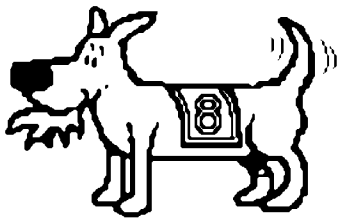
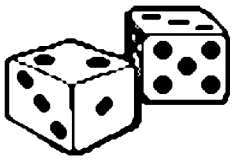
The Zero Page

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

Number 62, December 1998



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



Random Access

by Dale Lutes

As I announced in the last newsletter, I will be turning over *The Zero Page* to a new editor after this issue. It was not an easy decision to make, and now that the time is here, I find it difficult to let go. *The Zero Page* has been my baby for over five years and I think that I must be feeling (at least a little) what it will be like when my flesh and blood children leave home.

One of my objectives has always been to include as much original material as possible generated by CUW members, thus making the newsletter a true reflection of the Commodore Users of Wichita. I think that I have been successful in achieving this goal, and for that I must thank all of the CUW members whose submissions have made *The Zero Page* possible. You know who you are. Stand up and take a bow!

If the *The Zero Page* has been influenced by the individual contributors, it has been shaped even more by it's editor. I am entirely responsible for the punny title and Eight-Bit logo. No apology --- I'm just stating a fact. I've purposely tried to give *The Zero Page* an upbeat "Commodore computing is alive and well in Wichita, Kansas" tone. I have also tried to adhere to a certain visual style so that you would recognize a copy lying on a table across the room. There are a few issues I wish I could take back and do over, but overall I think the good far outweigh the bad.

What will our newsletter look like in the future? Dot matrix or laser printed? Text only or graphic? Will it have a new name or logo? Will it be more technical, less personal? At this time, I can't say. I hope that the new will borrow much from the old. I do know that it must be as much a part of the new editor as the issue you are now holding is a part of me.

Just one more thing:
Thanks for reading.

Next CUW Meeting:
Saturday, December 12
1:00-5:00pm
1411 South Oliver

It's time again for our annual holiday get-together. Say farewell to 1998 with good food and your good friends at the CUW.

Moe's Soap Box

by Moe Shouse

In the October column I talked about how my SuperCPU 128 was not working right. I sent it in to CMD. It only took 12 days total counting 2 weekends. And that is with about 6 days of shipping.

To make a short story long, the person that repaired it, Mark Fellows, sent a very nice description of what they found and how they tested it. One test he let run all night long. What he did to fix it was to replace the PLD chip. That stands for Programmable Logic Device. It does for the SuperCPU what the MMU chip does for the 128. It is like a director, it switches electrical pulses from one chip to another. It seems to work fine now, but I did have trouble getting GEOS to run twice tonight. Once it gave a system error. But once I had the JiffyDOS on in both the 128 and the SuperCPU 128.

Maybe a short word about JiffyDOS is in order. I have JiffyDOS in my 128. It is built into the SuperCPU 128 and my RAMLink. But you can't use the 128 JiffyDOS if you have the RAMLink plugged in, so you turn it off with its switch because JiffyDOS built into the RAMLink has no switch. The SuperCPU has a switch for its JiffyDOS, but it will override the JiffyDOS in the RAMLink. So here's the picture: A C-128, SuperCPU plugged into it, a RAMLink plugged into that. The JiffyDOS in the 128 is off. The JiffyDOS in the SuperCPU is turned on with its switch that overrides the JiffyDOS in the RAMLink. Most of the time, that is how I run my system.

Well back to the SuperCPU repair. The cost was not bad: $35 bench charge, $13 for the chip, and about $19 total shipping. So I must give Mr. Mark Fellows and CMD a two thumbs up for SuperCPU repairs.

Now on to the latest hot subject in our club. Do we change to let other platforms into our club? NO! NO! NO! NO!

Don's Digest

by Don McManamey

The opening shots have been fired! War has been declared!

In our quest to retain members, it has been proposed and most certainly will be approved that the club expand beyond the 8 bit Commodore machines. Of course everyone knows the potential for conflict between users of differing platforms. However, obviously not everyone reads *The Zero Page.* Because they don't read it, Dale should not be missed when he steps down from his editors post after this issue. If they had read last months issue one would think they would be ore aware and sensitive to feelings of others and be on their best behavior. At last months meeting, three persons engaged in ''Mac Bashing.'' Actually, one person asked the question, ''Who wants an iMac?'' After giving great thought to this question which on the surface seems to be a fair question, I concluded that had I asked, ''Who wants a PC?'' that it would have been considered a put-down and so I do too.

The purpose of this article is not to attack PCs or praise Macs but rather to point out what I tried to show last month which is that a multi-platform club just won't work. I feel like a broken record. Commodore users, more than anyone else, should be a bit more sensitive to the feelings of others considering the years of scorn we suffered from more powerful machines. The fact is that most who put us down did not fully understand our machines. PC users and pro PC advocates, as a general rule, know little or nothing about the Mac. On the other hand most Mac users have first hand experience on PCs. In fact many, like Dale, are computer professionals who use PCs considerably at work. When these enlightened individuals get home they want to use their machines as effortlessly as possible. They want something that will work logically and reliably. We Mac users were polite at last months meeting. We endured the insults and while we did defend our machines we did not stoop to the level of those making the attack but rather showed our willingness to be amiable. If we Mac users are gone in the next six months, just remember who fired the first shots.

Someone once said, ''The cure for paranoia is to kill all your enemies.'' If one did this they would surely be lonely. If your run off all who think differently than you, I hope you are happy in your solitude.

"X has had its share of $5,000 toilet seats --- like Sun's Open Look clock tool, which gobbles up 1.4 megabytes of real memory! If you sacrificed all the RAM from 22 Commodore 64s to clock tool, it still wouldn't have enough to tell you the time."

Garfinkel, Weise, & Strassmann, "The Unix-Hater's Handbook", copyright 1994 by IDG Books Worldwide

Remember When...

author unknown

A computer was something on TV
from a science fiction show of note
A window was something you hated to clean...
And ram was the cousin of a goat...

Meg was the name of my girlfriend
and gig was a job for the nights
now they all mean different things
and that really mega bytes

An application was for employment
a program was a TV show
a cursor used profanity
a keyboard was a piano

Memory was something that you lost with age
a cd was a bank account
and if you had a 3-1/2" floppy
you hoped nobody found out

Compress was something you did to the garbage
not something you did to a file
and if you unzipped anything in public
you'd be in jail for a while

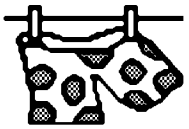
Log on was adding wood to the fire
hard drive was a long trip on the road
a mouse pad was where a mouse lived
and a backup happened to your commode

Cut you did with a pocket knife
Paste you did with glue
a web was a spider's home
and a virus was the flu

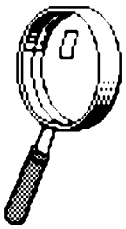
I guess I'll stick to my pad and paper
and the memory in my head
I hear nobody's been killed in a computer crash
but when it happens they wish they were dead

Newsletter Briefs

by Dale Lutes



The only newsletters we've received this month are from the Western Colorado Commodore User Group. I suspect the others are late due to the upcoming holidays. The November *Infinite Loop* has an excellent article on troubleshooting and maintaining Commodore keyboards. The December issue has another outstanding troubleshooting article. This one, covering the Commodore 1571 disk drive, was written by Ray Carlsen. Earl Williams announced his plans to move to South Dakota. His contributions as Vice President and Newsletter Editor will be greatly missed by the rest of the WCCUG. Our own *Zero Page* was recognized in Jake Smith's newsletter review in both issues.



Looking at GEOS

by Mark McGuinnis

[This article was first published in November 1993. It comes to us courtesy of Peter Hunt, geoClub OZ.]

Before we get started this month let me reiterate that I am by no means a GEOS expert. I have used GEOS and had pretty good luck with it. In the course of this column I am closely following the GEOS 2.0 users manual. I do not plan to delve too deeply into any one subject and I'll try not to back track too much.

Let's start this month by looking at copying a file to another disk. As mentioned in past columns, GEOS works best with more than one drive. A RAM expansion unit (REU) and disk drive would be the ideal set up. From personal experience and observation it seems that two drives of the same type (1541, 1541 II, 1571 etc.) will give you fewer headaches. In this column I will generally be referring to a one or two 1541 II set up.

Terms you will need to know when copying a file to another disk are source disk and destination disk.. These terms seem to be fairly obvious. The disk from which you wish to copy is called the source disk and the disk onto which you wish to place the file is called the destination disk. As a general rule GEOS can tell the difference in the source and destination files and keep you from shooting yourself in the foot. If you are using on disk drive: Select the file to be copied, drag the files ghost icon to the desk top boarder and deposit it there. Close the source disk by clicking on the close icon (or pressing the Commodore key and C). Remove the source disk from the disk drive and insert the destination disk. Open the disk by clicking on it's disk drive icon (or pressing the Commodore key and O). Drag the border file to disks note pad and turn it loose. From this point it should only be a matter of following the screen prompts.

A couple of notes should be mentioned at this point. In a single drive setup, the multi-file select feature cannot be used to copy a group of files to another disk.

Note #2. Copying a file does not delete it from the source disk. After a disk to disk copy, when you check the source disk you will notice the icon of the file you just copied still on the desk top boarder. This file needs to be returned back to the desk top note pad. This is just a matter of good house keeping as well as a way to dodge the GEOS gremlins. One last word on the subject. Berkeley Softworks states, "Files should not be left on the boarder." Don't leave your tacos on the boarder either! (I couldn't help myself). When using more than one disk drive to copy files you need to use the reset command from the options menu. The reset command will enable GEOS to recognize a disk in another disk drive. Once you have selected reset, the name of each disk will appear below its disk drive icon. This time drag the file copy process should be automatic at this juncture. Be aware that if you are using two different disk drives and no RAM expansion unit, your source disk will need to contain copies of the configure 2.0 and desk top 2.0 files.

Deleting files: not much to say here. Drop the file ghost icon in the waste basket and consider it gone. Another method of disposal is to select the file or files you want to get rid of and select delete from the file menu. GEOS will afford you the opportunity to cancel the deletion process when you are deleting multi-files. Next month we will look at deleting files from your GEOS master disks, touch on undoing a file delete and who knows what else. Manana mi amigo.

Stupid Programming Trick

by Dale Lutes

Here is a final brain-teaser from my bag of Stupid Programming Tricks. I am picking on C once again, my least favorite programming language. I have very strong opinions about a language that lets anyone write code like this. As always, the challenge is to guess what the program does without actually running it. Hint: This program has a holiday theme. The answer is on page 5.

```
/*
LEAST LIKELY TO COMPILE SUCCESSFULLY:
  Ian Phillipps, Cambridge Consultants Ltd., Cambridge, England

  An appropriate program for December 25th, this consists primarily of
  calls to main() combined by a lot of the ternary conditional (?:)
  operators. Have you ever seen a more forceful return? The judges note
  that this program looked like what you would get by pounding on the keys
  of a type writer at random.

  Note -- I have made a minor correction (for spelling) to line 48, where I
  added a missing comma at column 59. I also added the #include <stdio.h>
*/
```

(Continued on page 4)

Stupid Programming Trick (continued from page 3)

```
#include <stdio.h>
main(t,_,a)
char *a;
{
        return!
0<t?  /* Ternary block #1 start */

t<3?  /* Ternary block #2 start */

main(-79,-13,a + main(-87,1-_, main(-86, 0, a+1 ) +a)):
1,

t<_?
main(t+1, _, a )
:3,

main ( -94, -27+t, a )
&&t == 2 ?_
<13 ?

main ( 2, _+1, "%s %d %d\n" )

:9:16:
t<0?
t<-72?
main( _, t,
"@n'+,#'/*{}w+/w#cdnr/+,{}r/*de}+,/*{*+,/w{%+,/w#q#n+,/#{l,+,/n{n+,/+#n+,/#;\
#q#n+,/+k#;*+,/'r :'d*'3,}{w+K w'K:'+}e#';dq#'l q#'+d'K#!/+k#;\
q#'r}eKK#}w'r}eKK{nl]'/#;#q#n')()#}w'){){nl]'/+#n';d}rw' i;# ){nl]!/n{n#'; \
r{#w'r nc{nl]'/#{l,+'K {rw' iK{;[{nl]'/w#q#\
\
n'wk nw' iwk{KK{nl]!/w{%'l##w#' i; :{nl]'/*{q#'ld;r'}{nlwb!/*de}'c ;;\
{nl'-{}rw]'/+,}##'*}#nc,',#nw]'/+kd'+e}+;\
#'rdq#w! nr'/ ') }+}{rl#'{n' ')# }'+}##(!!/")
:
t<-50?
_==*a ?
putchar(31[a]):

main(-65,_,a+1)
:
main((*a == '/') + t, _, a + 1 )
:

0<t?

main ( 2, 2 , "%s")
:*a=='/'||

main(0,

main(-61,*a, "!ek;dc i@bK'(q)-[w]*%n+r3#l,{}:\nuwloca-O;m .vpbks,fxntdCeghiry")

,a+1);}
```

Don McManamey plans to have the June, September, and December issues of the Disk O'Quarter available at the next meeting. Don't forget to pick up your copy!

A Year 2000 Tale

author unknown

(Sung to the tune of ''Gilligan's Island'')

Just sit right back and you'll hear a tale
Of the doom that is our fate,
That started when programmers used
Two digits for a date,
Two digits for a date.

Main memory was smaller then;
Hard disks were smaller, too.
''Four digits are extravagant,
So let's get by with two,
So let's get by with two.''

But management had not a clue:
''It works fine now, you bet!
A rewrite is a straight expense;
We won't do it just yet,
We won't do it just yet.''

Now when two thousand rolls around
It all goes straight to hell,
For zero's less than ninety-nine
As anyone can tell,
As anyone can tell.

The mail won't bring your
pension check.
It won't be sent to you
When you're no longer sixty-eight,
But minus thirty-two,
But minus thirty-two.

The problems we're about to face
Are frightening for sure.
And reading every line of code's
The only certain cure,
The only certain cure.

There's not much time, there's too
much code
(and COBOL-coders, few).
When the century is finished with,
We may be finished, too,
We may be finished, too.

Eight thousand years from now I hope
That things weren't left too late,
And people aren't lamenting
Four digits for a date,
Four digits for a date!

The Helping Hand

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

Robert Bales 831-0008
trebor@southwind.net
Telecommunications, Internet, CMD HD drives

Dale Lutes 721-0835
lutes@feist.com
GEOS, Programming, Word Processing, Desktop Publishing, CMD FD drives and RAMLink

Don McManamey 265-2560
dmcmanamey@geocities.com
Word Processing, Print Shop, Printing

Jerry Shook 776-2683
jls695@gte.net
Databases, Label Making, Word Processing, Printing

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!

Stupid Programming Trick (solution)

This program prints out the complete text of ''The Twelve Days of Christmas.''

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. Microsoft Word documents (Mac or IBM combatible) on 1.44MB floppies are also accepted. In a pinch, paper hard copy will work. Call Dale at 721-0835 or mail your articles to:

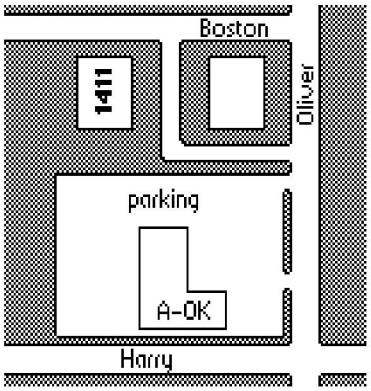
Commodore Users of Wichita
c/o Dale Lutes
11102 W. 17th Street
Wichita, KS 67212-1187

E-mail: lutes@feist.com

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 Dale Lutes
11102 W. 17th Street N.
Wichita, KS 67212-1187

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) _____