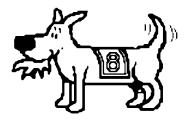# The Zero Page

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

Number 10, August 1994

Eight-Bit keeps takin' a byte
out of Commodore Computing

Jerry's Corner
by Jerry Shook

Well gang, for those of you that missed last meeting, the 5-1/4 disks were in and we sold 625 out of 1000. Minus 50 for the commercial lending library, that leaves us with only 325 to sell yet. Not bad, in fact I thought they did very well and I doubt that we will have any left after this meeting so if you want some be sure to show up. At $6.00 per pack of 25 they won't last long.

I was supposed to do a demo on Busy Bee's *Write Stuff* at this meeting, but due to some things that are coming up I am not sure that I will be able to make the meeting. So Dale has said that he would continue on with his demo of GEOS, and if you were at the last meeting you know that he does a super job. If you missed the last meeting you also missed one of the best demos I have seen.

I have always said that within our club is the best way to find out anything about our computers. Well now I am going to put it to the test. I have a C=128 and it has the capabilities to run CP/M, and I have played with it a few times. But the systems disk that came with my computer is an earlier version and is missing many features. I am looking for the version that is marked 28 May 87. If you have this version or know were I might be able to get a copy of it I would be ever so happy to hear from you.

August 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 demonstration
4:00 - 5:00	Meeting over, informal gathering, equipment teardown

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Next CUW Meeting:
Saturday, August 13
1:00 - 5:00 pm
1411 South Oliver

Dale Lutes follows up his GEOS demo from last month with a geoWrite & geoSpell tutorial!

Dale Lutes to be Published in dieHard

Dale Lutes will become the second CUW member to have an article printed in dieHard magazine. You may recall that an article on *Pocket Filer 2,* written by Fred Earley, appeared in the June 1994 issue.

Dale's article, entitled "Starting a User Group: A Personal Perspective", details the formation of our own CUW. It describes how we got going, how our club is run, and explains the reasoning behind some of our policy decisions. It is Dale's hope that his article will be of help to other Commodore enthusiasts who are working to start or revitalize a club. In fact, the article began as a reply to a request for information from one Ben Ulanoff, who was trying to reactivate the Brooklyn Commodore Users Group. Ben had found out about the CUW from the "Rarities" column in --- *dieHard!*

dieHard, "the flyer for commodore 8bitters", is published 10 times per year by LynnCarthy Industries, Inc., Boise, Idaho.

Your CUW Steering Committee members are:

Dale Lutes, Chair & Newsletter Editor
Marie Both, Vice-Chair
Robert Bales, BBS Representative
Francis Catudal, Public Domain Librarian
Nate Dannenberg, Q-Link Representative
Arlen Gould, Commercial Librarian
Don McManamey, Disk Editor
Jerry Shook, Quartermaster

Commodore Users of Wichita
Proposed Bylaws

Purpose of Commodore Users of Wichita Club:

The purpose of our Commodore club is to supply fellowship, education & support for all Commodore 8-bit computer users. We feel the best way to do this is to restrict membership to those people who have an interest in the Commodore 8-bit machines. Our main focus will be on the C= 64 and C= 128 as well as what ever help or assistance we can give to the VIC 20, Plus 4, C= 16 & Pet Commodores.

Requirements for Membership:

The most important requirement is a desire to work with one or more of the Commodore 8-bit computers. The dues for full membership will be $15.00 for one year from date of payment. A full member will be entitled to vote on club business, receive a copy of the bylaws, a club monthly paper, a disk of the quarter, use the clubs public domain library, use the clubs commercial lending library and have a chance to purchase specials as well as getting any assistance they may need that the club is able to give.

Associate members are immediate members of a family with a full club membership. An Associate member is entitle to use both libraries and what services we have to offer, but is not granted the privilege to vote unless there is an additional $5.00 paid for the voting privilege.

Limited membership will be granted to anyone willing to pay $5.00 for the right to our club paper only.

Honorary membership may be granted to anyone that has given or is giving a product or extraordinary service to the club, subject to a simple majority vote of voting members at a regular scheduled meeting.

Nomination & Election Process:

Elections will be held annually beginning in 1994. Nominations open at the start of the March club meeting and close at the end of the April club meeting. Nominations may be made in person or in writing to the Chair or Vice Chair. Members may nominate themselves. Nominees are required to submit a position statement for inclusion in the May newsletter prior to the deadline set by the Newsletter Editor.

Elections will be held at the May meeting. Votes will be cast by secret ballot of the members present. Members that will be absent may vote absentee, but all ballots must be returned to the Chair or Vice-Chair by start of the May meeting. The Chair will appoint two election officers with the approval of the members present.

The election officers will distribute, collect, and count the ballots. The winner will be determined by a simple majority of the votes cast. In the event that no candidate receives a majority, a runoff will be held between the two candidates who receive the most votes. In the event of a tie, the Chair may cast the tie-breaking vote or request that a second ballot be counted. A majority of the members present may request a re-count of the ballots cast.

The new officers will assume their posts on June 1. Term of office will be for 1 year and for no more than 2 consecutive terms in one office. After 1 year out of office or service in a different office the member may again run for the office that he/she held for 2 years.

Elected Officers:

Chair
- Is responsible for conducting the monthly CUW meetings
- Is responsible for setting the meeting agenda
- Serves as representative of the CUW to outside organizations
- Makes arrangements for Steering Committees meetings
- Makes appointments to the Steering Committee
- May form ad-hoc committees

Vice Chair
- Assumes the duties of the Chair in his/her absence
- Is responsible for maintaining the CUW membership database
- Is responsible for processing new member applications
- Is responsible for maintaining the CUW financial records and must be ready to show them upon request.

CUW Proposed Bylaws
(continued from page 2)

Appointed Officers:

The Steering Committee is composed of the Chair, Vice Chair, and these appointed officers:

PD Librarian	- Makes PD Library available at monthly meetings and sets fees with approval of members
Commercial Lending Librarian	- Makes Library available at monthly meetings and sets fees with approval of members
Disk Editor	- Produces the quarterly disk publication
Newsletter Editor	- Publishes the monthly newsletter/meeting announcement
BBS Representative	- Represents the CUW on local & national electronic bulletin boards
At-Large Member(s)	- Performs duties assigned by the Chair

Appointments are made by the Chair and must be approved by a simple majority of the members present at a monthly club meeting.

Removal from Office:

Any member of the Steering Committee may be removed from office by a vote of two-thirds of the members present at a monthly club meeting.

Finances:

Three separate cash boxes will be maintained: Public Domain Library and the Commercial Lending Library will keep no more than $10 cash each. The General Petty cash fund will not exceed $25 cash and will be kept by the Vice Chair or their named Assistant. No single fund keeper will spend more than $50 in any month or exceed $200 a year. The Steering Committee will not spend more than $100 over and above normal monthly expenditures without getting permission from a majority of the members in attendance at a regular meeting.

Amending the Bylaws:

A proposed amendment or addition can be presented by any club member in good standing at any regular meeting to be placed in the club paper and voted on at the following meeting, but must have at least two-thirds vote to pass.

Steering Committee Meetings:

All members have the right to attend steering committee meetings, but must notify the Chair of their desire to attend.

Random Access
by Dale Lutes

Tips for Making Programming Easier

OK, you've owned your Commodore computer for a few months. You have a small library of "canned" software that you are comfortable with. But now you are ready to take the plunge and write your own program. Here are a few things to keep in mind that will help you avoid some common programming headaches. My examples are from a program written in BASIC, but the tips apply to other languages as well.

1. First and foremost, plan your work. Often programmers are too eager to punch those keys and see something on the screen. This usually results in a program that is overly complicated, hard to maintain, and inefficient. A program that is well-designed on paper is much easier to code. Think about the major functions of the program and how you want it to interact with the user (even if the only user will be yourself). Also, identify the main pieces of information that your program will have to keep track of. Make notes for yourself.

2. Use a modular design. You've made a list of the major functions, now plan to write a distinct section of code to handle each of them. You might even assign certain ranges of line numbers to each module. For example, if you are writing a simple data base, your list of functions might look like this:

Function:	Lines:
initialization	1000-1199
main program	1200-1299
input data	1300-1399
print data	1400-1499
save to disk	1500-1599
load from disk	1600-1699
misc. functions	1800-1999

This technique is very useful in the testing stage of your programming effort. Let's say the main program prompts the user to make a choice, then "calls" the corresponding function using GOSUBs. You can thoroughly test the main program by substituting a "stub" for each of the major functions:

```
1300 rem Stub for Input Data routine
1302 print "Called INPUT DATA"
1304 gosub 1800 : rem Wait for a keypress
1306 return
```

3. Don't use consecutive line numbers in your programs. Use line increments of 2, 5, or 10. This will help minimize the amount of renumbering you must do when you need to insert some lines in the middle of a module. Some programming tools (such as Simons' BASIC) will automatically generate line numbers for you at a specified increment.

4. Be generous in your use of REMarks. This is for your own good. Someday you *will* want to modify your program. I can barely remember what I had for breakfast let alone the details of a program I wrote 6 months or a year ago. Prefix each routine with a description. For example:

```
1800 rem
1802 rem Wait for a keypress - return the character in a$
1804 rem
```

It's good practice to declare and initialize all of your variables. While you're at it, note just what they do:

```
1080 rc = 0 : rem Record Counter
1082 dv = 0 : rem Output destination, 0=screen, 1=printer
```

5. Write your program in upper/lower case mode and be liberal in your use of spaces. See my examples, above and below.

6. If you are executing more than one statement in a loop, split it across several lines:

```
1358 for n = 1 to 20 : print d$(n) : next : rem OK for a simple loop

1422 for n = 1 to rc : rem Print running totals for all records
1424 tt = tt + sx(n) : rem Calculate the total in TT
1426 print #4, n, sx(n), tt : rem Print the rec #, value, & total
1428 next n
```

It is worth noting that tips 4, 5, and 6 have everything to do with program readability and absolutely nothing to do with cleverness or execution speed. A true hacker would be quick to point out that BASIC programs run much faster if lines are compacted with REMs, spaces, and extra line breaks removed. This is true, but programs written that way are terribly difficult to modify and maintain. If speed is very important, I would suggest keeping a "human readable" version of the program written according to my tips, above. Then use a code compacter to produce an optimized "production" version. Spacing is not a factor when using a compiled language like C or Pascal.

These tips should help you get started. If there is sufficient interest within the club, I'll try to address programming issues more frequently in *Random Access.* Until then, may all of your programming bugs be easily exterminated. ;-)

The Helping Hand

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

Music
Robert Bales   Nate Dannenberg

Telecommunications
Robert Bales   Justin Riddiough
Nate Dannenberg

Programming
Nate Dannenberg   Dale Lutes

Astrology, Biorhythm
Marie Both

Printing in Color
Don McManamey   Jerry Shook

Labels
Jerry Shook

Titling Home Videos
Sue Harber

Cards, Posters & Signs
Fred Earley

Word Processing & Desktop Publishing
Fred Earley   Don McManamey
Jerry Shook   Dale Lutes

GEOS
Nate Dannenberg   Fred Earley
Dale Lutes

Family Roots
Maxine Ulrich

Helping Hand Volunteers
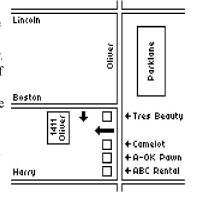Robert Bales   744-2580
Marie Both   652-7783
Nate Dannenberg   744-9953
Fred Earley   722-4044
Sue Harber   942-4884
Dale Lutes   721-0835
Don McManamey   265-2560
Justin Riddiough   522-5277
Jerry Shook   776-2683
Maxine Ulrich   838-8606

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. 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. A newsletter-only membership is available for $5 per year. Contact any of the officers (listed elsewhere in this newsletter) for more information. We are looking forward to seeing **you** at our next meeting!

If you own an Amiga computer system, be sure to visit our sister club, the C&AUGW. Contact President Hal Wigley at 776-9529 for information regarding their meeting time and location.

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

Marie Both
Commodore Users of Wichita
6606 Cottonwood
Wichita, KS 67207

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

Type of membership: ❏ Family ($15)   ❏ Newsletter-only ($5)

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

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