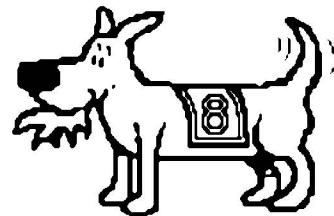


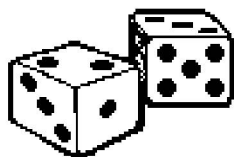
The Zero Page

*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 49, November 1997



Random Access

by Dale Lutes

Let me open this month by apologizing for missing the November meeting. I had planned to give a demo of the

subLOGIC *Flight Simulator II*, but was only recently assigned to officiate several football games that day. I will try again early in 1998. In the meantime, I want to say thanks to everyone who has been helping to run the club in my absence for the past two months.

I'm fond of saying that you never know what surprises your Commodore has in store for you. I got one of those surprises when I went to deliver copies of last month's newsletter to Z-Software. You may recall that I used my column last month to discuss text adventure games. Well, after leaving *The Zero Page* at the front desk, I had a quick look around the store and found a copy of *Compute!'s Guide to Adventure Games* by Gary McGath. This book greatly expands on the ideas that I tried to cover in my article. It includes a history of adventure games, reviews of games by several different publishers, tips on playing adventure games, a guide to creating your own adventure, and a type-in sample called "Tower of Mystery."

Not long ago, I received a letter from Peter Hunt of geoClub OZ. In it, he asked for help in locating one Mark McGuinnis who wrote an excellent series of articles entitled "Looking at GEOS." I passed this request on to the other user groups that we exchange newsletters with. This week, I found another package from Peter in my mailbox. This one included a disk with 32 of the McGuinnis articles on it. "Looking at GEOS" is well-written and targeted at the novice GEOS user. You'll find the first installment on page 2. Thanks to Peter for making these available to us. Mark, if you are out there, you have an audience that is eager for more!

This month, Dwayne Howard says "farewell" to the club in his "Tips & Bits" column. When Dwayne handed me the disk at our steering committee meeting, he told me I wouldn't like his column. I'm not sure what I expected, but I know I didn't expect this. It is always sad to see a member leave the club. It is especially hard for me when that member is a hard-working volunteer like Dwayne. Over the past several years, I have been able to count on him to give and help with demos. He was always there to help Francis Catudal with the PD Library, and when Francis had to take time away from the club, Dwayne stepped in as our full-time librarian. Those of you who were part of the geoSIG

will remember that Dwayne was the SIG chair. "Tips & Bits" was a welcome addition to our newsletter, helping to make it the home-grown journal that I am so proud of. Dwayne was right: I don't like this month's installment. But I do respect his decision and I wish him the best with the IBM user group. Come and visit us when you can, Dwayne. You'll always be welcome at the CUW.

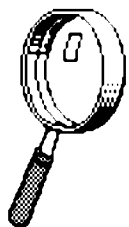
**Next CUW Meeting:
Saturday, November 8
1:00 - 5:00 pm
1411 South Oliver**

Have you got some hardware or software for your Commodore that you consider a "collectible?" Bring it along to the November meeting to share with the club!



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
Don McManamey	Disk Editor
Morris Shouse	Member at-large



Looking at GEOS

by Mark McGuinnis

[Editor's note: This article was first published in December 1992. It comes to us courtesy of Peter Hunt, geoClub OZ]

The idea behind this column is to help you use your

GEOS program and to get the most from it. Also if you are having problems or want to do something a little out of the ordinary perhaps these subjects can be addressed in this space in the future. Keep in mind that I am not an expert but with all the experience that is in the club perhaps an answer can be found.

Let's get those GEOS disks out and get the program up and running. This writer uses a stock 128 and two 1541 II disk drives operating in the 64 mode. I use GEOS 64 as I bought GEOS 2.0 when I owned a 64. This set up is about as basic as you can get with GEOS.

The first thing you must do with GEOS before you try anything else is to "install" GEOS. This means preparing the applications for everyday use. Step 1 is to boot GEOS. Insert the system disk into your disk drive and type LOAD "GEOS", 8, 1. The manual cautions to never boot GEOS with more than one disk drive on. More about multiple drives in a future column. For now keep it simple. The reason for the "installation" process is due to a copy protection scheme. All your applications are keyed to your system disk and yours alone. Have you ever wondered why you have trouble with that application a friend gave you?

After GEOS has finished booting a message box (dialog box) should appear asking you to "Please insert disk: Back up system." From this point it should just be a matter of following the directions or choices presented by the dialog boxes. The manual gives the impression that an application that has been "installed" to someone else's system disk can still be installed or keyed to your system disk.

Step 2: Activate your mouse ,koala pad or inkwell light pen. A joystick is the default input device and does not have to be activated. Hold down the commodore key and the letter "I" to get the dialog box needed to select an input device. Use the cursor keys to choose an input device and hit "Return" to select.

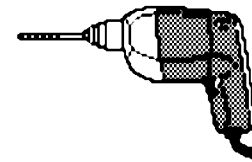
Step 3: Install your applications. An application is a program that operates in GEOS. Examples of applications are Geowrite, Geopaint, Geospell, Geomerge, Text Grabber and Paint Drivers. An application must be "installed" before it can be used. To start the installation process, close the system disk and open the disk entitled applications. Select an application and double click on the file icon to open the file. Shortly you should get a dialog box telling you the application has been installed. Close the file and proceed to the next application and repeat the process. At this point you will have a user friendly, I can do almost anything program or you will be up that familiar creek without a spoon. Should you wind up in the latter situation, do not use your GEOS disk for Frisby practice with the dog. Shut everything down, take a break and try the process again later. As a last resort you can call one

your friendly, willing to help club members.

Next we will continue with the use of GEOS. In the meantime install your applications to a work disk and be ready to go.

Tips and Bits

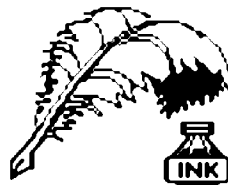
by Dwayne Howard



Dear Commodore People:

I have a word to say about the club. It

is one of the best and I liked working with Dale, but I can't make it to both this club and the other club. Yes, I and others have got the other computer [an IBM]. I have still got the Commodore C-64 and will keep it as long as I have a mailing list which I use instead of the other. This club is good, but I will move on to the other. Dale has done a good job and the other members, too. But as I said, I can't be at both places at the same time. If I get a Saturday free, I will stop in. You have a good library. Use this library - it has a lot of good programs in it. Well, I've said enough and will miss you all. --Dwayne



Don's Digest

by Don McManamey

Last month I talked about the RAMLink and GEOS. I said that I thought GEOS should have been a part of the RAMLink and that RAMLink should operate

through GEOS to eliminate DOS style commands. Of course, I once again spoke of GEOS on a chip. Since then I was enlightened as to why GEOS on a chip is not a good idea. As I understand it there are two problems. First, when you commit a program to a chip you had best make sure the program is right as it cannot be changed. Second, when you configure GEOS you need to save that configuration and that cannot be done to read only memory.

Once again I prove that a little knowledge is dangerous, for you see I am not happy with that answer. Dale has GEOS on his RAMLink and does not lose it at the end of the day because his RAMLink is battery backed. If GEOS were on a chip the config could be battery backed so *it* would not be lost at the end of the day. This is what is done with the Macintosh and IBM compatibles. Using a battery with about a ten year life these machines save everything from the time and date to mouse speed on RAM chips. I see no major problem here for a professional programmer type.

My next question is, when was the last time GEOS was revised? It seems to me it was in excess of eight years. Isn't that perfected enough? In all of this perhaps we hit the real answer to controlling the RAMLink through GEOS: Load GEOS on a battery backed chip made just for it. It would be in RAM and not ROM.

My real objection to the RAMLink OS could have been cured by simply having it menu driven. That is the way things are done now. Even Windows and the Mac OS are basically menu driven albeit quite dynamic and picturesque.



Rear View Mirror

by Moe Shouse

The question this month is: What is a collectible? I guess it all depends on what you are interested in. When I was growing up, there were a lot of older men, 50's and 60's, that were finding and restoring old Model A's. If you don't know, a Model A is a Ford built in the late 20's and early 30's. Point is, some people thought they were collectible. My dad and I thought that if one could find the right parts and buy them, and store them for 20 or 30 years, then one could make a lot of money. If you just knew the right parts to buy. Because we didn't have the money either, we didn't do anything. But, if we had known that big block & Hemi parts were going to to make a comeback, we could have made a killing.

So the next question is: What is the most collectible Commodore item? A C=64? I don't think so, as there were 22 million made. Well, maybe a 1581 disk drive. I know some people that would almost pay as much for one as a new CMD FD-2000 costs. But I don't think it's a collectible. Maybe a factory prototype? A C=65? Well that would be a good collectible. But they are very hard to find. OK, I guess I best tell you. I think some software is as or even more collectible than hardware.

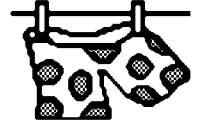
You still want to know what I have that I think is so collectible? It's a game called *Jack Attack*, a cartridge made by Commodore in spring 1984 only months after Jack Tramiel left Commodore. The game is almost word for word like the description Michael Tomczyk gives in his book *Home Computer Wars*, of how Jack would yell & scream at people. In the game Jack (red) jumps on people (blue), and jumps up on, and off blocks. The neat thing is I've had a magazine, *Commodore Power/Play*, for some time. That has an article about the *Jack Attack* game. The cover has a large picture of Jack jumping on a dude. Funny thing is this dude is yellow. The article has about 4 paragraphs on how hard it was to come up with the name. That was most likely before Tramiel left. I think the name was very easy after he left. What a way to get back at your old boss, make a game about him, and put his name on it! This game has 64 levels, that's a nice number. The game I have has the box and booklet. The cartridge, box, booklet are in mint condition. I haven't played it much, but it is a hard game to play. The article in the magazine says that no one at Commodore has gone to level 64.

So if you think you have a Commodore collectible, bring it to the next meeting. I know it will be neat to see some rare or little known Commodore items.

Question. What computer is the 1531 Dataset made to work with? Be careful before you answer this one. It's not an easy answer.

Newsletter Briefs

by Dale Lutes



In last month's GOCUG newsletter, Jim Brain introduced a new column in which

summarized the contents of newsletter received from other clubs. It looked like a great idea, so I've decided to incorporate a similar column in our own newsletter. I am calling this "Newsletter Briefs" for three reasons: 1) Jim had already taken "Newsletter Notes" for his column, 2) It's a good, descriptive title, and 3) It provides a good visual pun. Now, on to this month's newsletters:

Disklosure

Salt City Commodore Club, Hutchinson, KS

This issue features a number of reprint articles. Among them are "Hints & Tips" from the Commodore Hayward group, "Disks, Dust, & Dirt" by Russ Rowe of CFCUG, and "Skew to You Too!", a discussion of disk drive skew by Jack Blewitt.

geoNEWS

geoClub, United Kingdom/Australia

This newsletter includes two articles on the SuperCPU downloaded from CMD's Web site. There are also two items on Gaelyne Gasson's book, "The Internet for Commodore Users." Rounding out the issue are the third part of Dale Sidebottom's series on Creative Micro Designs and a reprint of Don's Digest (Technological Prophecy) from our own newsletter.

GEOS Publication

Rev. Willis Patten, Louisville, KY

Among this month's letters is a very good article by Virgil Leisure on TopDesk (an alternative to the GEOS desktop). Also worthy of note is a mini reference for geoPublish users.

Greater Omaha Commodore Users Group, Omaha, NE

The feature demo for October is the Advanced Computing Environment operating system for the 64 and 128. There is an article on the development of Jim Brain's "Virtual Internet Commodore User's Group" plus Jim's ever-popular "Commodore Trivia."

The Infinite Loop

Western Colorado Commodore Users Group, Mack, CO

The October issue was damaged in the mail, leaving only the cover sheet.

SCUG News

Sandwich Computer Users Group, Somonauk, IL

There was no October newsletter and the November issue did not arrive in time to include here.

All members of the CUW are entitled to four issues of the Disk O'Quarter annually. If you haven't picked up your disks recently, see Don McManamey at our next meeting.



If Dr. Suess wrote computer technical manuals:

author unknown

If a packet hits a pocket on a socket on a port,
and the bus is interrupted as a very last resort,
and the address of the memory makes your floppy disk abort,
then the socket packet pocket has an error to report.

If your cursor finds a menu item followed by a dash,
and the double-clicking icon puts your window in the trash,
and your data is corrupted 'cause the index doesn't hash,
then your situation's hopeless and your system's gonna crash!

If the label on the cable on the table at your house,
says the network is connected to the button on your mouse,
but your packets want to tunnel on another protocol,
that's repeatedly rejected by the printer down the hall,
and your screen is all distorted by the side effects of gauss,
so your icons in the window are as wavy as a souse,
then you may as well reboot and go out with a bang,
'cause as sure as I'm a poet, the sucker's gonna hang!

When the copy of your floppy's getting sloppy on the disk,
and the microcode instructions cause unnecessary risk,
then you have to flash your memory and you'll want to RAM your ROM.
Quickly turn off the computer and be sure to tell your mom.



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.

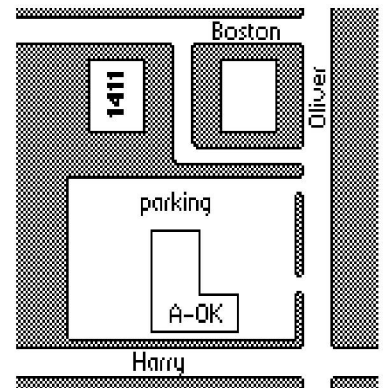
Meetings of the CUW are scheduled for the second Saturday of each month. The deadline for articles is 14 days prior to the meeting day. Submissions are accepted on 1541, 1571, or 1581 formatted floppy disks. geoWrite, ASCII, or PETASCII files are preferred. In a pinch, paper hard copy will work. Call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

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) _____