The Zero Page

Number 69 June 1999

Next club meeting will be June 12th at our regular meeting place 1411 South Oliver from 1 to 5pm.

Now just what is going on here?

Congratulation Robert you did good and we are proud of you.
In Robert's own words: " After four long years of going to Butler county community college I have earned my AAS in Electronics Technologies"

Random Access
By Dale Lutes

I am writing this month's column for a hotel room in Bethesda, Maryland. Cessna has sent me here to attend a 5-day class on database administration. I flew out on Saturday, giving me an entire Sunday with nothing on my agenda. What to do with my time? For me, the choice was obvious: A visit, nay, a "pilgrimage" to the National Air and Space Museum.

I wandered around this enormous place, home of such artifacts as *The Spirit of St. Louis* and the Apollo 11 command module, *Columbia.* Unexpectedly, I came upon a display about aircraft testing that included three interesting pieces of computer hardware.

First there was a MicroVAX II (circa 1985). The MicroVAX was a breakthrough machine for Digital Equipment Corp. when it was introduced - packing the power of a mainframe-sized VAX 11/780 in a suitcase-sized box. We had a system identical to the one on display that served us in the Cessna Ground Station for many years. Seeing this one was like meeting up with an old friend. I laughed aloud when I saw it and I longed to reach through the display case and boot it up.

Next I found a Cray 1 supercomputer (serial #14). If you've ever seen a picture of one of these, you'll remember its unique design: A cylinder with a padded "bench" around the outside. Part of the cabinet was removed, showing the most intricate tangle of wires I've ever seen. The cylindrical design served a purpose - to minimize the distance between any two connections. According to a placard on the display, no wire in the Cray exceeded two feet in length. The "bench" served a purpose as well - housing power supplies and cooling fans. The Cray was unrivaled in speed in its day. I wonder how this "supercomputer" would compare to present-day systems.

Finally there was a memory module from an IBM Sage computer. This thing was the size of a small refrigerator. It utilized core memory technology: a matrix of iron "donuts" interlaced with a net of wires. An impressive set of vacuum tubes was visible inside the case. This was just one memory module. I had to wonder about the size of the entire computer. The really amazing thing was that this machine was operational from 1957 through 1987.

I hope you don't mind my rambling on. Now, if I can only wrangle a trip to Boston and another "pilgrimage." This one to the Computer Museum...

Here we are at last months meeting where were You? All you could eat at Erby's Pizza . The Fellowship came with us.

MOE'S SOAP BOX
By Morris Shouse

Some of you may not know that my neighborhood was hit by a tornado on May 3. However God had his arm of protection around my house and family. No one in the Shouse house was harmed. And the house and cars had only minor damage. Not one glass in the house was broken. The roof lost about 2 dozen shingles. The main part of the tornado was one block to the west. And then it was one block to north. God did protect us.

Now on to Commodore stuff. I started having trouble with my CMD hardrive last year. It got to where I had to wiggle the power connector to get to come on. It got worse and worse. So what to do? The first thing is to ask an expert. Can you guess who that would be? That's right, Nate. Well Nate said that some people have had the cold solder joints at the board and connector. Well I checked that and it looked like one joint had a glob. So I resoldered it. But that didn't help. Then I thought that it might be the connector on the cable. So when I took it apart I

found that it was bad. It looks like the wire was just butted up to the metal piece and soldered. What should be done is. The wire is to go inside the small hole in the end of each pin and then soldered. This gives the wire support. So I am in the middle of resoldering the four connectors now.

In the Commodore world JiffyDOS is the only way to go for an O.S. One of the best things about J-DOS is that it can be added to the computer in three ways. One is to replace the Commodore O.S. ROM in the computer. One other is to use a RAMLink it has J-DOS built in. One other is to use a Super CPU. Well I have all three, and I found a mistake in the J-DOS short cuts in the Super CPU book. It lists some of the short cuts wrong. They are F-2 through F-7 and the @T short cuts.
The @T is used to list a file from disk to screen in ASCII. But the Super CPU J-DOS shows it to list PETASCII. But it does not. It lists it as straight ASCII. I have had my Super CPU for about one and half years, but I haven't seen any one talk about this anywhere.

OK how about some rumors? I found out that something very big is going to be happening at Commodore World. I don't know what it is. But it comes from a good source. The other isn't really a rumor it is going to happen. The C=64 mag. GO6 out of Germany is coming out in English. And our own Nate D. will be one of the proofreaders. I think this will be a good thing for Commodore people.

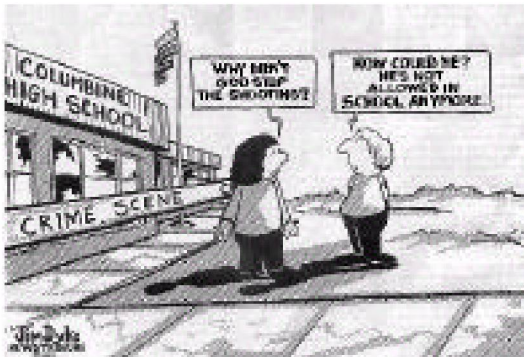Happy 8 Biting. MOE77

****
What If

Bill Gates died in a car accident. He found himself in Purgatory being sized up by God...
"Well, Bill, I'm really confused on this call. I'm not sure whether to send you to Heaven or Hell. After all, you enormously helped society by putting a computer in almost every home in the world and yet you created that ghastly Windows 95. I'm going to do something I've never done before. In your case, I'm going to let you decide where you want to go!"
Bill replied, "Well, thanks, God. What's the difference between the two?"
God said, "I'm willing to let you visit both places briefly if it will help you make a decision."
"Fine, but where should I go first?" God said, "I'm going to leave that up to you." Bill said, "OK, then, let's try Hell first."
So Bill went to Hell. It was a beautiful, clean, sandy beach with clear waters. There were thousands of beautiful women running around,

playing in the water, laughing and frolicking about. The sun was shining, the temperature was perfect. Bill was very pleased. "This is great!" he told God."If this is Hell, I REALLY want to see Heaven!" "Fine," said God and off they went.

Heaven was a high place in the clouds, with angels drifting about playing harps and singing. It was nice but not as enticing as Hell. Bill thought for a quick minute and rendered his decision. "Hmmm, I think I prefer Hell" he told God. "Fine," retorted God, "as you desire." So Bill Gates went to Hell. Two weeks later, God decided to check up on the late billionaire to see how he was doing in Hell. When God arrived in Hell, he found Bill shackled to a wall, screaming amongst the hot flames in a dark cave. He was being burned and tortured by demons. "How's everything going, Bill?" God asked. Bill responded-his voice full of anguish and disappointment, "This is awful, this is not what I expected. I can't believe this happened. What happened to that other place with the beaches and the beautiful women playing in the water?"

God replied, "That was the screen saver"

Submitted By Donald R. McManamey

Subject: Know who you let in your house

A few months before I was born, my dad met a stranger who was new to our small town. From the beginning, Dad was fascinated with this enchanting newcomer, and soon invited him to live with our family.

The stranger was quickly accepted and was around to welcome me into the world a few months later. As I grew up I never questioned his place in our family. Mom taught me to love the Word of God, and Dad taught me to obey it. But the stranger was our storyteller. He could weave the most fascinating tales. Adventures, mysteries, and comedies were daily conversations. He could hold our whole family spellbound for hours each evening. He was like a friend to the whole family. He took Dad, Bill, and me to our first major league baseball game. He was always encouraging us to see the movies and he even made arrangements to introduce us to several movie stars. The stranger was an incessant talker. Dad didn't seem to mind, but sometimes Mom would quietly get up -- while the rest of us were enthralled with one of his stories of faraway places -- go to her room, read her Bible, and pray. I wonder now if she ever prayed that the stranger would leave.You see, my dad ruled our household with certain moral convictions. But this stranger never felt an obligation to honor them. Profanity, for example, was not allowed in our house-not from us, from our friends, or adults. Our longtime visitor, however, used occasional four letter words that burned my ears and made Dad squirm. To my knowledge the stranger was never confronted. My Dad was a teetotaler who didn't permit alcohol in his home not even for cooking. But the stranger felt like we needed exposure and enlightened us to other ways of life. He offered us beer and other alcoholic beverages often. He made cigarettes look tasty, cigars manly, and pipes distinguished. He talked freely (much, too freely) about sex. His comments were sometimes blatant, sometimes suggestive, and generally embarrassing. I know now that my early concepts of the man/woman relationship were influenced by the stranger. As I look back, I believe it was the grace of God that the stranger did not influence us more. Time after time he opposed the values of my parents, yet he was seldom rebuked and never asked to leave. More than thirty years have passed since the stranger moved in with the young family on Morningside Drive. But if I were to walk into my parents' den today, you would still see him sitting over in a corner, waiting for someone to listen to him talk and watch him draw his pictures. His name? We always just called him...TV.

Author Unknown