearly half this issue contains pages prepared by members who accepted the invitation to submit copy-ready pages. Except for the front page header, which came from Dick Estel who produced it from GEOS on a Star NX1020 Rainbow using the EPSN8PIN3PASS driver, the submitted pages note what they used.

More pages and other material came than the issue could accommodate. Hence, not all submissions could be used. Authors were not limited to the "know-how" topic, but it did weigh on editing and influenced selection of printing examples and content. The topic also prompted inclusion of some excerpted material edited and compiled from numerous different sources which appears without by-lines. Material excluded as a consequence, if it came with the required text files, went to the May editor.

A large thank you is extended to all who participated in this issue. And not to be overlooked are the efforts of Jean Nance, Tom Adams, and Brian Vaughan, without whom the Mailink would not happen.

MAY EDITOR

Paul Berry will be the editor of the May Mailink. He can handle submissions in most any form, but prefers they be on a disk (either 5.25" or 3.5") in TWS format or via email. Submissions deadline is April 21th. Send to:

Paul Berry  
 2113 Seven Lakes South  
 Seven Lakes, NC 27376  
 email: [pdberry@pinehurst.net](mailto:pdberry@pinehurst.net)

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 TO PRODUCE THIS ISSUE  
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Most of the work done in this office involves text. And since the one sitting at the desk is not retired, the time it takes to do things is a consideration. This factor is reflected in the computer system, peripherals, and software used. An unexpanded 64 with 1541 disk drive remains at the hub of this setup simply because another system has yet to demonstrate faster overall results.

Material other than prepared pages (whether it came by disk or e-mail) immediately found itself in The Write Stuff (TWS) word processor where it quickly became individual pages. The editing sought to maintain content while sizing the material to accommodate the format preferred by this editor.

Working with individual pages allowed the flexibility of shifting things around as other material and prepared pages arrived. TWS expedites this in two ways. First, it provides two work areas on the 64. Second, just how the page will print is determined at the time of printing, thus allowing format changes without the need to alter text.

Therefore, when the time came to assemble the issue, it merely required printing the unprepared pages. Except for special printing techniques which utilized a Star NX-1000C printer, the text pages produced by the editor came from a Citizen Premier 35 daisywheel using carbon-film ribbon. Daisywheel printing is very a straight forward process because font quality is determined by the print wheel selected. Carbon-film ribbon provides a crisp character impression and avoids the inconsistencies often experienced with ink-ribbon printing.

The graphics on pages produced by the editor came from the Fun Graphics Machine (FGM) program by overprinting in the space planned for them using the NX-1000C. Two-pass printing requires precision, but it is very efficient and flexible once mastered. FGM facilitates this by allowing many printing options.###

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TREASURER'S REPORT as of January 31, 1999-----  
REFLECTIONS  
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Balance			
1-1-99	\$2924.42	1-1-98	\$2507.80
Credits	245.00		3090.75
Debits	306.00		2674.13
1-31-99	2863.42	12-31-98	2924.42

Credits include all dues and donations.  
Debits are all the expenditures. A special note of thanks to the many who added a little something to their dues. Not only did the number of donations increase, but more than a few were very generous.

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DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN LETTERS AND NUMBERS

The last two issues of the Mailink incorrectly showed the Treasurer's zip code as 83001 instead of the correct 93001. Consequently, not a few renewals ended up going to Idaho before finding their way to the California address.

This error first occurred in the May '98 issue. It came about because the file was edited based on its appearance in the March '98 issue. Unfortunately, the font used in that issue made the 9 look like an 8. In spite of correction in July and September, the error reasserted itself as a result of the corrupted file resurfacing.

Anyway, kudos to the Post Office: the envelopes did make it. That's an advantage of snail-mail over e-mail: incorrect e-mail addresses never make it! And this reality points to a difficulty in deciphering some e-mail addresses: like making out the difference between l (el) and 1 (one), or the capital 0 and zero. For instance, ba100@lafn.org is the Treasurer's e-mail address. That is BA100@LAFN.ORG using all lower case letters.

In many instances the differences can be seen by examining the characters as they appear elsewhere in the printed material. Note their distinguishing peculiarities. Depending upon the font used, the number 1 often appears with its top left serif slanting slightly downward. Differences might also appear in the bottom serifs. As for the differences between the capital 0 and zero, some fonts use a slash through the zero. Otherwise, the zero may appear more oblong than the capital 0.###

Instead of writing letters, many responded to President Tom Adam's request for comments with a brief written note tucked into the envelope along with their dues check. All spoke their appreciation to those "who make the Mailink happen," followed by encouraging words like "keep up the good work."

While many of those who wrote acknowledged enjoying the newsletter (indeed, the very act of renewing one's membership expresses at least some degree of satisfaction), some said they wanted to see "less technical, more basic, articles." In contrast, other hoped for more "how-to" material. Likewise, several wrote things such as "not so much GEOS," which were countered by others urging "more GEOS." A few preferred "less telecommunication stuff." An equal number "planned to get on the internet soon."

Looking up the bio's of those who penned their thoughts reveals a reflection of interests. For instance, those who expressed little interest in on-line "stuff" are not among those with listed e-mail addresses. It's noted that only two of every five members are on-line.

Similarly, those wanting less on GEOS do not show GEOS among their listed interests. NonGEOS users account for three of every four members, and most of those who do mention GEOS do not indicate the presence of added computing power. It is from this nonpower group that requests came for more on GEOS.

Of those who want to see greater emphasis on the rudimentary rather than the technical, several also came from nonpower GEOS users. On the other hand, several in that group were among those desiring material telling more specifics.

A few mentioned programming as an interest, indicating they already possess some skills, "writing little routines to accomplish various small tasks." All but one were nonGEOS users. According to the bio's, though, the subject of programming is less popular than GEOS.###

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THE GEOS DEBATE  
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SUMMATION  
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### PREFACE

A little debate now and again is a good thing. Controversy can bring forth beneficial information. And to inform members about how they can better use their Commodores is the purpose of the Mailink. But when what can be said has been said, a summary is in order to wrap-up things. It is hoped the following compilation concludes the matter. --the Editor.

One of the two primary approaches to Commodore use today is that which existed before the advent of GEOS. It consists mostly of running individual, single-purpose programs. To do word processing, a word processor is used. To accomplish graphics, a graphic program is utilized. This approach is very flexible. It allows selecting programs to suit each user's own tastes and wants. Or users who know to program can write BASIC routines and utilities to accomplish specific needs. And since each program runs independently of others, their functions do not have to be compatible. Just LOAD, RUN, and use.

Of course, there is more to it than that. There is SAVE. But before that can be accomplished, the user must first do OPEN15,8,15,"NO:DISK NAME,ID":CLOSE15 to format a disk. Then there is scratching files, and.....

Many users learn enough of this to give them control of their Commodores. The result is a high proficiency of operation. Others though, seek relief from the command structure of Commodore's native text-based operating system. Enter GEOS. It presents a graphic-based environment alternative: just point to the icon or pop-down menu selection and click. Instead of running independent programs, GEOS applications are integrated. Instead of handling text and graphics separately, GEOS treats text as graphic images.

Since GEOS is an operating system, it is limited to running GEOS applications. And before a GEOS application can be run, GEOS must first be booted. Moreover, because of the copy-protection scheme

contained in GEOS, it requires properly matched software. And to use GEOS to its fullest capabilities requires additional hardware. Given all this though, GEOS provides a powerful means of combining text and graphics on the Commodore. (The 1998 July and September issues of the Mailink illustrate its mastery.)

But, certainly, GEOS is not for everyone. Many who are proficient in the use of single application programs find GEOS restrictive, the required additional hardware burdensome, the copy-protection untenable, the need of printer drivers awkward, and the graphic environment for text inefficient.

However, nothing requires a nonGEOS user to fully implement all the faculties of GEOS. After all, GEOS initially came out designed to run on a stock 64 with a joystick and a single 1541 disk drive, originally offering geoWrite and geoPaint. This basic package needed no additional hardware or software. It still doesn't.

Therefore, if a nonGEOS user wants to access the graphic creation capabilities of geoPaint, all that's required is booting up GEOS on a bare bones Commodore system and let the artistry begin: draw lines from point to point or with drag and draw, produce circles of any size at will where desired, fill spaces with various patterns, spray paint designs, add fancy text with geoWrite, and so forth. The results can then be captured or otherwise imported into a more familiar program like the Fun Graphics Machine, further manipulated if desired, and printed therefrom rather than wrestling with GEOS.

Likewise, a GEOS user isn't prevented from running other Commodore programs. GEOS applications are required only when GEOS is booted. And it is possible to convert text and graphics from other programs to GEOS, and vice versa.

It all boils down to preferences. Some like the point and click environment of GEOS. They learn to work with its requirements. Other prefer to work with individual programs. They too develop the means and methods to overcome any shortcomings. The end result in both instances is satisfied Commodore users.###

WORKING THE WRITE STUFF RIGHT  
 Anonymous Submission  
 (to protect the guilty)

While watching a 128 owner show how he uses the 80 column version of The Write Stuff (TWS), he cursoried to mid-screen to begin a letter by centering his name and address. "This is really difficult to do in 40 columns on the 64 version," he remarked. He then cursoried to far screen right and typed the date. Obviously, he was entering the text just as he wanted it to appear when printed.

That is how it's done on a typewriter. It is also the way many word processors work. But it is not the intended way to utilize TWS. Instead, The Write Stuff is designed to format text as it prints. Much of this formatting can be done at the print menu. All of it can be done by embedding codes in the text. The manual contains all the details.

In other words, how text will appear when printed is not dependent upon how the text appears as it is typed. This makes whether 40 or 80 columns is used without

consequence. Following is how the 128 user could have begun his letter.

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-----
First Name←
Street address←
Town, ST zip code←
phone number←
date←
    
```

The reverse characters are the format codes. They do not print. They instead cause the printer to act accordingly. The reverse pw80 establishes Page Width at 80 characters. The reverse pl66 sets Page Length to 66 lines. The reverse tm2 creates a Top Margin of 2 lines. The reverse bm2 creates a Bottom Margin of 2 lines. The reverse lm5 makes the Left Margin 5 spaces. The reverse rm5 makes the Right Margin 5 spaces. (All the foregoing can be accomplished at the Print Menu.) The first reverse c toggles centering on and centers all lines until the second reverse c toggles it off. The reverse r forces the line to be printed aligned with the right margin.###

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 USING THE BIOS  
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The membership bio pages received with this issue of the Mailink are to encourage personal correspondence between individual members. To that end, included in the bios is info about occupation, interests, programs and equipment used. So, finding members with like interests is simply a matter of reading through the pages. Or, maybe the want is to find help with a certain program or peripheral.

If you get the disk version of the

Mailink, the search can be made a bit easier. The disk version for March contains the bio pages in sequential files. The files are small enough to fit into most word processors. And if the word processor possesses a hunt feature, it can be used to search out the interest.

If the word processor is The Write Stuff (TWS), tap CTRL then tap A to switch to ASCII. Load the file using ,s in the name and tap CTRL A again to go back to screen code. Saving the results to another disk is a good idea: TWS files

load faster.

To hunt in TWS, make sure the cursor is home by tapping the HOME key twice. Tap CTRL and SHIFT H, enter the word to hunt for, and press SHIFT RETURN, which invokes a caseless search. Then press the H key and the cursor will stop at each occurrence of the word, if any. Consult the manual for more details.

The Mailink on disk is only \$6 per year. This is in addition to the \$12 per year membership dues, and you must be a paid-up member to subscribe.

Order from  
 Fred Knerr. With

your check made payable to him, indicate the disk format preferred: 1541 5 1/4" format or 1581 3 1/2". Otherwise, 1541 will be sent.

[This is four-column printing in TWS. To do it, set up for two-column printing with page width equal what one column without margins occupies. Preview and split text at end of first column, print each half to disk with zero margins, load resulting sequential file halves, set margins and page width to normal, and print in two-columns.]

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**TWS TIP #0**

C= + selects drive 11  
 C= - selects drive 12

**INTRODUCTION TO TWS TIPS**

Thus, each drive is equally accessible with essentially a one-key stroke.

In the following series, we cover many aspects of easing the use of THE WRITE STUFF, the premier word processor for the C-64 and C-128.

You can set these macros up IN TWS 128 as follows:

Before tackling these ideas and suggestions for yourself, know that:

- 1) CTRL, C= D
- 2) 8
- 3) CTRL, SHIFT D, A, RETURN

1) all the tips are applicable to TWS 128, version 2 (the speller version).

This sets up the macro C= 8 to set you on drive 8.

2) most of the tips are also applicable to TWS 64, version 2 (aka BB Speller).

Repeat these steps four more times, substituting 9, 0, + and - in step 2) and B to E in step 3), respectively. This gives the other four macros. (Since TWS version 2 can only handle five drives, you have now reached its limit. For more drives, you'll just have to swap!).

I have attempted to flag out any special version limitations. But, being primarily a TWS 128, v2, user, I may have missed something - hopefully not. In any event, give them a whirl and see if you can't fly higher with TWS!

IN TWS 64 it's as follows:

Emil Volcheck, Main Line Computer Users Group (MLCUG).  
 [printed on a Canon BJ-200ex inkjet]

- 1) CTRL, C= D
- 2) 8
- 3) SHIFT D, A, CTRL

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**TWS TIP #1**

This takes care of drive 8. Drives 9-12 follow the same pattern.

**MULTIPLE DISK DRIVES**

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**TWS TIP #2**

Do you make use of more than two disk drives, or need to use a drive with device number NOT 8 or 9? If so, then the C= Z macro in version 2 that toggles between 8 and 9 will not do it for you.

**QUICKY PREVIEW (TWS 128)**

That's when some additional keyboard macros will be of help. For example, yours truly uses drives 8 (1571), 9 (1581/FD-4000), 10 (1571), (11) 1581 and (12) HD-40/85 with TWS 128. To facilitate the use of the three drives, I have set up five keyboard macros so that:

I am sure that you occasionally (?) want to have an idea of what the text will look like that you are working on - without wanting to go to the preview option. IN TWS 128 ONLY, you can get a quick look by simply pressing the ALT key (and you can page thru the text with the CRSR Up or Down keys). If you are expecting 2-column output, you will see how the one column you are working on will look, but not both columns (note that the PRINT menu has to have the CM setting right, as the ALT viewing uses the margin settings in that menu for this quick look feature). Very handy!

- C= 8 selects drive 8
- C= 9 selects drive 9
- C= 0 selects drive 10

**Out of the Blocks**

I would like to start off by saying a very big **Thank You** to everyone who wrote or e-mailed me with their comments on the July 1998 MaiLink. It was a treat to know that people liked what I did. I hope that every MaiLink Editor receives the same treatment as every person who takes on this job puts in a lot of effort to bring the latest news to the members.

I also hope that a lot of people take up the challenge that Rolf put forward for this issue. The ideal situation would be enough pages get submitted that a few issues could be filled. The fact that you can contribute to the newsletter without doing an entire issue makes the job easier to tackle. It also makes the group a more personal item than merely a newsletter every other month.

**Sorry**

I must send out a very sincere apology to William Kennedy. William submitted a wonderful letter outlining the features of the FontMaster 64 Word Processor. I added this at the bottom of Page 19 in its original form to let people see William's handiwork. Unfortunately this letter did not photocopy very well and it came out looking rather pale and blotchy.

From what I saw, FM 64 looks like a decent program that allows a lot of flexibility in the output. If anyone else liked what they saw, and is in need of a good word processor, I would encourage you to check into this program further. The reproduction of William's letter didn't do it justice.

**Photo Quality**

In the Jan. 99 issue a submission from Chris Fite bemoaned the fact that DeskTop Publishing (DTP) programs provide no means to import real photos. It seems to me like Chris has been using the wrong DTP programs as he also had a letter condemning the genre in the September 98 MaiLink. That same issue, Editor Earl Williams included 5 photos that he had imported into geoPublish after using geoFAX to 'scan' the images into his PC=. This reminds me of the old saying - saying it can't be done usually just means you can't do it.

It is also possible in geoPublish to

create a region in Page Layout mode and just leave it blank. This region can be sized very easily with the on-screen rulers to match your photo. After printing out the page it is just a matter of pasting the photo into the empty region (a technique Chris praised) and running off the copies you need.

Now, on fancier computers with megabytes of video RAM it is possible to use color scanners and place the color photo into your DTP package in living color. While we don't have that capability on our PC's as of yet we are getting closer.

Dale Sidebottom has been taking color photos with his new digital camera and printing them out from within GEOS. The camera stores the photos on a 3.5" floppy and Dale reads it with his FD-2000 drive to get the pictures (JPEG format) into his computer. He then prints them out in full color on his color PostScript printer.

The Oct/Nov and December issues of the LUCKY Report (Louisiana Users of Commodore of Kentucky), edited by Dale, arrived with front covers blazing in color. The first production User Group Newsletter containing a color picture completely done with no help from another computer platform featured none other than Commodore Guru Jim Butterfield standing beside Dale and two other LUCKY members!

To top things off it may even soon be possible to add these pictures directly into the geoPublish file prior to printing. Maurice Randall (geoFAX, Wheels, etc.) is working on a new version of PostPrint that will allow color JPEG images to be included in the PostScript printout. PostPrint comes on Dale's Laser Lovers Disk.

If you wish to stay on top of some of the truly leading edge developments for the Commodore you should subscribe to the LUCKY Report. While you may not be able to make it to the meetings in Kentucky you will surely benefit from all of the information contained in the newsletter. Having more than one source for Commodore information is very beneficial.

One other feature in a recent issue outlined how to modify a CMD hard drive. This piece laid out the process of removing the Hard Drive mechanism and replacing it with a ZIP drive that uses removeable 100 MB cartridges!

Write to LUCKY c/o K. Dale Sidebottom, P.O. Box 303, New Albany IN 47151. Full membership is \$20 per year and includes the newsletter plus access to the entire club library. If you want a copy of the Oct/Nov 98 issue (the Jim Butterfield color collector's edition) the cost is \$4.00.

**Placing Graphics**

GeoPublish allows the user lots of options when it comes to placing graphics on the page. You can add the graphic into your geoWrite file and it will be imported along with the text. You can create a separate region on the page and place the graphic in the region in Master Page mode, Page Layout mode or Page Graphics mode. You can also just page the image directly onto the page in Page Graphics mode.

The latter method is the one I use. By placing the graphic directly onto the page you can control the flow of text around the picture. It takes some work but manipulating the margin settings in Page Layout mode lets you wrap the text neatly around the picture.

**COPS**

A new Internet Mailing List has started up to offer help for users wishing to Laser Print GEOS documents and also for getting the most out of geoPublish. This list came about as a result of an exchange I had with Dale Sidebottom while reviewing his Laser Lovers Disk for Commodore World Magazine Issue 24.

Commodore Only PostScript (COPS for short) resides on Gaelyne Gasson's Videocam web site in Australia. Dale and I owe a big Thanks to Gaelyne for her help in starting this resource.

To join the list send an e-mail to: [cops-request@videocam.net.au](mailto:cops-request@videocam.net.au) with the word 'subscribe' in the subject.

**Credits**

This page was produced on a C-128D running geoPublish under Wheels 128. The text was laid out using LW-Roma 10 point font while the page header was set in 18 point LW-Zapf. The page was printed on a LexMark 4039 Plus Laser Printer at 600 Dots per Inch (DPI).



## Commodore MailLink - March 1999 Avoid PC FUD - upgrade your Commodore.

PAGE 9

February 5, 1999. An article in our local paper today brought the news that Microsoft will offer a FREE upgrade to their new Office 2000 software package for anyone who buys the current Office '97 package between January 1st and June 30th of this year. This upgrade offer was made to counter the fears that people had towards buying the '97 package when the 2000 package is expected soon. Considering the prices of these packages it is easy to understand why PC users suffer from FUD (fear, uncertainty and doubt) on a regular basis.

The Office '97 package comes in various configurations and includes a word processor, spreadsheet, presentation graphics program, e-mail software and, in advanced versions, a database program. The new Office 2000 suite features greater Web integration as well as other enhancements over the present package.

Since I mentioned the price playing a part in the FUD factor what will this new package cost if you don't get the FREE upgrade? Well, if you want the basic version, the upgrade price is only \$389; \$769 if you don't qualify for the upgrade. A step up to the Professional version will set you back \$539 for an upgrade while the price a new user will pay is \$929. The top of the line Premium package hits the cashier at \$699 for the upgrade and a whopping \$1,229 for new users.

Ouch! OK. Let's all pick our jaws up from the floor and think about this. Anywhere from \$400 to \$1200 gets a PC user one software package. This is for applications only and still requires the user to own an Operating System to run them on. Upgrade prices for Windows 98 are over \$100. PC Drawing programs and FAX software run into the hundreds of dollars for each package also.

All of a sudden it is very obvious that we, as Commodore users, owe Eric Lee far more than the twenty odd dollars we paid him to own a copy of The Write Stuff (TWS). I don't want to continue discussing the PC world but hope to convince people to upgrade their PC-'s instead.

What kind of upgrades do I think people should consider? Anything that will increase your computer productivity. How do we determine this? Simple. Getting more work done in less time means you

have increased your productivity.

For starters get yourself a RAM Expansion Unit. It doesn't have to be a Commodore REU which are hard to find - it just has to be accessible by the programs that you use. Nowadays, the only RAM units being produced come from CMD and include their CMD 1750 series with up to 2 MBs of RAM and their RAMLink units with up to 16 MBs of powered, battery-backed RAM.

At one time RAM units were considered the exclusive domain of power users. This is no longer the case as many of the finest programs we have today support RAM in one fashion or another. The afore-mentioned TWS is not copy-protected and loves to be installed into a RAMLink. While the program loads fast enough from a floppy it is lightning quick from a RAMLink and spell-checking from RAM (ewe due cheque yore spilling write?) is a pleasure to do.

GoDot supports expansion RAM of almost every kind for various duties. Of course, GEOS is one package for the Commodore that loves a RAM unit and the new Wheels upgrade, along with the forthcoming MegaPatch3, won't run without RAM.

Right after RAM you should think about extra storage space. These days the best floppy storage space comes in the form of the CMD FD-2000 disk drive. This little workhorse holds the contents of nearly ten 1541 disks on one 3.5" floppy disk. Since you can keep more information in one place you will spend less time changing disks and thereby become more productive. The drive also has built-in JiffyDOS to speed up drive access as well as an optional clock unit to set the time in programs like Novaterm.

Once you have RAM and a high capacity floppy drive you will want to turn your attention towards the acquisition of a Hard Drive. Again we set our sights on the headquarters of CMD for one of their HD series Hard Drives. These units come in sizes up to 2 GigaBytes (more than 12,000 floppies!) and feature JiffyDOS and an internal clock. While the speed of these units is terrific when daisy-chained on the serial port you will get amazing results by using the parallel connection from a RAMLink unit. The storage available on an HD drive is enough that you can put away your floppy

collection and work without touching a diskette. Again, many of the popular programs like GoDot, GEOS, Wheels, TWS and Novaterm come to life when run from a Hard Drive.

Once you become more organized and faster at getting your work done you will want to think about looking better in the material you present to others. Inkjet printers really make TWS shine and if you use GEOS you have to know that many Laser Printers are available on the used market for unparalleled output. Either of these options are faster than a dot-matrix.

To stay in touch with the entire world you need a Turbo232 interface so that you can use high speed modems and improve your on-line productivity. Again, CMD is the place so grab your shopping cart and head on over to East Longmeadow, Maine. It should be noted that you may want to check the used computer stores, classifieds or on-line 'for sale' areas as many PC users are getting rid of modems (you want an external model) that are 'too slow' for them but are excellent when driven by a Commodore. Your best bet is to buy a FAX/modem model so that you can make use of geoFAX.

The latest and greatest productivity enhancer is the SuperCPU from CMD. This cartridge powers your Commodore at 20 MHz instead of the normal 1. Couple this with a RAMLink and hold on for the ride!

Alright, we have picked up the items that we need to really pump up our PC='s. Let's do some quick math on hardware that will pump up our Commodores while not draining the bank (all prices are in US funds and, where appropriate, taken from Commodore World Issue 24 - check with CMD for current pricing before ordering).

A 2 MB CMD 1750XL Ram Cartridge costs us \$99, an FD-2000 drive rings in at \$179, a 500 MB Hard Drive adds another \$439, a Turbo232 is just \$39.95 and a SuperCPU 64 with 4 MBs of RAM checks out at \$294. Inkjet printers are under \$200 and I know people who have picked up used PostScript Lasers for less than \$100.

My total comes to \$1251 (with an Inkjet). Add another \$21 for shipping and all of this power is yours for what a new PC user can expect to pay for an operating system and one high-end software package. To top it off you can avoid FUD and continue using all of the software you are familiar with - just a

lot faster!

If you still want more proof as to how a Laser Printer will enhance your output I will explain a bit about this 2-page article you have just read. I wrote the article using geoWrite 128 and created the two-column layout in geoPublish. I then proceeded to Laser Print the page (yes, singular) and was almost ready to send it off to Rolf. I then realized that a lot of group members don't use GEOS and may be getting tired of me continually pushing GEOS and Laser Printing.

I took my geoWrite article and converted it to TRUE ASCII text with a GEOS program called WrongIsWrite. This converted file was loaded into TWS 128 where I reformatted it and printed it on my Canon BJ-200 Inkjet printer.

I felt this was a great opportunity to kill two birds with one stone. I could help Rolf fill space if he didn't get enough submissions while showcasing some of the productivity enhancements I have been writing about.

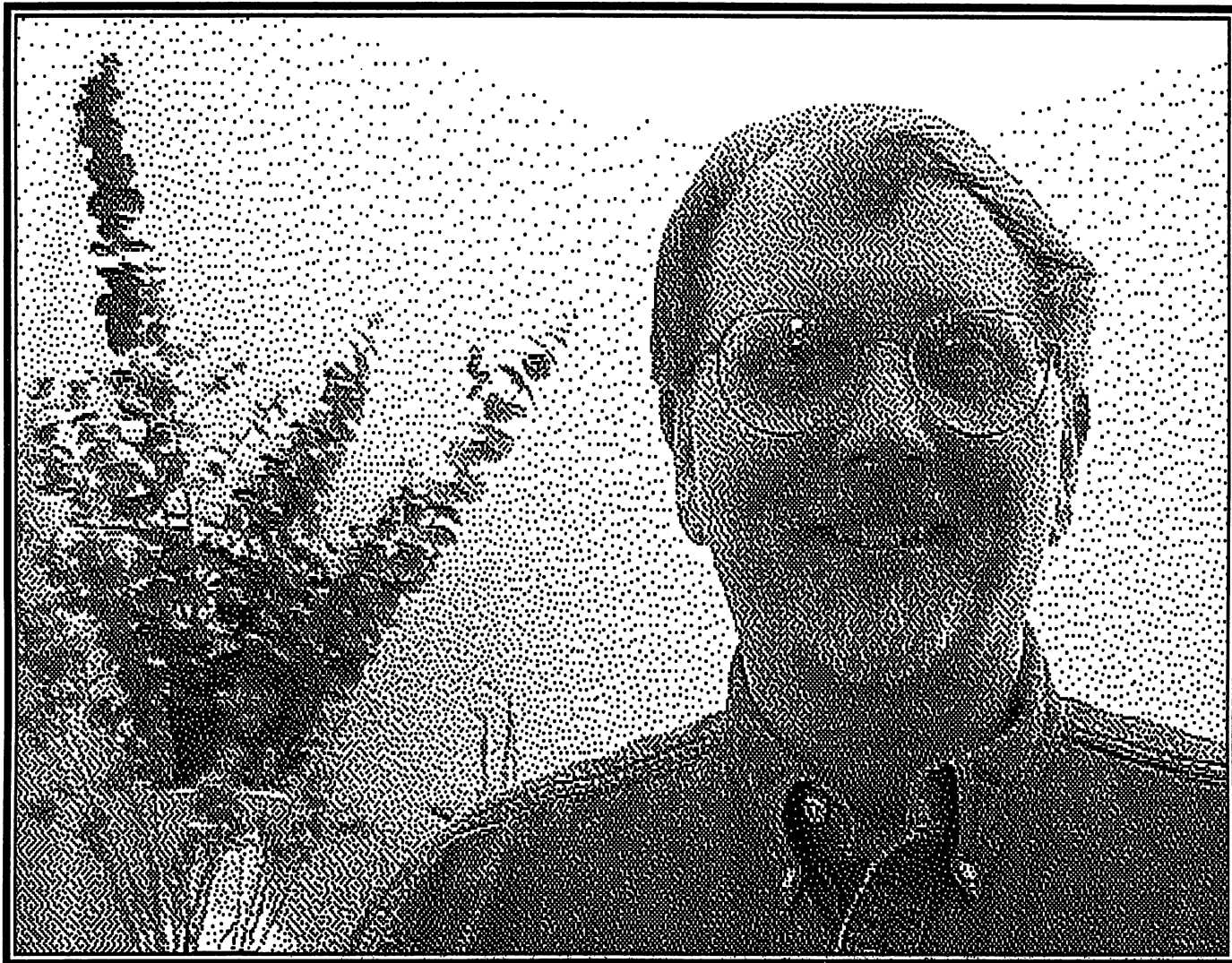
I have not been a regular GEOS 128 user because I could run GEOS 64 at 4 MHz with my TurboMaster accelerator and then at 20 MHz once I got my SCPU. Nevertheless, my writing was always done in The Write Stuff 128 and imported into GEOS. Wheels allows me to run geoWrite 128 at 20 MHz so I have started using it on a more regular basis. The SuperCPU provides such a speed increase that I find a product that I didn't use before to be more useful to me and it has saved me time on publishing projects.

My Laser Printer got this entire article onto one page. The text was crisp and clear at 600 DPI and the laser prints a lot faster than my BJ-200. Again, the enhancements I have made to my system allow me to continue to use familiar software while saving time and money.

I created the heading and column dividers in geoPublish and Laser Printed them onto the page after printing the text from TWS.

Hopefully this will convince some of you to look into the many great products that are available for Commodore users as the 1990's come to a close. A small investment can pay off big time for years to come.

Bruce Thomas



### HOW WAS THIS PAGE CREATED?

The graphic was created by first taking a picture of myself with a Sony Mavica digital camera, creating a standard 640x480 JPEG image. This camera uses IBM HD formatted disks to record images. Li'l Red Reader and a CMD FD-2000 drive transferred the image to a Commodore disk.

Novaterm 9.6 and ZMODEM were used to upload the image to my UNIX shell home directory. I then used the command: `djpeg -gif -grayscale filename.jpg > filename.gif` to create a 640x480 GIF image.

After downloading this image, and booting Wheels128, I used geoGIF to translate it to a geoPaint image, and ScrapCan to copy a slightly smaller image to a Photo Scrap. I then imported this scrap into geoPublish and added a frame around it.

The top line of text was created in Page Graphics mode, while the remainder of the text originated as a geoWrite128 file imported into text regions and edited in the normal manner.

The page was sent to a Panasonic KXP-5400 postscript laser printer using geoPublaserGC and a CMD GeoCable II.

### WHAT ABOUT MAILINK ON DISK?

A sequential file was created from the geoPublish-modified geoWrite 128 file using WrongIsWrite81.

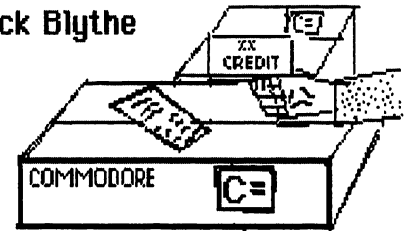
The GIF file created for geoGIF to convert was far too large (over 1000 blocks) for GIF viewers such as Giffy (64) and GDS (128) to handle. For Giffy I used the command: `djpeg -gif -colors 16 scale 1/2 filename.jpg > filename.gif` to create an image size of 320x240. The scale option can use parameters of 1/2, 1/4, and 1/8. For GDS, I used the same command without the scale option, because GDS can handle 640x480 images.

"NOW is the BEST time to compute on a 64/128!"

DAVE PETERSON [davpete@netins.net](mailto:davpete@netins.net)

**REMEMBER THE 1980s, AND YOUR NEW COMMODORE by Rick Blythe**

Many of you may remember back to 198?, and that beautiful new Commodore Computer. The reasons that you bought it may vary, but it was yours. What do you remember of the day, that you set it up?



Let's look at a few examples of memories from the earlier 1980s, and see if any of these fit in with yours. There was a high school teacher, and the school board decided the teachers needed to learn the computer. That started with the lowest bid, and a Radio Shack TRS 80, often called "TRASH 80s". Due to that, there was at least one person who didn't want the TRS 80 as their home computer.

Their shopping began by looking at the Apple, the old IBMs, and the VIC. With that, the Commodore 64 was replacing the VIC 20s, and a chain store was offering, a package with a C=64, tape, 1541 disc drive, Okidata 2 printer, SR monitor, plus a joystick, and some various software. Maybe you remember that then, the C = 64 software had various thought games such as Dr. Livingstone, etc.. Remember learning to draw with a computer, using Turtle Graphics. Maybe your first word processor was Magic Desk, that required the joy stick as using it. Maybe the reader should look at all of their old programs that are now filed away .

That teacher told of when, they'd returned to Graduate School at night, and on summer breaks, for an EdD Degree. It was over 10 years after thier M.S., and they knew that a type-writer was not the thing to use for a Dissertation, as was done for a Master's Thesis. The C= 64, was used, and Melody Hall's; Power Word was chosen as the word-processor. To get the required Word Perfect print on over 100 pages, a Blue Chip daisy wheel printer was also purchased.

Later in the 1980s, that teacher, after promotion, was shopping, and found thier ultimate program, GEOS (1.5 & later 2.0). Look at your own memories, while still using a Commodore; with, or without GEOS. Old-timers may remember transferring programs from a tape to a disc, or the T.V. as your monitor.

As souped-up Commodores maybe used for writing Mailink, this was done in GEOS, on a normal C = 64, with a 1581 drive, and printed on a Star SJ-48 inkjet printer, operating as an Epson LQ (cc) connected with a CMD interface.

Here in 1999 after those long past times, does the reader remember the Commodore things that are now gone. What about the past Commodore users that moved to MAC, but now have IBM Clones using the ever changing Windows. This author will close with, a happy memory of the 15 (+ or -) years ago, and that first new Commodore 64, which was used for this.

## Harler's Hearty Hash

Let's start with two of the favorite topics of the day: Y2K readiness and the beginning of the millenium. We'll branch out from there. (Some of this you have probably read before, so count those parts as a refresher course.)

All of the hype about the Y2K problem has confused what will happen on the first day of January 2000 (the need for four-digit years) with the beginning of the next millenium. The easiest item to clarify is the beginning of the millenium, which will be 1 January 2001. The reason it doesn't begin a year earlier is that there is no Year Zero in the Gregorian calendar. That means the first decade of the present era was Year One thru Year Ten, rather than Year Zero thru Year Nine. Considering years 1-10 as the first decade, years 11-20 would be the second, right up to the years 1991-2000. So, regardless of the hype, now we all know when the millenium will begin.

Of course, that doesn't solve problem and reminds me that when I told my boss about the problem (back in the early '70s) his reply was: 'Don't worry about it. We don't have the time now and, anyway, you'll be retired by then.' (Got the same general response when I told him about ZIP+4, the nine-digit ZIP code.) Many people claim they don't care when the millenium begins, they're going to celebrate on 12/31/99! What'd ya say? 'My mind's made up. Don't confuse me with the facts'?

For the really difficult to convince there's the \$130 Millenium Countdown watch, which 'ticks backward toward January 1, 2001.' Unfortunately, the watch can be reprogrammed to count backwards to any date, so those who are convinced that January 1, 2000, is really the date will be able to 'prove' their point.

Our next problem is Y2K readiness. Commodore users really have it easy on this one because we can test our programs without the fear of permanently messing up anything. If you run into a problem, just turn off the computer and let it start anew when you turn it back on.

Here are results of tests I ran on the *Big Blue Reader* and *The Write Stuff*. (And, if you're looking for something to write about for the next *Mailink*, fill us in on the results you got when you tested your favorite programs.)

BBR does *not* turn over at midnight at any time, so it will not automatically go from 1999 to 2000 when the clock strikes midnight on December 31. The good news, however, is that the years from 2000 thru 2099 are available. We doubt that any of us (or our computers) will make it that far.

*The Write Stuff* (and probably most other C= wordprocessors) uses its clock as a timer, so there's no worry about Y2K. However, if you have a real-time clock and your wordprocessor (or other program) takes the date from it, you could have a problem. In that case, we suggest you test the real-time clock and let us know the results.

C-128 users can key C-64 BASIC programs much quicker and easier if they do the job in C-128 mode. The biggest help is the automatic line-numbering feature. In addition, data (DATA, PRINT, etc.) can be assigned to the F-keys.

One of the quirks of *The Write Stuff* shows up when printing a two-column page. Double quotes turn on the graphic mode so reversed characters in the adjacent column print as graphics.

This page was produced by Ed Harler on a C-128, using *The Write Stuff* and a Seikosha SP-1000VC.

SOME THINGS I LEARNED THE HARD WAY by Charlie Colwell

Have you ever fired up your trusty C=64 only to have your drive not working and something wrong with the whole set up? I have! Guess what? I had the 5 volt reference wire for my Epson printer disconnected. My interface was plugged into my disk drive, but not the 5 volt reference wire. It must be everything or nothing.

A bad power supply can not only let the smoke out of your computer, it can make a drive or printer act up. I built an A/C D/C guage set that I link between my power supply and my computer. I make sure that the A/C voltage is no lower than 9 volts and doesn't go above 9.5 volts. The D/C voltage must remain at 5 volts. Low voltage can be as bad as high voltage. Imagine your computer chips as a rubber band in the middle of a link with something (low voltage) pulling on that link. Reverse cremation!

For the folks that have hard to find printer ribbons, there is a company here in California that does a great job of re-inking or rebuilding printer ribbons. The address is Inky Dew, 7297 University Ave, La Mesa, CA 91941-5927. The phone number is (619) INKYDEW.

I put this masterpiece together using a C=64, a 1541 disk drive, and an Epson FX-80 printer with a Xetec Super Graphix Jr printer interface. I used a program called Key punch, which is a seq. word processor with a letter writer, a mail list, a phone list, and a labler. It is super easy to use. "That's the way I like it, uhuh-uhuh."

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 PRINTING POST CARDS  
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by Chris Fite, revised

The Post Office sells 3.5" X 5.5" stamped postcards for \$0.20 each. So, for writing brief correspondence, you can save over a third on postage using postcards, and the card is free.

To use a single card in an impact printer requires a friction feed. And if the paper-out sensor cannot be disabled, insert a sheet of paper behind the card. If the print head mechanism will not hold the card firmly against the platen, use some drafting tape from an office supply store (it will peel away without tearing the card) and tape the top and bottom

edges of the postcard to the platen, which prevents the print head from snagging on the card.

Or, use continuous form pin-fed cards, which is also the solution where friction feed is not an option. Though fan-fold pin-fed cards are lighter stock than the cards provided by the Post Office, they will work fine and are available in a 4" X 6" size which is acceptable to the Post Office (3" X 5" cards are below the minimum size, larger than 4" X 6" is above the maximum size).

Setting up the word processor for postcards is no different than setting up for a letter. Merely adjust the page width and page length to the size of the card. Then provide appropriate margins.###

+++++ Q &amp; A +++++

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## THE BEST KEPT SECRET IN COMMODORE

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by K. Dale Sidebottom, edited

Q. Does anybody know how to get around having to unplug a Super Graphix Jr. in order to change drive numbers on a hard drive? (Stanley Weintraub)

A. From: r.harris1@genie.com  
I'm not sure what he is referring to, but here are some thoughts on the subject.

If it is a CMD HD, are you referring to the CONTROL-D toggle used by JiffyDOS to change the default drive number? If so, then (on the 64 only or 128 in 64 mode) press the @ key before doing the CONTROL-D toggle. The serial bus needs to be cleared the first time you power up on the 64, or else it appears to hang.

If you are using the HD with a RAMLink AND a parallel cable, YOU MUST enter the @p0 command before running HD-TOOLS or it WILL hang. HD-TOOLS can't use the parallel cable. So entering the @p0 command tells the RAMLink to NOT use the parallel cable. Resetting the computer, or entering @p1 will restore parallel cable use.

Lastly, if you are trying to press the SWAP buttons on the HD (or FD or RL for that matter) before doing any other serial bus access on the 64, it won't work. In 64 mode only do you have to just enter a @ by itself (assuming you have JiffyDOS) to clear the serial bus before pressing the SWAP buttons.

REPLY: Thanks for the info on the CMD hard drive. I was referring to the swap buttons. With the SuperGraphics Jr. plugged in I could not get the 8 or 9 swap buttons to work or the write protect button. Resetting the hard drive didn't seem to make any difference and when I use the @ key, I get a device not present error. However, after resetting the hard drive again, I got a directory and the device 8 and 9 lights started working. This seems to have solved my problem. Since the interface gets its power from the datasette port, I thought about putting a switch in that line which should allow me to leave the interface plugged in all the time, but may not have to. (Stanley Weintraub)

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Q. Does anyone know how to get past the second screen of BOULDER DASH? (Stanley Weintraub)

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For years I have been waiting for someone to write a program that will read a CD. This media makes available virtually no-limit storage capacity to the Commodore. A standard CD holds the equivalent of a whopping 1927 double-sided 1541 disks!

So when I read a report of a European programmer accessing a CD-ROM device from a Commodore, I emailed him. He informed me that a Commodore user in the US was already reading files from an IBM formatted CD, and sent his email address!

I connected with John Hoepker, an enthusiastic member of the MACUG (Madison Area Commodore Users Group). He informed me of a program called CD-ROM Commander. Imagine my surprise to discover that he had been using this program for three years! He also said that used CD-ROM devices can be found everywhere, and they are cheap! (Sure enough. One found cost only \$30!)

I then heard from a Commodore friend in Germany and found he, too, was using CD-ROM Commander. He furthermore added a very important missing piece of information. This is a commercial product, written and being sold by a fellow in Germany.

I emailed him and confirmed that he wrote and sells "CD-ROM-Commander 128" and has been doing so since 1995. The program reads all ISO-9660 CDs and copies their files to all CBM and CMD disk drives. The SCSI CD-ROM drive must be connected to a CMD hard drive with a SCSI cable.

I offered to act as an American distributor. If interested in this best kept secret in Commodore, contact me.###

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## THE MAIN REASON I LOVE MY C64

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from Robert W. Kribs, edited excerpt

I bought my Commodore 64 in 1987 and have been upgrading it ever since. It is not the most powerful computer around, but it is best for the uses I put it to: word processing, data bases, simple drawing, games and of course GEOS.

The main reason I love my C64 is that I can program it. My latest effort is a program capable of running within GEOS.###

## Program Assisted Word Processing

## TWO &amp; THREE COLUMN PRINTING

```

1 rem 2/3columns
8 nc=3:ef=.7:yf=2:rem nc=2:ef=.5:yf=1
10 f$="filename":c=4:cw=20:forx=1tocw+c:s$=s$+" ":next:dimc$(300):open8,8,8,f$
20 a=1:forx=0tol:get#8,g$:x=st:ifg$=chr$(13)thena=a+abs(x=0):goto35
30 c$(a)=c$(a)+g$
35 next:close8:e%=a/nc+ef
40 f$="."+f$:open8,8,8,f$+" ,s,w":forx=1toe%:fory=0toyf:c$(0)=c$(x+e%*y)+s$
50 print#8, left$(c$(0),cw+(abs(y<yf)*c));:next:print#8:next:close8

```

Some word processors are capable of printing in double columns. Other are not. Then there is three-column printing. However, whether or not a particular word processing program possesses the ability has nothing to do with being able to do it. The fact is that any word processor which is able to produce an ascii sequential text file can be made to print in two or three columns.

One of the advantages of using a Commodore is the ease with which it can be programmed. And the programming does not have to be complex. Very often, a routine of fewer than ten lines is able to accomplish a great deal.

Applied to the task of word processing, a little programming can enhance the results in numerous ways. This includes the creation of pages containing text in double or triple columns. The type-in program heading this article is responsible for the three-column format on this page.

This is an outline of the procedure. Decide upon two or three columns. Plan the page margins and number of spaces between columns. Determine the column width. Create the text in a single column which doesn't exceed the determined width, with a carriage return at the

end of each line. Save the prepared text to disk as a sequential text file. Exit the word processor and run the program with the proper column selection in line 8 (nc=3:ef=.7:yf=2 for three columns, nc=2:ef=.5:yf=1 for two), proper filename in line 10 along with C equal to the space to use between columns and CW equal to the column width.

The program creates a sequential file of the text formatted in two or three columns as selected. The filename is the same as in line 10 except that it has a . at its beginning. Load it into the word processor and print the page using the margins as planned, but set the right margin zero for the columns since they are already formatted.

Calculate the column width this way. Add up the left and right margins and the space between columns as planned for the printed page. Subtract the total from the page width to be used. Divide the result by the number of columns. For example, with a page width of 80, left and right margins of 6, and 4 spaces planned between columns, the math for three columns is  $80-6-6-4-4=60/3=20$ .

This page used a page width of 102 (allowed by 12CPI printing). This made room for a column width of

28 with 4 spaces between them and left margin of 6. The right margin, though calculated at 4, was set to zero for printing the columns as explained.

To accomplish the page plan, typing the not longer than 28-character column lines took place on three 66-line pages, each with a top margin of 18 (to allow for the header line, title, and program listing), and a bottom margin of 3. Each page, thus, represented a column. Limiting the text within those three pages guaranteed that the three columns would not exceed the full page. Where the material is less than a page, increasing the bottom margin allows predicting free space.

Some word processors (like TWS) allow setting up the page as described, typing the text as one document, and previewing it as three pages. But regardless of the way it is done, the program needs the text saved as a single sequential document in an ascii file. (Be sure any nontext items, such as formatting codes, are removed before saving.)

Note that the program uses carriage returns to count the lines. So, extra carriage returns within at the end of the text will affect the outcome.###



# ACCESSING THE PRINTER

When it comes to printing text on a dot-matrix or laser type printer, using the printer's built-in fonts and abilities produces the best results. While those who use graphic based word processors may find themselves limited in this regard, those who use text based word processors are not. And programs which allow embedding printer codes within their text make manipulating the printer easy. However, if the program does not provide for such coding, that deficiency need not prevent accessing the printer's capabilities.

*This page is the product of a dot-matrix printer using a word processor without embedded printer coding. In other words, all of the font selections and special effects resulted from issuing printer commands outside the word processor.*

For example, before printing the title line of this page, direct commands to the printer set it up to print quadruple size characters in Near Letter Quality mode. This can be done apart from the program because most printers maintain their configuration until changed, reset, or turned off. Thus,

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Using the printer's built-in fonts and abilities produces the best results.

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the printer set up is not affected by loading the program. After printing the title, turning

the printer off and on reset it, and Pica NLQ selected. Many printers provide for these selections at the printer. If not, it requires issuing a command. In some cases, this can be done without exiting the program. In any event, changes can be instituted anytime. Hence, the italicized second paragraph.

Directly issuing a printer command outside of a program merely involves bringing the computer to its READY state, typing the command, and pressing RETURN to execute. The computer is READY at turn on. If a program is running, holding down the STOP key and tapping the RESTORE key often brings the READY prompt. Several word processors allow the STOP/RESTORE procedure, then resume when RUN is executed.

Printer commands issued directly take the form of OPEN4,4,7: PRINT#4, command string: CLOSE4. The command string consists of a series of CHR\$(n) functions where n is the required decimal ASCII value to effect the desire action. These values differ between various printers, making the printer's manual indispensable. Indeed, the key to discovering exactly what a printer can do is its manual.

The three-column section came about by typing the columns, not a particularly efficient endeavor. The expanded text insert is the product of two-pass printing in which the text is overprinted in the space planned for it. Graphics can be placed in the same way. If the page is to act as a master for photocopying, cut and paste is an alternative.

As for the lines at the top and bottom of the inserted text, they could be created by printing, but it's quicker to just draw them in using a straight edge.###

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THREE-IN-ONE 1541 PROJECT

WRITE-PROTECT, OVERRIDE WRITE-PROTECT, 8/9 DEVICE SWITCH  
 compiled from several sources

Do you dislike messing with write-protect tabs and having to notch disks? And would you like an easy way to switch the 1541 to device 9? This simply project provides the solution to all three.

The write protect works this way. In order for the drive to write (format, save, scratch, etc.), an electric eye in the drive must "see" through the write-protect notch. Covering the notch blocks the eye and no writing will occur. This explains why notching the other side of the disk is necessary to make the flip side usable.

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    If you remove the top
    cover and internal metal
    shield of a 1541, you'll
    see several plugs with
    wires on the motherboard.
    One is a 15-pin plug. At
    pin 13 there is a green
    (sometimes purple) wire.
    At pin 12 there is an
    orange wire. These two
    wires carry the electric
    eye signal. So, cutting
    the pin-13 green (purple)
    wire "blinds" the eye and
    the drive will not write
    to the disk.
    
```

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    To make the write-
    protect condition of
    the drive switchable,
    install an on/off switch in line between
    the two cut ends of the pin-13 wire.
    
```

On the other hand, connecting a wire between the green and orange wires has the effect of making the drive think the disk has an open notch even if it doesn't. This is not a good idea by itself. The write-protect mechanism also detects when disks are changed in the drive. Hence, disabling the sensor can produce disk errors ranging from minor annoyances to major disasters.

However, placing an on/off switch in line with the connecting wire also makes this switchable. But there is no need to add a second switch. Instead, use a three position switch providing on/off/on. This

type of switch usually has three posts. The middle post is common to both top and bottom posts: up connecting the middle post to one, down to the other, and center is off.

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    +---orange---o      So, scrape
      +---green---o    some insulation
    ---green---+      off the orange
                    wire to bare metal
    and solder a wire from it to one of the
    switch's outer posts. Cut the green wire
    and solder an extending wire from the plug-
    side end to the center post. Solder an
    extending wire from the other end to the
    other outer post.
    
```

This switch can be flipped to any position between operations without having to turn the drive off and on. When the switch is on in one position, it connects the green wire and the drive operates normally, writing disks only if the write-protect notch is open.

When the switch is at its center position, the green wire has no connection and the drive will not write to a disk even if the notch is open.

When the switch is on in the other position, the pin-side of the green wire is connected to the orange wire and the drive will write to a disk even if there is no notch or it is write-protected.

While in the guts of the drive, it's an easy matter at this point to make the device switchable between 8 and 9. The manual says to permanently change a 1541 from 8 to 9, cut the solder path between the two half-moon spots of Jumper 1. Do so, then look closely at the two Jumpers to see a circuit trace connecting one half-moon spot of each Jumper to the other. Solder a wire to the half-moon spot of the cut Jumper 1 that is NOT connected to the other Jumper. Solder the other end of the wire to the pin-12 orange wire.

Now, if the drive is turn on with the switch in the normal position, it will be 8. But if turned on with the switch set write-protect (or a write-protected disk in the drive), it will be 9.###

In the September Mailink, Rolf Miller discussed "Printers". Armed with his recommendation for "higher quality" printers, I capitalized on a great deal on a Hewlett-Packard Desk Jet 500. I couldn't have done better. The output looks like it came off a printing press. It is quiet and fast. Just to set matters straight, it's connected to a C64 through the most basic of Cardco interfaces, the interface doesn't even have any switches! (probably one of their first models).

I've been able to send software commands through the word processor I normally use (Cardco's "Write Now!") as well as in BASIC commands to get other styles of printing, underling, etcetera. That has been especially nice since the HP has an envelope handling feature so that I can print out an envelope with my return address in small print and the sending address in standard size print.

I've yet to try graphics but I thought some might like to know these experiences now. I will report in the future on graphic capability when I get into that.

Above text printed by an HP Desk Jet 500 using Speedscript

Vincent S. W. Dymek

People looking for printer ribbons, ink jet or laser cartridges can contact Michelle or Mike at:

All Ribbons Express, Inc.  
6409 Abercorn Street  
Suite D-1  
Savannah, Georgia 31405

Tel. 912-353-6070  
Fax 912-353-8639

They have ribbons for probably anything you want. In behalf of our user group, I asked about Okidata 120, Commodore MPS 801 and 803, Star NX-1000, Seikosha SP1000VC and Epson ERC-05. They had them all at a fair price and reasonable delivery. For orders \$25 or more, shipping is free. The ribbons received were well inked and they say they guarantee "good" ribbons. If you're tired of the dried out ribbons from Staples, Office Max or Office Depot, you might want to give them a call.

Jean Nance also sent me a page from MEI/Micro Center which is recommended by her and Frank Redmond and they seem to have a good selection. They can be contacted at 800-634-3478.

Another source is possibly Midwestern Diskette who can be contacted at 800-221-6322 Ext. 3050 (Sherry). I say possibly because I do not know of anyone who has tried any of their products. If anyone has, please report.

Above text printed by an HP Desk Jet 500 and using Speedscript.

Vincent S. W. Dymek

>>>> FOR SALE <<<<

MAILINK INDEX

The six-year Mailink index described in the last two issues is still available. Send \$1.50 to Paul Berry.

FREE OFFER

The CIVIC 64/128 User Group offers Mailink readers a complimentary issue of their monthly newsletter on disk. The disk also contains programs pertaining to the issue, and the back side contains a selection of programs from that month's library review. Contact Rolf Miller or mail requests to CIVIC 64/128, PO BOX 2442, Oxnard, CA 93034-2442.

COMPLETE GEOS SYSTEM

I have a complete GEOS system package for sale that includes GEOS 64 V2.0 disks & manual along with geoCalc, 1351 mouse & pad, 1764 256K REU w/power supply, all in original boxes with disks & manuals. Also includes 20 boxed 5.25 disks, new or filled with PD GEOS software at purchasers option. Asking price of \$110.00 US includes shipping anywhere in North America. Contact Bruce Thomas

SCSI HD UNITS

Two Conner 200 MB and two Maxtor 245 MB units. It is a simple process to upgrade a CMD Hard Drive by swapping in one of these mechanisms. \$40 US each for the 200 MB units or \$45 US each for the 245 MB units. This includes postage in N. America. First-come, first-served. Before sending money, contact Bruce Thomas Ph: 780-478-3613

PROGRAMS

For listings of programs on 5.25 disks, send SASE to: John A. Fernandez Jr.

USED WARE &

The Cincinnati Commodore Computer Club has a LOT of used software and equipment for sale at very reasonable prices. Send a floppy mailer with return postage to: CCCC c/o Roger Hoyer

TELNET SERVICE

VideoCam Services is pleased to announce a new telnet service designed specifically for Commodore users. This provides members with Commodore-friendly service, support and guidance in learning about the Internet. To cover the expenses of this service, a yearly membership fee of \$30.00 Australian, (or \$19.95 US if paying by US check) is required.

VideoCam Services also announces that "The Internet for Commodore C64/128 Users" manual is now available for a new single price of \$29.95 Australian, or \$19.95 US if paying by US check. Bulk order prices have also been reduced. Contact Gaelyne or Rod Gasson. Ph: +61 8322-2716 Fax: +61 8387-5810

>>>> WANTED <<<<

I want to buy an original FONTMASTER-64 by Xetec with manual (I have the 128 version). Eloise Cary. Ph: (805) 528-7868

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