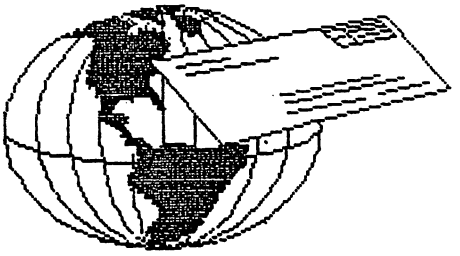
COMMODORE MAILINK
NEWSLETTER OF —
MEETING 64/128 USERS
THROUGH THE MAIL

SEPTEMBER 2001



MEETING NEWS

by Tom Adams, PRESIDENT

Meeting News September 2001

Here it is September and I hope everyone had a great summer.

With this issue there is the membership list for this year. It also contains the Resource List where you can find help with a particular software or hardware problem.

I hope you enjoyed the special July issue which had some pages printed in color. I want to thank K. Dale Sidebottom for his excellent efforts to put out a really nice issue of The Commodore MaiLink. I understand that Dale printed the color pages on his personal color copier. Thank you very much, Dale.

Again I want to issue an appeal for guest editors. The newsletter is produced by you, the members. Each issue is edited by a "guest" editor. This shows what can be done with your Commodore computer. Just look at what Dale Sidebottom produced with his Commodore. You really don't neeed a lot of expensive equipment--even a dot matrix printer can produce a great looking newsletter. Most. if not all, the material is supplied to you and all you have to do as an editor is to print out the final copy. I have done this and found it both interesting and easy to do.

So how about it? Please contact me or David Mohr, the managing editor, and volunteer to edit an issue of your newsletter. If you look in the list of officers you will find the address, and e-mail address of both me and David Mohr. My telephone number is also listed.

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Compiles lists of members having expertise in various Commodore fields; also lists products and services available at discount to members, or specifically geared to Commodore users.

ADVERTISING IN "COMMODORE MAILINK":

Members may place free advertisements in the MAILINK. Text should be sent to editor of next newsletter. Very short ads may be hardcopy, but most submissions should be on disk. See editor's requirements. Ads should be about Commodore stuff such as "BUY", "SELL", or "TRADE". If list is long, ask for S.A.S.E., and send list via the SASE. In "FOR SALE" ads, be clear about shipping costs. Your name will appear in the ad and members can find your address in bi-annual membership list.

COMMODORE MAILINK SUBMISSIONS:

Robert Snyder will be our November 2001 editor. He has been a C64 user since December, 1982, has been a member of local club, Commodore Computer Club of Toledo since 1993, and has edited club's newsletter for the past five years. Robert will accept articles that are typed, handwritten, on 5 1/4" or 3.5" floppy, or emailed. He says "I can handle almost any format except MS WORD, but please list the format, i.e., the program used to create the article you send me." If you can include phone # for non-email submissions, he can answer any questions he may have quickly. Deadline is 10-15-01. He will use TWS 128, and can be reached at P.O. Box 296, Metamora, OH 43540-0296, or email him at arsnyder@toast.net. Phone 419-644-6391, 3-9 P.M.

OPEN LETTER TO MEMBERS

from Lord Ronin from Q-Link, M.K.A. <Sensei> David O.E. Mohr

Sorry group, gotta do the Managing Editor bit at this time. Spoke about this on our Mail List. Now since part of what I said there is about not all members being or wanting to be on the Inet. I place the topic in here, our major method of "Meeting Through The Mail"

At OryCon we call this the "Orchids & Onions". Where it is time to say good and bad things about the prior issue. That being the beautiful looking July issue from Dale Sidebottom.

GOOD STUFF: Well this issue does rock the IBuMers on their heels as to what an almost 20 year old computer will do for the world. Over all price is even cheaper in the long run than buying <over and over again> the IBuM Micro$haft products. Great colour pictures and smooth text.

BAD STUFF: This also has rocked some of our members into thinking that the new standards for the CML and our group will be "GEOS Post Script" DTP. I have received E-Mail on this subject from members who for privacy rights, I won't name. Policy Statement from the Managing Editor! Any Commodore programme, be it a mega looking post script full colour print out, to a home brew SEQ writer is correct for the CML. As this simply puts shows the massive diversity of our system. Plus our most important feature, STAYING POWER.

GOOD STUFF: Great colour pictures. Shows off that we can do 16.5 Million colours on the C=. Pity the average human can only see 500,000 colours. Still it is nice to know that you can take a picture of something with a camera, digital or film and through a process put it on your print out.

BAD STUFF: Now this is part personal opinion and part items from e-mail. A bit too many pictures, sort of an over kill on the message of the ability to do pictures.

GOOD STUFF: Lots of important GEOS information and related topics.

BAD STUFF: Lots of important GEOS information and related topics. O.K. I'm one to talk, as I'd fill the issues up with RPG things. But msg to me have indicated that the issue wasn't balanced enough. Some users of other word processors felt left out. I understand this from both the viewpoint of the reader and the editor. As a reader there were problems in editing with the articles that i felt could have be handeled better. That isn't new, every issue brings that comment. As an editor, well you do with what is sent to you in submissions. Filling in the rest with what you can create, if there isn't enough for the page count. The layout is the choice of the editor of that issue. What and how it is placed is his responsibility.

SUMMATION: The July issue was a great job by Dale. Problems happened and that is on a level not to be discussed in this note. A new set of editors guidelines, based and updated from Jean Nance's original work is being done and hope the officers approve the copy by the November issue. If so I will submit it for publication. Dale did what he could to present a CML that shows a land mark of what we as Commodore Users can accomplish. But it should be seen as a CAN, not a WANT or a HAVE to situation. I'll admit that I too have an Optra 40 and the software/hardware to create a similar issue. But this is NOT the standard for our group. Only the pretty, or as we used to say in the carnival, the "Mousing". The flash for the Marks. I also apologize for having to bring this topic up in this issue. I do want to thank and applaud Dale for his work on the issue. Thanks go also to Jean who has guided me in many points of this matter, as did Tom and Paul Berry. Also to all who have sent comments my way both publically and privately. Just shows in the end that we are concerned for our group and our choice of Personal Computer.

MORE THAN A LITTLE COMMODORE HISTORY

"*A beginning is a very delicate time.*"
That is a line from Frank Herbert's DUNE, one of my favorite movies (and books). It is also a very true statement. In 1981, Commodore Business Machines began a delicate birthing process that spawned a computing revolution. I am referring to, of course, the introduction of the famous **Commodore 64 Personal Computer.** The introduction came, in fact, one month before **IBM** released their first offering into the home computer market--the **IBM PC**, for those of you who thrive on such trivia.

I thought it fitting, on this 20th anniversary of the birth of our favorite computer, to revisit the history of Commodore Business Machines. The **C-64** made Commodore Business Machines a household name, but CBM had a delicate beginning and a humble ending. This is the telling of that story.

Commodore Business Machines was started by Jack Tramiel. Tramiel was a Polish refugee from Auschwitz who immigrated to America while he was still a teenager. Tramiel settled in New York City and opened a typewriter repair shop. The typewriter repair business was good to Tramiel and he eventually received a contract to manufacture and sell typewriters for a Czechoslovakian company. Around this time, Tramiel moved his business to Canada and began operating under the name Commodore Business Machines, Canada. Rumors exist as to why Tramiel chose that exact name. Some sources seem to allude that Tramiel had some nautical fascination, thus choosing Commodore. Other sources say there was no coincidence to the fact that the initials of the company (**CBM**) bore no small resemblance to **IBM**. I personally have found no concrete evidence to confirm or deny either theory.

Soon after Commodore Business Machines, Canada opened their doors, the company expanded its product line and began manufacturing desktop adding machines--the hottest piece of new office technology at the time. This helped the company be moderately successful until a business partner of Tramiel's was indicted for engaging in unscrupulous business practices and CBM's sales began to suffer. It was at this time that Irving Gould offered to bail CBM out of its financial troubles using his own money in exchange for being named Chairman of the Board. Tramiel agreed.

The desktop adding machine market had begun to plateau, so Tramiel traveled to Japan to uncover what the next "big thing" woould be. He discovered that to be the electronic calculator. Tramiel returned home and refocused CBM. Commodore Business Machines created and marketed the first American electronic calculators and their business skyrocketed. Soon after CBM began making calculators, many other American and Japanese companies began producing them and the "calculator wars" began. By 1976, competition in the electronic calculator market had gotten very heated with companies battling to make their products smaller, faster, and cheaper. CBM responded to the competition by purchasing many small electronics companies where the calculator components were manufactured. New creative people were added to CBM as well as a result of the acquisitions. One of these people was Chuck Peddle, the designer of the **PET** and the **6502** microprocessor. Peddle convinced Tramiel to abandon the electronic calculator altogether and concentrate CBM in a new area--home desktop computers. Tramiel took Peddle's advice and Commodore Bueiness Machines introduced the **PET (Personal Electronic Transactor)** in 1977.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

BY MICHAEL WALTON

MORE THAN A LITTLE COMMODORE HISTORY, continued

The **PET** had some stiff competition in the home computer market up against the likes of the **TRS-80** and **Apple II**. The PET did fairly well, but it was not a sweeping success. To add to the difficulties, Peddle and Tramiel had a difference of opinion regarding where the memory components of the PET should come from and Chuck Peddle left Commodore Business Machines in 1979. With Peddle gone and the PET treading water, CBM's future once again looked bleak. That all changed, however, in 1980 with the success of the **VIC-20**.

The VIC-20 was a completely different animal from the PET. The VIC-20 did not come with a built-in monitor. In fact, it did not require a monitor at all as it could be connected to a standard TV. The VIC-20 was designed to be an inexpensive home computer, and it certainly was. The VIC-20's suggested retail price was only $300 versus the PET's suggested retail price of approximately $1,500. The VIC-20 made headway in the home computer market, but it was still lacking in features, even for home computers of the time. CBM remedied that the very next year with the introduction of the **Commodore 64**.

Externally, the C-64 looked very similar to the VIC-20. It was housed in the same case, just in a different color. The big difference was inside the case. The C-64 boasted 64K of RAM to the VIC's 5K. The C-64 also had a higher graphics resolution than the VIC, but the big improvement was in the sound. The C-64 was the first computer to contain a fully functioning sound synthesizer in the SID chip. During the C-64's lifespan, an estimated 17-22 million units were sold making it the best selling personal computer to this day.

Fresh off their success with the C-64, CBM introduced the portable **SX-64** in 1983. CBM went on in 1984 to release the **Plus/4** and the **C-16**. Both of these machines included interesting amenities like utility software in the system ROM. They were designed to be marketed along with the C-64, and not as competition to it, not that there could be any competition to the C-64 at that time. Neither the Plus/4 nor the C-16 was compatible with the C-64 on a hardware or software level and resulting sales were poor. Realizing nothing could compete with the C-64, CBM introduced the **C-128** in 1985.

The C-128 was essentially three computers in one with its three processors. The C-128's total C-64 compatibility was both a blessing and a curse. The C-64 compatibility helped the C-128 have decent sales, but very little software was produced for the native C-128 mode. For the most part, it was cheaper for software manufacturers to only make a C-64 version of their software product since C-128 users could use it, too.

Jack Tramiel surprised nearly everyone in 1984 when he left Commodore Business Machines to go to work for Atari. That left CBM in the hands of Irving Gould and Medhi Ali right about the time that CBM shifted their focus from the 8-bit C-64/128 line to the 16-bit **Amiga** line. The Amiga 1000 was released in 1985 and based on the Motorola 68000 processor. It was succeeded in 1987 by the **Amiga 2000** and slimliine **Amiga 500**. The **Amiga 3000** followed in 1990 and the final computers to be introduced in the Amiga line were the Amiga 1200 and 4000 which were released in 1993.

MORE THAN A LITTLE COMMODORE HISTORY, continued

There are running jokes about CBM's inability to market an excellent product. This only got worse after Tramiel left the company. The Amiga line, as revolutionary as the C-64 was in 1981, sold poorly overall and was mainly relegated to a niche market. The NewTek Video Toaster made the Amiga very popular among commercial graphics folks. All the CGI effects from the popular Babylon 5 TV series (among many others) were done on an Amiga. Unfortunately, the Amiga's poor sales began to take their toll on CBM. CBM tried to compete in the console video game market with the CDTV and the CD32, but whatever success they had was too little, too late. Commodore Business Machines officially filed for bankruptcy in 1993, and the doors were closed on CBM worldwide in 1994.

After the bankruptcy, the remainder of CBM's assets were purchased by Escom AG, a German computer company. Two years later, Escom filed for bankruptcy also. In 1997, computer giant Gateway 2000 purchased the former CBM assets, allegedly to gain the Amiga technology, although I have questioned Gateway 2000 about this fact and have not yet received an answer. Amiga International recently gained their independence from GW2K and began life as their own company again. They are currently gearing up to produce new Amigas, this time running a Linux-based operating system on a Power PC processor. Tulip Computers, a Dutch company, has been selling PC clones with a Commodore badge in Europe, but their website has been unreachable for the past several months and the standing rumor on the internet is that they have also gone out of business.

The internet seems to have helped Commodore fanatics out in the past few years. No longer are we relegated to dial-up BBS systems as we now have access to Commodore information from all over the world. Emulators have also sprung up allowing people to relive their Commodore experiences on their PC with emulato for everything from the C-64 to the VIC-20 and even the PET are known to exist (although they are still no substitute for the real thing). Commodore equipment is always up for sale at on-line auctions like eBay. Plus, there are many places still dealing in Commodore hardware and software.

The Commodore scene was dealt a major blow recently when Creative Micro Designs, the manufacturers of FD-2000, HD series hard drives, Jiffy DOS, RAMLink, and SuperCPU, announced they were discontinuing production on their line of Commodore hardware. Shortly after that announcement, though, the Internet was abuzz with rumors on which remaining companies were making offers to buy out CMD's hardware line though. Hopefully by the time this article sees press, this will have been settled. Regardless, I am comforted by the fact that there will still be dedicated Commodore users out there. Twenty years after its introduction to the market, there is still no stopping the good old C-64. Or, as CBM's own jingle puts it:

"*I adore my 64, my Commodore 64*"

WINDOWS IS A 32-BIT UPGRADE FOR A 16-BIT SHELL ON AN 8-BIT OPERATING SYSTEM FOR A 4-BIT PROCESSOR MADE BY A 2-BIT COMPANY THAT CAN'T STAND 1 BIT OF COMPETITION.

SUBMITTED BY CHRIS FITL

FRACTAL 3 by Chris Fite

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10 REM FRACTAL 3/DRAWS 2-D FRACTALS,SNOWFLAKES,LACE PATTERNS,
GEOMETRIC DESIGNS
110 REM BY CHRIS FITE, MARCH 2001/REVISED MAY 2001/NEEDS GRAPHIC LANGUAGE LIKE[
120 REM 'SUPER EXPANDER' CARTRIDGE OR USE C-128's BUILT-IN GRAPHICS LANGUAGE
130 REM CHANGE X,Y,S1,SF,NS IN LINES 1030 to 1090 TO MAKE OTHER  SHAPES
140 REM 'DRAW' COMMAND USES INTEGERS INSTEAD OF MORE ACCURATE
FLOATING POINT #'S
150 REM SO THE SHAPES DRAWN MAY BE FLAWED ESPECIALLY IF NS=ODD #
1000 GRAPHIC1:SCNCLR
1030 X=50:Y=70:REM LOCATION OF DRAWING ON SCREEN
1040 LOCATE X,Y
1050 DRAW TO X,Y
1070 S1=1.40:REM OVERALL SIZE OF DRAWING
1080 SF=2.8:REM SIZE RATIO BETWEEN LEVELS OF DRAWING
1085 NS=6:REM # OF SIDES TO BASIC SHAPE
1090 A1=000:REM ANGLE OF OVERALL DRAWING
1100 FOR I1=1 TO NS
1150 S=S1:A=A1
1200 ON I1 GOSUB 3100,3200,3300,3400,3500,3600,3700,3800
1250 S2=S1/SF:A2=A1+(180+360/NS)+(I1-1)^360/NS
1300 FOs I2=1 TO NS
1340 S=S2:A=A2
1350 ON I2 GOSUB 3100,3200,3300,3400,3500,3600,3700,3800
1360 IF I2=NS THEN GOTO1800
1375 S3=S2/SF:A3=A2+(180+360/NS)+(I2-1)*360/NS
1400 FOR I3=1 TO NS
1[illegible] S=S3:A=A3
1450 ON I3 GOSUB 3100,3200,3300,3400,3500,3600,3700,3800
1460 IF I3=NS THEN GOTO 1700
1490 S4=S3/SF:A4=A3+(180+360/NS)+(I3-1)^360/NS
1500 FOR I4=1 TO NS
1510 S=S4:A=A4
1550 ON I4 GOSUB 3100,3200,3300,3400,3500,3600,3700,3800
1600 NEXT I4
1700 NEXT I3
1800 NEXT I2
1900 NEXT I1
2000 GET A$:IF A$="" THEN GOTO 2000
2100 GRAPHIC0
2200 STOP
3100 DRAW 1 TO 20*S;360*1/NS+A:GOSUB5000:RETURN:REM SUB1 FOR SIDE 1 OF SHAPE
3200 DRAW 1 TO 20*S;360*2/NS+A:GOSUB5000:RETURN:REM SUB2 FOR SIDE 2
3300 DRAW 1 TO 20^S;360^3/NS+A:GOSUB5000:RETURN:REM SUB3 FOR SIDE 3
3400 DRAW 1 TO 20^S;360^4/NS+A:GOSUB5000:RETURN:REM SUB4 FOR SIDE 4
3500 DRAW 1 TO 20^S;360^5/NS+A:GOSUB5000:RETURN:REM SUB5 FOR SIDE 5
3600 DRAW 1 TO 20*S;360*6/NX+A:GOSUB5000:RETURN:REM SUB6 FOR SIDE 6
3700 DRAW 1 TO 20*S;360+7/NS+A:GOSUB5000:RETURN:REM SUB7 FOR SIDE 7
3800 DRAW 1 TO 20^S;360^7/NS+A:GOSUB5000:RETURN:REM SUB8 FOR SIDE 8
5000 REM SUB PAUSE
5010 RETURN
5020 FOR I=1 TO 500:NEXTI
5[illegible] RETURN
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GEOS MAPPING PART #2

by Lord Ronin from Q-Link
M.K.A. <Sensei> David O.E. Mohr

The July issued showed some good illustrations of Geos Mapping for games. Sadly space was limited and not all of the information was presented. Looked good and visualy shows what can be done with our Computer and Geos. This short is to explain a bit more on the work and reasons for the map making, and how it is enjoyed by C= users and non alike.

I use GeoPaint, as out of all the different paint programmes I have tried. This one does what I want it to do for my own needs. If I could find another Commodore product that does better, I would use it. Not even the Amiga programmes I have give me the same feeling as the GeoPaint. All that said for now. A questions looms as to why bother?

A good questions and there are parallels between the games and our Personal Computer. The two illustrations in the July issue are games that are dead. Or undead is a better word. As the Traveller game is being reproduced in a new format. But the original 1977+ information. This done by a company that has as a member. The original author of the game. <I'm on their mail list> The other map for the game Basic Dungeons & Dragons. This one has PBEM games on the Inet. STill played after 24 years by millions. Also it is being reprinted by an Italian company in a new format. Sort of reminds me of the Commodore and all the versions, upgrades and now the new CommodoreOne from Jeri. Hey the games and our Commodore aren't broke, so no need to fix it <BG>

But after awhile. One wants to make their own adventures for the games. Create ones own stories, villians rewards and well the term is mythos. Personally I have characters in these games and a mythos that is older than the C=64.

To do this work. One needs to have tools. Since the V.C. did a number on my hands. My penmanship is not worth talking about. So I used the typewriter. <Still can't touch type> A ruler and 1:20 graph paper. Spending hours making maps for adventures and writing the story. The games would take months to play 4-5 nights a week and 6 hours a night. <trivia note, I have one binder at 1" thick of maps for a game all done in GeoPaint>

Now with GeoPaint and GeoWrite, all in 128 mode. My work goes a bit better and much faster. The Star Ship in the July issue is from a Traveller game book. Modified to fit my game mythos. The original is about 20 years old and falling apart on dried out graph paper. I made the grid pattern myself. Based on one that I found on Q-Link. The other one, for the Basic D&D game, is my own creation. Based off of a long running game that my group has played for several years.

Making the maps is and isn't easy. I'm still all thumbs with the tools in GeoPaint. The easy part is using the pencil icon to hand draw cave walls. The fill to, well fill in the areas. Spray to make rubble and depth effects. As yet I haven't created a standard for what fill pattern is what in my maps. The hard part is in fitting what I want on the map. Many times I have to make an exit to another map. There were tools on Q-Link and some made it over to GEnie. Fonts for graphics. Like the trees in the July Issue, and the images in the information box. Mapping symbols were also made for GeoPaint. These based on t stock ones presented by TSR 20+ years ago for fantasy maps. Apparently many

GEOS MAPPING, continued
others, long before me, used GeoPaint for their games.
My finished product is played weekly with my game group. Not all members are Commodore users. But all members enjoy the output of my work. Even when their character doesn't make it. <SEG>

Now with the new post script system. I will be able to publish some of my work and sell it as a fanzine through my shop. Allowing other gamers to enjoy my work, all done on a Commodore. Which just like these games, won't die.

WE NEED YOU WE NEEED YOU WE NEEEED YOU WE NEEEEED YOU WE NEEEEEED YOU
by Lord Ronin from Q-Link, M.K.A. <Sensei> David O.E. Mohr

Hey it is that time again. The Managing Editor needs to bug you about next year and the CML.

At this time I have editors for September and November issues. David Moon and myself are co-editing and issue. I may do an issue on my own, if need be. I could use 2-3 more volunteers for the issues in 2002. January, March, May and July are not locked in for any one at this time.

Here are the simple rules for doing an issue. Guidelines are being written based on Jean's original outline. For now all that is important to know is .... The machine and programme used, must be Commodore. Programme used to make the issue is unimportant. So long as it runs on a Commodore. Examples are Geos, The Write Stuff, News Room, Pocket Writer, Word Writer versions, and quite a few more that I have forgotten. Further details I can give you privately and after I finish a have approved the new guide lines. Now the printer used can be anything that prints from a Commodore. Dot matrix, daisy wheel, ball, inkjet, laser or what ever.

O.K. so you don't want to do an issue. That is understandable. How about an article submitted to the issue? The editors and the readers need input as well. But you may wonder what to write about? I've heard people say things about, not being up on the latest techno parts, or not knowing programming, or not knowing the Inet or not ... Hey that doesn't matter. You use the machine called the Commodore. Tell us about what you use it for. Do you just play games? Well tell us about your game play. What did you find? how long did it take to play the game? In short a review of the game. There is a 70% chance that it is now on one of the sites on the Inet as a .D64 image file for the emulators. Do you have old C= related magazines? What was in them? Give a review about the magazine(s). What do you use for a word processor in your work? We have many that use Geos and TWS. What do you use and why? Are you on the Inet with your C=? If so what do you do there and how easy is it for you? There is a lot more that you can write about and send to the editor of the next issue. Remember we get out of our group. What we put into it. you don't have to know Basic programming to write about what you know or even ask a question. We are a group of users and have many uses for our machine. Write about what you do with it, and how it effects your life.

O.K. that's good enough till next year. <VBG>

COMAL: THE BIRTH and DEATH of a COMPUTER LANGUAGE

Jean Nance

In 1973, Borge Christensen and Benedict Loefstedt, of Denmark, developed a computer language and named it COMAL (Common Algorithmic Language). It was designed to be a better programming language than Basic, especially for beginners. Comal became popular in Europe, and was widely used for teaching programming in schools. In the early 1980's, Comal versions for CBM computers were developed, including a version for the C64.

Basic allows beginners to type in and run programs without the text editors, and operative system command languages that make many standared languages frustrating to master. However, as Borge Christensen wrote in "The Comal Handbook" by Len Lindsay,

"On the other hand there is no doubt that as a programming language, Basic is a disaster. People who use Basic may early may be led astray, and after a time may find themselves fighting problems that could be solved with no effort using programming languages more adequate to guide human thinking."

Comal uses the operative environment of Basic with familiar Basic commands, but adds a structure similar to Pascal. Students who start out in Comal can easily move up to Pascal, or even C. Our son whose introduction to programming was Comal, is now a systems analyst although he had almost no formal training . He tells me he sometimes has to learn new languages, and finds his background in Comal is a great help.

Starting about 1982, Len Lindsay formed a Comal Users Group, and put out series of disks and a magazine, "Comal Today." There was a cartridge developed for Comal 64. Len made the Commodore version of the language available cheaply, and at times some version was free. He was "Captain Comal", and wrote exellent books and manuals. His small home business prospered for a time, but Comal never really caught on in the Commodore community. One factor was probably that the arrival of the C128, and Basic 7, provided programming commands and structures that were a big improvement over Basic 2.0.

Sometime late in 1988, the last issue of "Comal Today" came out, and while Len tried to continue providing disks and support, he had a family to provide for and took paid employment that used his computer experience. I last heard from him a few years later, when he had a Comal area on QLink, with a weekly chat group consisting of four or five of the Comal faithful.

I confess, I don't program any more. I was never proficient at Basic, and nobody is interested in using, or even seeing, Comal programs. I have a collection of Len Lindsay's disks and books, I can't bear to give them up. It's like keeping a shabby old teddy bear or a beloved doll stowed away, I guess.

DID YOU KNOW??????

Y%=A runs faster than Y=INT(A)
A=B^C runs faster than B=A/C
POKE53280,. runs faster than POKE53280,0

PLUS and MINUS, PRO and CON by William E. Robblets

A lot has been written and said about IBM verses Commodore and Commodore verses IBM, as far as I am concerned neither one is better than the other, both have tasks the other platform can do better, it is just personal preference which actually gets used for a project.

I am a devoted Commodore user/enthusiast, the tasks I performed with my Commodore on the very first day I bought it, are the tasks I am still doing 18 years later. Plus the Commodore has the same operating system it was born with, the IBM I have is now on its fourth with three in the wings.

To this date my IBM still has not been able to replace my Commodore, what it has done though, is enhance my Commodore usage. Depending on criteria, I generally write articles with the Commodore, then I can convert this to IBM and format as needed with graphics or format and send out as a TWS document.
I could also reverse this and write the article on the IBM and then format it on the Commodore, I do not like to use the latter method if it can be helped.

HERE IS AN EXAMPLE OF WHY I DO THINGS THE WAY I DO:
Lets say someone needs you to do a report, you start the IBM, already this is a gamble, you can never be 100% sure everything will work 100% of the time. In most cases yes it will be just fine, but the IBM by nature alone is prone to having its 'Hissy Fits'.

You load the program you will use for the report and start typing; during the first hour you did remember to save the work in progress a couple times. You are now on hour three and decide to take a small break; it has now been two hours since your last save. You come back to your report forgetting you were going to save what was already done and continue right where you left off. All of a sudden you get an error message stating your application is being shut down, you now attempt to save what you have done and now get a message stating 'A Fatal Exception Has Occurred', the infamous blue screen of death. By this time your heart has sunk to around your big toe and there is an awful knot in the pit of your stomach, two hours of hard work just went out the door.

With the Commodore, yes, the problem can occur where you will lose the two hours of data, but it is not so much due to hardware, nature itself is the biggest foe. Being a Commodore user for 18 plus years, I know this fact and long ago got into the habit of frequent saves. So, what happens if a Commodore drive fails on me? The setup I have for my Commodore 128 usually only requires just pushing a few switches to correct the problem, when I am done with the task, I can then make the required repairs or replacement at my leisure. The Commodore programs I like to use, usually lets me shut off one drive and turn on another with the same device number without too much difficulty.

What I have connected are two pairs of 1571 drives, two pairs of 1541 II drives, a pair of 1581 drives and a pair of FD 2000 drives. Each pair consists of a device 8 and a device 9, and I can power up just about any combination of 8 and 9 one can ponder with what I have. **I HAVE NEVER USED OR NEEDED A DEVICE 10 SO DO NOT HAVE IT IN MY CURRENT SETUP.**

I have not had a Commodore drive fail on me in the middle of a project in the last ten years, but if one does I am ready and know I can continue to work. I do test my setup frequently, this is another of the habits I picked up along the way. In my house, both platforms share an equal pedestal, both get almost the same daily usage, and there is no rivalry due to equality.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

I have received the July MaiLink and was pleased with the results of Dale Sidebottom's publishing efforts. Since my opinions on Desktop Publishing are printed in the issue I won't go over them again.

What I would like to point out is an error that crept into this issue on Page 7 and on Page 12 regarding the COPS mailing list. I'll also send this to Linda for inclusion in the Sept. issue.

Basically you need to send e-mail to: *cops-request@videocam.net.au*

In the body of the message (first line): subscribe

For the digest version: subscribe digest

You can also join the list via the World Wide Web, at:
http://cbm.videocam.net.au/mailman/listinfo/cops

I hope this helps. If you were impressed with Dale's Color issue of the MaiLink and want to learn more about getting the best output possible from your Commodore, you need to join the COPS list. We are more than willing to offer assistance for anyone willing to learn.

Bruce Thomas

C-64/128 vs. PC by Brian Vaughan

I had to purchase a PC for only one reason--full access to the Internet. There became too many airline and other bargains only available on the Net. I also wanted to be able to send & receive E-mail with scanned attachments of color photos and other documents. But would this new toy cause me to give up my C-128 system? Never!

Beside the club's bios & mailing address files, I have too many other database files that are so easially managed and printed from the C-128. I maintain a vast database of movies on videotape, and database files for my many programs on disk, Christmas card list & label file, Label Wizard address files, and files for programs from C= magazines, fonts, one-liner jokes, credit card record, etc. And there is the speed at which I can use SpeedScript to create & print a letter and use a 24-pin printer for good output or an ink-jet printer for professional printing. Any thought of transferring all this data to the PC is out of the question.

WANTED:
Book: HOW TO MAKE COMPUTER CONTROLLED ROBOTS FOR COMMODORE 64
edited or published by Osborne

Linda Tanner

EDITING MANUALS by David Moon
Preserving Manuals and Walk-Throughs for Commodore Users

This is my first article for the CML. I'm still learning how to do this so I'm bound to make a few mistakes. Sensei David Mohr wanted me to write this article or he'd use me as his target dummy to demonstrate throws in the martial arts class. Unfortunately I'm not good at my rolls and falls yet. <BG> But I'm hoping that this won't be too boring and put any one to sleep. <LOL>

I've taken it upon myself to edit and preserve manuals and walk throughs for Commodore games so that others (including myself) can use them to play these with out too much difficulty. Now days the games are difficult to find and the documentation is even harder to find. Sometimes the only way to get the games we want is to find someone with them who is willing to copy them for us. Sadly most of the time they have a copy as well and don't have the documentation for the game. Through my efforts I hope to make it possible for the documentation for these games to be available to all who need them.

This is not going to be my lifes work, just a hobby, but I will edit and preserve as many manuals and walk throughs as I can. The manuals and walk throughs I have done so far are on the Vacuum Tube BBS (503) 325-2905. I do the best I can and hope that the people using them find them to useful and informative. Many of the manuals contain typo's and have been written in a confusing manner. I had to go through the entire spell list in the Bard's Tale manual in order to make the spells understandable. I know I'd find it rather difficult to understand something like Mangar's MindbladeMIBL. More than a few of the spells were set up that way. Not only as far as the name of the spell and what you need to type in cast it, but everything about the spell as well.

When I edited the manuals for Phantasie 1 & 2. I had to seperate the games into their own manuals and than add the spells into each manual. Fortunately the manual for Phantasie 3 wasn't set up the same as the Phantasie 1 & 2 manuals were. If I hadn't separated them it is likely they would have confused people more than actually help them to play the game. No offense to who ever did the original work on the manuals. I know I found it confusing, so I figured others might as well. The manuals and walk throughs are in areas 1.90 and 1.91 in the file transfer area. I have quite a few more manuals and walk throughs to do in the mean time.

This is also my first year in the CML so I'm new to this type of thing. I hope to improve my skills and be able to write longer articles in the future. I'm still learning how to edit the manuals and walk throughs as I go along. Eventually I'll know what I'm doing. <VBESG> But at least I'm gaining experience in this field. I hope to get a project started in the future, but I won't get into that at this point in time. There are still a few things to work out on that, and it might not even happen, so I won't raise false hopes.

I'm also still learning how to use GEOS v2.0 and have recently aquired a 1750 REU as well. Now I can get wheels so I can use my FD-2000 after I get it fixed. My main interest is in programming in basic at this time. Although I love to play games like Wasteland and Pool of Radiance among others. That is only a small part of why I'm doing this. I also like to be helpful to others when I can. There are so many people out there who need help as far as getting manuals or walk throughs and they need people who are willing to preserve and pass around these things for others to enjoy and use. I just hope that I can make

EDITING MANUALS, continued
people happy and help them to learn how to play the games they have or get in the future. If I can even help one man or woman learn how to play and enjoy a single game, than I've done the job right. To me that is what matters the most, helping others. Manuals and walk throughs are rapidly vanishing and we need to preserve them while we still them around. If we don't they will be gone for ever. That would be a terrible loss for all

I'm not the only one out there preserving manuals and walk throughs, but the more of us who do this, the more likely these manuals and walk throughs will be around in the future.

#30 Fox Mulder Vacuum Tube BBS
David Moon

Lord Ronin's additive: Our #30 is quite modest. The work he does for our local users group requires hours of dedication. Since he doesn't have Inet abilities yet. I collect files from the web. Place them on the BBS, in a secret location. He down loads them, converts them to GeoWrite 2.1 with Wrong is Write V7. At that point he spends hours working and reading the text. Since the files are usually in ascii. Meaning that the translation, has a point of not putting in the correct spaces, paragraphs etc. This I know as I did some of the first ones. When all that is completed. SDA versions are placed on the BBS. Our way of helping to preserve this great body of work for the Commodore

PRINTING SUPPLIES by Bruce Thomas

A topic that has received attention in the MaiLink manytimes over the years ha been ribbon re-inking. This topic is even relevant with today's ink-jet printers where individual cartridges can cost $40 or more. there are companies who make kits to refill the ink-jet cartridges and here is a little info on a couple of them. The **Ink Place** is in the USA and **Nomi** is in Canada.

I know that Willis has raved about the Ink Refills he gets at: *http://theinkplace.com/* but the other day I was in a local computer store and they had a display stand with Nomi refills. They did not have an Optra40 kit on the display, but I found that Nomi carries them on their website at: *http://www.inkrefill.com/* (where they claim to be "North America's largest and best distributor of Ink Jet Refills").

Their price is $59.99 US ($74.99 CDN) for a kit that will refill 12 color cartridges and 4 black cartridges. This seems to be more expensive than The Ink Place ($34.95 for 8 color and 7 black refills) but it seems to have more ink.

I sent an e-mail to Nomi asking about the amount of ink in their kits and received the following reply:

HI BRUCE:
Our number of refills is the number of full cartridge refills you will receive. In other words 12 color refills means 12 of each color (equivalent to 12 full new cartridges).

GEOS and da dum Ork:
Lord Ronin <M.K.A.> Sensei David Mohr

Cute title, decided on it simply because when you are like me, and out of the main swing of things. Based on time and space. One can feel like a "dum ork". That and I am a fanatic C= user and FRPG player. Making the term and this little bit on GEOS seem to just fit.

In the past we have great articles in multiparts on GEOS setup. That is just counting the 1.5 years I've been a member. Out of those articles I learned some things that I did wrong. Things I never thought about and many techno things I didn't understand. But will in the future.

Our group seems to be divided between users of GEOS and users of TWS. my thanks to Jean who sent me a factory copy of TWS And another member who sent me factory copies of TWS and the Illustrators. Because of that I understand it a little better. But TWS won't do what I love to do in writing. That being making game adventures for my FRPG <Fantasy Role Playing Games> group.

Now the point of this article is not to talk on how to use and install and modify GEOS. nor to tell you about the additives for it that Dale and Maurice have created. That can be in a future edition in my Shadowland section <G> Besides there are members in our group that are much wiser than I on those subjects. No this article is just on how one man enjoys his C= and GEOS and the fun that it brings to him and to his small group of people in the games. One of whom is now a member of our group.

My current system is Wheels-64. Though I have GEOS 128. I'm waiting for my Wheels 128 to arrive, before installing everything. There is a 1BG HD, a FD-2000 a dead 1571 drive in the 128D and the SCPU.. Others have said how Wheels and the SCPU make GEOS a dream. When dealing with things like Desk Top Publishing. This is true. The speed and features outshine stock GEOS.

Though I am not a fan of the mouse. I have a 1351 left handed one set up. the smart mouse is in need of repairs. That covers the C= stuff. But the rest of it? that is a 23 year collection of FRPG games and experience.

Many of you may know of a game called Dungeons & Dragons. Got good and bad press over the years. Banned by some churches and even my store was protested as doing the devils work. What ever you have heard about the same. it is the first oficial FRPG. Way back in 1974. There have been thousands since then. Almost all of the 40+ ones that I have are out of print. Or simply put. no longer supported at all. These games don't even have a group like ours or a place like CMD or even a newsletter like this to have players meet anymore.

Meaning that stories to play. Treasures and items to find, maps of towns and planets and space sectors or what ever is needed for the game just plain can't be bought at the store. Enter the game runner, called the DM. Who must make up his own. Well most of us do that when the game is supported anyway. So it isn't a new thing to us. Now add to this mixture the C= and GEOS.

Before I had the C= I did my maps by hand on 1/20th scale grid paper. Typed al the entries on the map. Wrote the adventure with the typewriter. Remember that I have never had a typing lesson. You can imagine the wastebasket of paper globs.

GEOS and da dum Ork, continued

My first map attempts with the C= were with Flexidraw. Printed out on my Oki-10 they looked amazing to what had been prepared before. Then entered GEOS. Luckil for me I was just then joinig Q-Link a few months before the end. There I grabbed or Data Stole as it is called in a game. Many fonts, that I had no idea what they were at the time. Save by title.

There was a GeoPaint file of 1/2" grid. that I made into 1/4" grid for my use. This is the basis for the game maps. Both the ones that the DM sees and the ones that the players are handed. By the use of different fonts. I can create the environment on the map. As not all the fonts I found were text. There wee some that were graphics. Now why someone made fonts with trees and bushes as the character, who isn7t into FRPG, I don't know but thank them anyway. Specific map numbers and points of interest are marked on the DM map. Then by the use of the paint feature and the fill or spray features. I can make the walls and all the other stock FRPG map icons that we the gamers have come to understand. In fact I was able to once make with an editor my own fonts. That used the stock FRPG sysmbols for maps that covered large scale areas.

Text for the adventure is done in GeoWrite. There by the use of margin settings and diferent fonts. I can create what for me works as an easy way to see the information and smoothly present it and the story to the players.

My first work was done with the Oki-10. A thermal printer that worked till the head stopped moving. Later I used many different dot matrix printers. Last of those was a Star 1020 rainbow. Now I use perfect print drivers from CMD and the Cannon BJC-4000. Recently I was complimented by a new member to my users group. Who is a gamer. That my adventures look like the ones done in the early 80s for the games. In fact I have been asked to create adventures for local players fo pay. Sort of a fanzine type thing for the gamers of these gone but not forgotten games. I even still owe a GEOS print out of a mega game to a man in the U.K. who wants to run it for his group in Glascow.

Naturally not all of the members here are interested in FRPG and it's use in GEOS. This article is only to show how the C= can and is used in daily life for a fun cause and makes others happy htat don't use the C= directly. Besides, I'm hopeing that this article will stimulate oithers to write about their personal enjoyment with the C= and their world. Not all of us have to worry about Dragons and alien craft wanting to do planetary bombardment, as a daily happening. <VBG>

THE SUM OF CPU POWER AND USER BRAIN POWER IS A CONSTANT.

SUBMITTED BY CHRIS FITE

HINTS & TIPS:

Some time ago I asked the question of how to change the colors of the "help" screen in the Illustrator program for TWS, because contrast was poor on my screen. I had no answer and now I know how to do it.

All that needs to be done is to change the colors (text and background and menu) of the main screen with Control "b", Control Shift "b", and/or Control (British pound key). When any of these is changed, the colors of the help screen change too. Somewhere in all the possibilities there is a color selection which will give good readable contrast for the help screen and the main screen. So that solves that problem.
W. R. (Bill) Kennedy

In answer to Linda Tanner's query about her mother's Star NX printer, the problem is almost certainly due to the ribbon binding. I have had some weird margin changes, loud noises, and invisible printing she describes. Changing to a new ribbon will probably get rid of the problem. Some varieties of ribbon cassettes are better quality than others.
W.R. (Bill) Kennedy

Have an FD 4000 and cannot find those expensive ED floppies anymore? Just format a standard 3 1/2" HD disk as if it were "Extended Density" and it will hold 3.2 MB like any other ED floppy. Brian Vaughan pointed out this nifty trick, saying "it works every time", unless you have a defective disk. In direct mode type **@N:DISKNAME,ID,EDN**.
Linda Tanner

Do your SWAP buttons on RAMLINK and Hard Drive work only when they feel like it?

For over a year, I tried to "Swap 8" over and over on my RL. About one in seven times it would "catch", and the Swap 8 light would turn on. Try a thumbnail or fingernail to turn it off and on. Since I switched from a finger press to a "nail" press, it works about 100% of the time now. It was one of those accidental discoveries.
Linda Tanner

RAMLINK POWER

In the March 2001 MaiLink, Bill Kennedy stated that his RAMLink battery was not enough to keep his contents intact during a 57-hour power outage (page 6). This topic came up again in the May 2001 MaiLink where Joe Fenn contributed an article (page 15) regarding the use of an Uninterrupted Power Supply (UPS) to maintain the contents of his RAMLink.

Not too long ago, we had a power outage that lasted 6 hours and my RAMLink (with 16 MB) was fine. Everything was in perfect condition.

My 2 MB RAMDrive was another story. When I turned on my C-64, the RAMDrive did not respond. This caused me great concern as I had not backed it up for some time. Luckily, once I reloaded the HD-DOS, I found that my partitions and content were still safe. I copied the contents to my FD-2000 and vowed to be more diligent at saving to floppy (even though our power is generally trouble free--thank goodness we haven't had anywhere near a 57-hour outage).
Bruce Thomas

NEW/OLD

by Lord Ronin from Q-Link, M.K.A. <Sensei> David O.E. Mohr

Recently, through some e-mail that popped my way, from members. I started thinking about our group. As have others in this last year. My thoughts were on what are we? What do we comprise?

I came up with some groupings of members. now all of these are good and the fact that we have such a wide spectrum is fantastic. No other computer group to my knowledge can boast this diversity of interests in a computer.

These groups are as follows. NEW/NEW, NEW/OLD, OLD/NEW, OLD/OLD. Nope this doesn't refer to the ages of members. <G> Though I'd fall in an Old group. No this is about our age in the group and our equipment.

NEW/OLD: Great place to start. Since we were all at this point at one time. The NEW stands for being new to the Commodore. The OLD for the equipment. My users group is mainly in this group. All new to the Commodore and dealing with OLD. Or better said, stock C= items. Stock C=, stock drive, stock monitor or TV set, stock C= printer. Doesn't matter how it was obtained. I know of at least two members to the MTTM that are in that class. Who have now moved to the ...

NEW/NEW: This group of us are those that are new to the Commodore World. They also have quickly gained a lot of the NEW C= related items. Be it Jiffy Dos or a FD or a SCPU, RamLink or etc. These are the ones that are trying out all or as much as they can of the new items. Sometimes more quickly than they can understand. A fault that I am guilty of these days.

OLD/NEW: A class that I don't as yet fall into. Since I am just now really learning about the Commodore. i still consider myself a NEW/NEW. The OLD/NEW user is some one that has been for many years a Commodore User. Who has many of the new items for the Commodore. There are many in our group and on the different mail lists and newsgroups on the Inet.

OLD/OLD: This group has been unfairly getting bashed over time. These are the old time users of the Commodore. Some still with the original machine that they got in 1982. They are quite happy with their system and wish to learn more about the advantages of the stock machine. They are not interested in nor have a need in their lives for the new items for the Commodore. This is perfectly fine. As they are happy and productive with their version of the Commodore.

As I thought about writing this article. I looked for comparisons in other things. Sure i had to deal in gaming. Where those of us that prefer the older games are shunned by the brand new is better gamers. I looked into my Martial Arts. Seeing there that the traditional schools are fast supplanted by the fast buck schools. All glimmer and glamrock theme. Then I looked at computers. Scanned some of the newsletters I have from other clubs. An idea struck me. So I asked users of the "other" platform questions. There I discovered if the product was new or just new or soon to be new. They seem to not be interested. Admittedly my sampling was mostly teenagers. Next I projected. What would a group of IBuMers be like if they were like the MTTM? They would have to have the multitude of windrone versions in their group. 486, 386, 286 XT and others of that ilk. All the way to the PC jr. That sounds like a nightmare movie from either George Romero or Clive Barker. <Night of the Living Dead, Night Breed> They wouldn't be able to communicate between machines or even verbally.

NEW/OLD, continued

Then I looked at our MTTM. So what if some of us like just the stock machines or if we want the new toys that plug into it? We can still talk to each other. We can still trade tips and hints on programmes. Doesn't matter that David Moon plays Wasteland at 1Mcps, and I at 20Mcps with a SCPU. he can still tell me where to look for hidden things in the game. Doesn't matter that I have 16 MB RAM for my Geos work and that he has 512Kb on a 1750. We can still share files. The IBuMers can't say that.

After all this thought, I came along to the idea that our group is the best group out there and we have the best members. Simply because we are so widely apart. Yet we are still connected to each other in a system that is the best computer for all ages and interests. So yeah I am proud to be in this group. Even if I am a NEW/NEW. The OLD/OLD are teaching me things. In return I am teaching my users group members. The knowledge continues to be passed along.

THREE QUESTIONS

1. I want to write and one of my projects involves autographs. How might I lift autographs, different ink colors, different sizes, different styles, and put them in a design, all on one page? I have enough of them to make several pages. Would a Handy Scanner do the job? If so, where might I get one for temporary use?

2. Using TWS and a reverse, "L=126", which is the ASCII character number for the symbol "pi", my Star 2420 printer will print the tilde part of the symbol, but not the vertical parts of the symbol. There is even a key on my Commodore 128 for pi (on the same key with the up arrow). I have not been able to get this key to print pi (for use in an equation). Has someone out there found a way to print the pi symbol?

3. So many times people have given me help through our MaiLink. I recently told of my RamLink going out so often because of power outtages. One of our members told me to get an "UPS" and it would cure it. So I went over to United Postal Service and they were no help. I took it to my computer supply man and he said, "Oh, that must be an Uninterrupable Power Supply." Well, how was I to know? So I got one ($80) and since I have had it in, not one loss has occurred, and we have had some dilly lightning storms, too. And the clock has blinked several times! (See previous issue).

Now, I need some additional help. I accidentally short-newed a disk (haven't we all?)! I remembered the Maverick had a program called "Disk Recovery" in its "Upgrades and Goodies" disk. I pulled it out and it did the trick. Now: I have backups on the Maverick disks but I noticed I didn't have a backup on that particular disk. I tried File-copying it and I tried Data-copying but it doesn't work. Did the makers of Maverick protect this disk? They state that only the Parameter disks were protected (and therefore, not copyable). All the copies I made would get the first menu, but died when a menu selection was made. Is there a "fix" for this? I am confined now to using the original (and it works, well: but it is a LOT of work)!

Thanks for all the help. Sincerely yours, W. R. (Bill) Kennedy

MAILINK on DISK

BY:RICHARD SAVOY,EDITOR

FROM THE DISK EDITORS CORNER!

WHAT'S NEW FOR SEPTEMBER

Side 1: This issue of CML will be on the front side of the disk. Whatever space is left, I will fill with Fun Graphics Machine type Clipart.
SIDE 2:The CML membership BIO's will be first, and with the space left I will fill with Commodore C-64 programs.

FREE BONUS DISK... with the **SEPTEMBER ISSUE...** is the July 1999 "Club Magazine"... from Clark County Commodore Computer Club in Nevada. AL Jackson (a fellow member) does a good job of putting current Commodore articles and some past history, 1541 Tricks, and Monitors machine language, all in this issue and some games and other programs. Side two contains SID music with Pictures, hope you enjoy.

PLEASE NOTE:
Some of you may already receive or have received these disks I'm using as bonus disks from **M.C.C.C.** or the ones like I sent in May from the **FIVE "C"**. If so please let me know and I'll send you something different.

BACK ISSUES OF MAILINK ON DISK:
Are available starting September 1987, in those days only the text of the Mailink newsletter was on the disk and they were one sided disks, I have them packed on double sided disks,as follows: 1987-88...2disks;1989...3disks;1990... 3disks;1991...5disks;1992 & 1/93...3disks;1993...3disks;1994 6...disks;and since 1994 there are 6 disks per year.The cost is $1.50/disk or $6.00/year except the years with two or three disks.

SUBSCRIBE TO THE
COMMODORE MAILINK on DISK

If you aren't a subscriber you don't have to wait till January, you can start anytime and you will receive the current issue and the latest bonus issue and the next five issues, which are mailed about two weeks after the current Commodore Mailink newsletter is mailed.

PRICES FOR THE COMMODORE MAILINK
on DISK ARE AS FOLLOW

The cost is $7.50/year in US.
$8.70/year in Canada
$10.00/year everywhere else
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What Can C.A.T.S. Do For You?
by William E. Robblets

"In October of 1992, the illness that put me out of the service now put me out of work. Because of that illness, I am now a severely disabled American vet. who lives for his Commodore computers."

(Editor's note: the above quote was lifted from the fascinating, seven-page introduction to Computer Assisted Technical Services literature submitted by member William E. Robblets. Due to space constraints, only some of the C.A.T.S. info could be included here.)

Of C.A.T.S., William says, "I originally formed C.A.T.S. in 1983 to help those purchasing a Commodore 64 computer. When I first bought mine, I had no one to help me. I had to learn everything by trial and error. It was at that time I decided others should not have to go through what I did; on March 23, 1983, C.A.T.S. Services was born."

Over the years C.A.T.S. has built up a massive Commodore PD Library. Their library is so massive (over 30,000 files and programs) that they purchased DCMR (Disk Catalog Manager/Reporter) and put the whole listing on it for easy access. Group discounts are available on all materials; when a club purchases the C.A.T.S. DCMR Catalog, they may make copies for their club members and they can order directly from C.A.T.S., which saves clubs the hassle of maintaining a PD Library and of placing a lot of single orders.

C.A.T.S. can furnish User Groups with all kinds of Commodore articles for their newsletters; if C.A.T.S. doesn't have an article on the subject needed, they car research the topic and write the article. These articles are provided on disk in either Seq ASCII, Seq Pet ASCII, PRG, TWS, or GEOS, so they can easily be incorporated into club newsletters.

C.A.T.S. has a set of lessons for those wanting to learn programming in BASIC. There are twenty lessons in the entire set, but one can buy as many or as few as desired. The course is for beginners, comes with separate Question and Answer sheets, and comes on disks (first seventeen lessons are one on each disk), and hard copy (lessons 18, 19, and 20).

Last minute catastrophe that destroyed your work on your Commodore Club's newsletter the night before it was to be mailed? C.A.T.S. to the rescue. While they wouldn't or couldn't promise overnight replacement, they can compile newsletters, performing part of the work, or setting up the full newsletter for you.

For the GEOS nuts out there, C.A.T.S. has the Multifont packs of over 350 different fonts that work with geoWrite and geoPaint. This set is copyrighted by C.A.T.S. GEOS users know that ordinarily only seven fonts are available at a time. With Multifont, C.A.T.S. has beaten the seven font limit, and in most cases, the user can have access to over forty (yes 40) different GEOS fonts at the same time!

Most orders are filled within 48 hours, and ordering information can be found in the INFORMATION & GROUP RESOURCES listing.

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK:

An apology as well as thanks are both due this month's readers/members. Thanks go to all those who submitted articles and other items for this issue. We even have a type-in program from Chris Fite, one of the two he submitted this issue.

Apologies go to all, as the quality of this edition is not what I had wanted and there are several reasons. First, I had planned to do this newsletter with my new Lexmark Optra 40 printer (no, not in color-- Dale Sidebottom already convinced even the most ardent naysayer that Commodore users can do excellent color printing). I recently learned geoPublish well enough to produce a decent output for the novice level. Right about time to start the newsletter, my SCPU decided to misbehave. With no time to troubleshoot and no desire to reconfigure Wheels to RL, I had to resort to the trusty old Star NX1000 I've had since June, 1988. Then a glitch happened here also! I had finally recently thinned the printer ink, and much to my dismay, many of the typed letters now appear to have missing parts, I other words, holes or spaces where there should be ink. My mother's NX 1000 would be a perfect temporary substitute, but it too is "in the shop" (on the floor of my computer room).

This issue eventually did limp its way to completion. Used were a C-128, RL, FD4000, 1571, and Star NX1000, all with TWS.

As mentioned on page 2, Robert Snyder will be your November editor. You can find all the particulars on that page.

Linda Tanner

LATE NEWS BULLETIN:

Last week, Gaelyne Gasson, auth of THE INTERNET FOR COMMODORE USERS, and co-owner of Videocam Services, made the announcement that she has been diagnosed with cancer and will be seeking immediate medical treatment for it. She admits it is a very scary thing, and voiced her concern that during her treatment phase, she might not be able to devote as much time to her Commodore work as she would need.

Gaelyne has since received numerous get-well wishes, both public and private. Anyone wanting to send good vibes her way may contact her at **Videocam Services, 90 Hillier Rd., Reynella, SA 5161, Australia.**

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