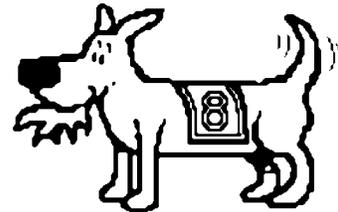


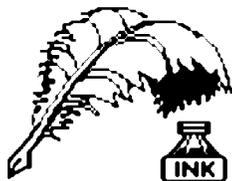
The Zero Page

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



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

Number 41, March 1997



Don's Digest

by Don McManamey

Over the last few months, I have talked about an image I came across many years ago. People have really enjoyed embarrassing me over this issue because

of the subject matter. It is the image of a young lady who didn't have much in the way of modesty. Those who have seen the picture understand, though they may razz me a bit.

You see, the subject matter is not what I found so interesting. The interesting thing is how the picture was created. I assume the picture had its origin back in the days before dot matrix printers. I also assume it was created using a mainframe, back when computer time was sold for a great price. This leads me to think it may have been done at a university where students had time to do such things at no cost to them. Now, if you wanted to use a computer and printer to create pictures in those days how were you going to do it? Remember you didn't have a dot matrix printer. The only way would be to use standard keyboard characters to give varying amount of grey or a grey scale to provide light and dark in a picture. This picture was made predominantly with the following characters:

' " - : . M H A D T I Z F P

Since each character has a different percentage of black vs. white, it creates this grey scale we need when viewed at a distance. Someone figured out a way, perhaps some sort of scanner, to create the combination of characters needed to make what at close range just looks like alphabet soup, but at a distance blends to make a picture.

The picture of which I have spoken so many times was for a long time the only one I had of this type. When I finally found others they were crude in comparison and the subject matter was no better. A few months back when I displayed this picture, Dale told me he had about 400 such pictures, and not all of girls. I don't think anybody is creating this type of image anymore and so what there is is what there is.

At the February meeting, I showed off one of these new-found pictures. It was Neil Armstrong on the moon and used a process called "overstriking." This process prints characters on top of

**Next CUW Meeting:
Saturday, March 8
1:00 - 5:00 pm
1411 South Oliver**

**Don McManamey and Dale Lutes
will demonstrate the software
featured on the new Disk O'Quarter.**

characters to create combinations not on the keyboard. In this way you can get a greater range of density. This image was printed on nine pages with some lines being printed as many as five times! Now my original picture was printed using a word processor. This one was too large to print that way, so we tried to print it using a sequential file reader. We used the little seven block reader found on the DOQ. This turned out to be very slow. In fact, Neil Armstrong took about nine hours! Now the slowness was not the fault of the printer, nor was the computer incapable of going faster. The problem was the program. This program was written in BASIC and is very slow. I remembered Dale saying that a sequential file reader was not a difficult program to write,

so I asked him if he could write one in machine language to which he replied "yes." He wasted no time getting the project done. The program is called **LISPIC V1.0** and I have included it on the March 1997 DOQ. Armed with this new program we printed Neil Armstrong in about fifty minutes. Not only does the new DOQ contain LISPIC, but Dale has graciously provided some new artwork which I have also included. These pictures are of a wholesome nature and can be printed on a 64 or 128. You should be able to print at least some of these pictures on any printer including Commodore printers and daisy wheel printers.

(continued on next page)

Dale has provided the option of printing in condensed mode and six or eight lines per inch. This may help in making the pictures in the proper proportion. I have written a program to enhance LISPIC providing you have a Star NX1020 printer. If you don't have you may be able to change the codes to fit your printer. **NX1020 format** will allow you to go into superscript and adjust the line spacing by as little as one two hundred sixteenth of an inch. If you are using my program you must run it first. LISPIC requires the file name to include .lis or .pic at the end. At the prompt select condensed if you prefer but do not choose eight lines per inch if you have adjusted the line spacing already with NX1020 format. Finally, if your printer or interface gives automatic line feeds you must turn this feature off. If you have a Xetec Super Graphix Jr. set switches 2, 3, and 4 to the off position. This will put you into transparent mode (needed to send codes to the printer) and turns off the automatic line feeds. Some people cannot see the forest for the trees. Until next time, I hope all your images are clear.

The Zero Page is a monthly publication of the Commodore Users of Wichita. The opinions expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the CUW. Unless otherwise stated, articles in this newsletter may be reprinted by other Commodore user groups without permission provided that the author and the CUW are given proper credit.

Meetings of the CUW are scheduled for the second Saturday of each month. The deadline for articles is 14 days prior to the meeting day. Submissions are accepted on 1541, 1571, or 1581 formatted floppy disks. geoWrite, ASCII, or PETASCII files are preferred. In a pinch, paper hard copy will work. Call Dale at 721-0835 or mail your articles to:

Commodore Users of Wichita
c/o Dale Lutes
11102 W. 17th Street
Wichita, KS 67212-1187

In case you are interested, *The Zero Page* is produced using a Commodore 128 and geoPublish. geoPubLaser is used to print the final copy on a PostScript laser printer.

March Meeting Agenda

1:00 - 2:00	Equipment setup, informal meeting
2:00 - 2:45	Business meeting
2:45 - 3:00	Break
3:00 - 4:00	Feature demo
4:00 - 5:00	Meeting over, informal gathering, equipment teardown



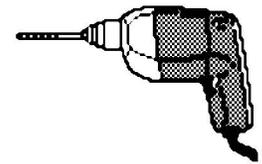
March is a Disk
O'Quarter month.
Members who live in
the Wichita area must
see Don McManamey
to get their disk. Don



always has copies of every issue,
so if you've missed a disk or two,
he can bring you up to date.
Back issues are also available for club
members to purchase at \$2.00 per disk.

Tips and Bits

by Dwayne Howard



Well, here it is March and I think that I have missed two meetings. First, I would like to thank the club for the potted plant that they sent.

If you are going to stay in the club, it is all we have left of the Commodore 64 and Amiga. Yes, I said Amiga. I have one for sale for \$80.00. This is from a person not in the club, but he heard we are still going and he bought one of those off brands.

I guess I like my old Commodore 64. It will do what the others do. I'll tell you a short story. I was at an IBM meeting the other day putting a computer together for a club member. There were four people in the room and we were putting Windows in. Well, I spoke up to this other person and said, "Hey, that is just like GEOS."

You know, the PD Library is a good place to spend your time at the club meetings. I guess I have said enough, but please do drop by the library and try it out.

Your CUW Steering Committee members are:

Dale Lutes	Chair, Newsletter Editor
Jerry Shook	Vice-Chair
Marie Both	Financial Officer
Robert Bales	BBS Representative
Arlen Gould	Member at-large
Shaun Halstead	Internet Representative
Dwayne Howard	Public Domain Librarian
Don McManamey	Disk Editor
Morris Shouse	Member at-large



Random Access

by Dale Lutes

A Disk O'Quarter Preview:

December was a very productive month for me and my Commodore. "Whoa, Dale! It's March already! Why are you talking about December?" You see, I had a couple of weeks off in December, so I could devote some extra time to programming. But the next Disk O'Quarter didn't come out until this month, so I've been sitting on a couple of announcements for some time.

The geoSide includes a new program that I've written. ScoreUP is based on a puzzle/game by Sid Sackson published in the April/May 1987 issue of *Games* magazine. You may remember a BASIC version for the C64 and 128 that was included in DOQ number 13. Compare that program with this new ScoreUP and you'll see what a little GEOS can do! Although it's not the most sophisticated program I've written for GEOS, it is the one I am most pleased with in terms of look and operation.

Way back in 1994, DOQ number 7 included GeoMines version 1.0. I received some very good suggestions from club members, and so I had an upgrade on my list of things to do for two years. GeoMines v1.1 is finally here, and it is available on the March DOQ. The enhancements in this version include improved click handling, 80-column support for 128 users, a new "free hole" option, and shortcut keys for all menu items. If you've played the original, I think you will agree that the new version plays much better. As before, I am waiving the shareware fee for CUW members.

While working on ScoreUP, I designed a minimal font for the numbers which appear on the game board using Jim Collette's Font Editor v2.2 (also featured on the new DOQ). I couldn't let that practice go to waste, so I went on to create the Tablature Font Collection. I have seen several fonts for writing musical notes on a staff, but never one that met my needs as an amateur guitarist. The Tablature fonts are for guitar players who would like to use geoWrite to create chord diagrams. For example, all novice guitar players know the C chord. Here is the C chord diagram from the Tablature font:

Rabbit Hunting With a Cannon:



It seems we Commodore users are always defending the use of our machines to IBM, Mac, and Amiga owners. And sometimes, when we are on the defense, we say something like, "our Commodores can do anything those 'other' machines do." If you really think about it though, there are many things our machines can't do.

At least for the present, sophisticated document preparation, advanced animation, and networking are beyond our systems' reach.

Now, I'm not joining the ranks of those other users who have nothing better to do than put down Commodore systems. What I am saying is that we need to qualify what we say in defense of our C64s and 128s. Instead of, "My 128 does everything a PC can do" I say, "My 128 does everything *I need a home computer to do at a small fraction of the cost.*"

The latest issue of *GEOS Publication* has a wonderful article in it by Dale Sidebottom. In it, Dale uses a fictitious conversation between a doctor and patient to help the reader understand when "upgrading" may or may not be appropriate. My favorite part of the article goes like this:

Dr: Does your husband hunt?

Pat: ...Every year he goes rabbit hunting with a gun that he inherited from this grandfather.

Dr: Let's say that he decides to upgrade his firepower and buys a small cannon!

Pat: Let me see if I get the picture. Instead of sending his dog into the thicket, he just blows the whole thicket to hell! If a rabbit dashes across the field and he can land a volley anywhere within 30 yards, that hare is "hamburger!"

Dr: ...Yet that is what millions of Americans are doing! They buy high-priced, high-powered, high-end business machines...and then take them home to chase "rabbits."

I think the analogy that Dale gives is perfect. If you have the *need*, to do something such as run a business out of your home and you *need* the latest software that keeps you competitive, then you are hunting big game and you definitely *need* to upgrade your hardware. But I am certain that the vast majority of PC/Pentium/Windows users are hunting rabbits with a cannon and would do as well with grandpa's gun -- a Commodore 64. The marketing strategies of companies like IBM, Intel, and Microsoft are designed to convince people that the need to upgrade is real even when it's not. You can't fault them for these tactics, it's just good ol' American capitalism at work! What you *can* do is balance the marketing hype with good ol' common sense and upgrade when it is to your advantage, not to IBM's.

My brother-in-law is thinking about buying a PC clone. In order to get a machine with enough power, memory, and disk space to run Windows and the applications he wants, he will have to spend close to \$2000.00. I daresay I have one of the more advanced systems in our club. Even so, my total investment is maybe $\frac{1}{3}$ the cost of his "starter" PC and we aren't even talking about the price of software yet! Is he hunting a rabbit with a cannon? Not if that is the system he must have to meet his family's needs. Is my system a toy? Hardly. It meets my correspondence, desktop publishing, and telecommunications needs perfectly.

As usual, I will have *GEOS Publication* and newsletters from other user groups at our general club meeting. I hope you can find the time to glance through them. We have entered into these newsletter exchange agreements for the benefit of all CUW members.

The Helping Hand

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



Astrology, Biorhythm

Marie Both

Cards, Posters & Signs

Fred Earley

Family Roots

Maxine Ulrich

GEOS

Fred Earley

Dale Lutes

Internet Access

Shaun Halstead

Labels

Jerry Shook

Telecommunications

Robert Bales

Printing in Color

Don McManamey

Jerry Shook

Programming

Dale Lutes

Word Processing & Desktop Publishing

Fred Earley

Don McManamey

Jerry Shook

Dale Lutes

Helping Hand Volunteers

Robert Bales

744-2580

Marie Both

262-2338

Fred Earley

722-4044

Shaun Halstead

942-5809

Dale Lutes

721-0835

Don McManamey

265-2560

Jerry Shook

776-2683

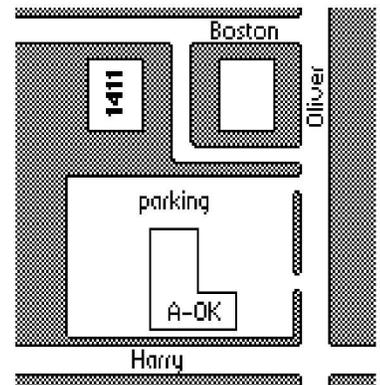
Maxine Ulrich

838-8606

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

The Commodore Users of Wichita is a club dedicated to "the sharing, learning, and love of Commodore computers." Meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month from 1-5pm at 1411 S. Oliver, one block north of the corner of Harry & Oliver. Anyone who owns or uses a Commodore computer system is welcome to attend.

Family memberships cost \$15 per year. Members receive a monthly newsletter, a quarterly disk publication, access to an extensive library of public-domain software, and the right to vote on matters of club policy. Other membership options are also available. Contact any of the officers (listed elsewhere in this newsletter) for more information. We are looking forward to seeing **you** at our next meeting!



You may join or renew your membership by mail.
Complete this form and mail with a check payable to:

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

Type of membership:

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

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

List additional family members who are interested in participating:

What Commodore systems do you use? (please check all that apply)

- C-128 C-64 SX-64 VIC-20 C-16 Plus/4
- Other (specify) _____