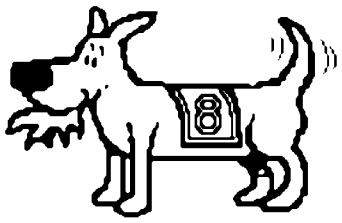
The Zero Page

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

Number 40, February 1997



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

MEETING DATE CHANGE!

Due to a conflict in schedules, we have had to change the February meeting from second to the third Saturday.

Next CUW meeting:
Saturday, February 15
1:00 - 5:00 pm
1411 South Oliver

Dale Lutes continues
with part 2 of his
Introduction to Programming

February 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 demo
4:00 - 5:00	Meeting over, informal gathering, equipment teardown

Don's Digest

by Don McManamey

Sometimes persistence pays off, especially if you give it enough time coupled with a little personal growth. I suppose the question actually comes, is there enough time so that patience and persistence will allow you to reap the benefits you seek. Short of winning a sweepstakes, I don't think anyone has been broke one day and wealthy the next. Before Donald Trump became rich, he developed a plan and worked his plan. He did everything he could to acquire his wealth. Then after a period of time he saw that he was making progress. On the other hand, if you fall off a ship and don't know how to swim, you don't have much time to learn.

I knew a fellow who had a car that needed a new engine. He decided to rebuild the engine himself. After several hundred dollars and countless hours the moment of truth arrived. He connected the battery and turned the key. The engine turned over and over and over and over but would not start. The hours became days and the days became weeks and still the engine would not start. He took the car to a local mechanic with an outstanding reputation. He too worked and worked to no avail. The mechanic said he just couldn't figure it out. The spark was good, and the timing looked right but it just wouldn't fire. Finally, the car was towed home and parked in the yard where it sat for months. One day he sold the car to the scrap company and the torture was over. Or was it? Some time later he was talking to a fellow who recognized the problem. He said that he had a similar problem. The cam shaft was 180 degrees off. All the marks looked right but everything happened at the wrong time and nothing happened. When they finally realized what they had done, the car started right up! The young man's heart sunk. He thought he had the answer to his problem but the car was gone. It was too late.

I have enjoyed "old things" for as long as I can remember. I have had antique furniture, woodworking tools, cameras and such in my collection for many years. One of my oldest possessions is a camera which is nearing 100 years old. Part of the fun is being able to use these relics. Among these old items is one that is really quite new in comparison but most would still call "antique." It is a computer. Actually, my first computer, a Vic-20, is considered "antique" to most anymore. The Vic-20 was the first computer created for the masses. But my oldest computer is older yet.

(Continued on page 2)

(**Don's Digest** continued from page 1)

A few years back I was given the opportunity to purchase a Commodore 8032. This computer was considered to be a business computer having an 80 column display and a whopping 32K of memory. This was in the same class as the Commodore Pet but with added features. It had the computer, keyboard, numeric keypad, and monitor all in one unit. The external floppy drive houses two single sided drives. Each is capable of one half meg of storage. The printer is labeled ''Commodore'' but is actually a Diablo 630. This daisywheel printer is capable of the astounding speed of 40 characters per second. Believe it or not, for a daisywheel printer, this is still considered fast today. This equipment in a 1981 issue of Compute! magazine listed for around five thousand dollars. The computer was about $1500, the disk drive was another $1500, and the printer was about $2000. I paid $35 for the lot.

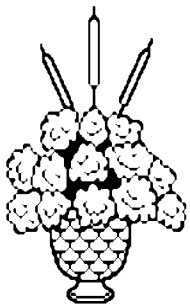
A fellow told me I could run Vic and 64 program on the 8032 as long as they met certain criteria. The only problem was that the start of BASIC was different for each of the machines. This in itself was not a serious problem as long as the programs were on disk. You see, on a Commodore, BASIC programs saved to disk will load back at the start of BASIC regardless of where they came from. The problem is that there were several different disk drive formats in those days and they were not interchangeable. The chances of having programs in the right format (1541 from a Vic or 64) to transfer was slim at best. The one way which was universal was the old tape units. These were used heavily on the Vic and 64 in the early years and were a hold over from the Pet class of computers. Now compatibility was solved and the drives can still be had for just a few dollars but now a new problem arises. Tape programs load back to the exact memory location they came from and this is different on all Commodore machines. This fellow gave me a formula to transfer the program from the Vic to the 8032 using the built in machine language monitor. When I tried it it didn't work. I couldn't figure out why. Though I was persistent I was never successful. Years went by.

I planned to take my equipment to the December meeting but just didn't have time to get it together, however, the January meeting was looking good and so once again I worked on the problem of making transfers. I wanted to do this because I had very little software to show. Additionally, we had some programs in the December DOQ which were suppose to run on all Commodore machines and I wanted to try them out. This time I had one other item I thought would help me. A 1981 issue of Compute! gave the formula. Once again I sat down and worked at making transfers. This time... I got the same answer. But what was I doing wrong?

Then it struck me. Where did BASIC start? On the 8032 it was 1025 decimal or $0401 hex and on the Vic it was 4097 decimal or $1001 hex. The programs I had were on disk and had to be transfered to tape and this was done on a 128. In the process they were loaded into the 128 and resaved to tape which changed the start of BASIC marker. Now what is the start of BASIC on the 128? Here it is. It's 1C00. 1C00? What does that mean? I don't know that stuff. Is that decimal or Hex? Do I want decimal or Hex? There is only one way to find out, call Dale! No, it's too late at night. Well let's just guess. I noticed the number 0401 in the formula. That would correspond to the beginning of BASIC on the 8032 and over here I see 1001 which must be the beginning of BASIC on the Vic. Since we are going from Vic then let's substitute 1C00 where we see 1001. But it says memory $1000-$1007. Here we make a guess and enter 1C00 and 1C07 into the formula. Bimbo! (From the movie *Short Circuit*.) A little luck and a little acquired knowledge since last time and we were transfering programs via tape. In other words, very slowly. Nevertheless we were doing it.

The moral to the story is ''persistence pays off.'' If you have tried and tried to solve a problem, don't give up. Keep asking questions and don't give up. Until next time, I hope you have no memory problems.

The CUW maintains a "Friendship Fund" that we draw from in order to send cards and/or flowers to members who are ill or have lost a loved one. This fund is maintained separately from the club's regular account and participation is completely voluntary. At this time, the fund is running rather low. If you would like to contribute a few dollars, please call or see Marie Both at our next meeting. Thanks to all participating members!

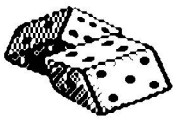


The Zero Page is a monthly publication of the Commodore Users of Wichita. The opinions expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the CUW. Unless otherwise stated, articles in this newsletter may be reprinted by other Commodore user groups without permission provided 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.



Random Access

by Dale Lutes

''I am a HAL Nine Thousand computer Production Number 3. I became operational at the Hal Plant in Urbana, Illinois, on January 12, 1997.''

--from *2001: A Space Odyssey,* by Arthur C. Clarke

As I write this installment of ''Random Access,'' it is HAL's birthday, January 12, 1997. I was reminded of the significance of the date by a co-worker a few days ago. I am also reminded of a day almost 30 years ago when, as an eight year old boy, I sat spellbound through two consecutive showings of the movie version of *2001.* Yes, the special effects were incredible (even by today's standards) from the weightless scenes to the amazing centrifuge shots to the ''ultimate trip'' through the stargate. But what really blew me away was the intelligent (though neurotic) computer, HAL. I think that in some ways, HAL helped influence my career choice years later.

Back in the '60s, every aspect of computer science was advancing at an amazing rate. It seemed a safe bet that the trend would continue and we really would have thinking machines by the end of the century. In fact, the film version of *2001* was even more optimistic than the novel, setting HAL's birthday in 1992. Alas, true machine intelligence has proved elusive. Today, a computer like HAL still seems as remote as the manned mission to Jupiter enacted in the film. I am still hopeful that a breakthrough is just around the corner and that I will have a chance to meet a computer like HAL in my lifetime. I wonder what such a machine will think of us, and what it will have to say to us...

A Final Word:

Thanks to everyone who attended my ''Intro to Programming'' class at the January meeting. I am looking forward to finishing it up with you in February. I regret that I had to leave the meeting so abruptly. I want to extend a special thanks to Galen, Virginia, Don, and Robert for helping me tear down the equipment and pack up my car in record time.

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
Shaun Halstead	Internet Representative
Dwayne Howard	Public Domain Librarian
Don McManamey	Disk Editor
Morris Shouse	Member at-large

Beverly Moore is selling a Commodore 128 system that includes:

- ✔ Commodore 128 computer
- ✔ two 1541 disk drives
- ✔ 40-column monitor
- ✔ 80-column monochrome adapter
- ✔ printer rack
- ✔ printer cable
- ✔ lots of disks

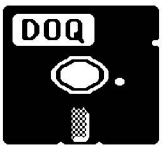
Anyone interested in making an offer for this system can call Beverly at 652-8801.

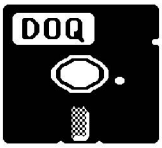
Linda Leatherman has the following C-64 system for sale:

- ✔ Commodore 64 computer
- ✔ two 1541 disk drives
- ✔ monitor
- ✔ software

Linda did not specify a price. If you would like to make an offer, please phone her at 777-1881.

If you haven't picked up your December *Disk O'Quarter* yet, be sure to see Don McManamey at the next meeting. Remember, the DOQ is part of your paid membership in the club. If you have missed any issues, Don has them for you.





Dijkstra on IBM

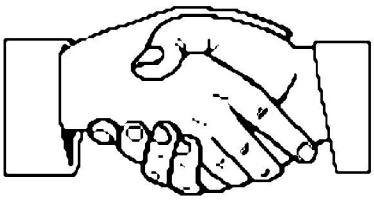
''The problems of business administration in general and data base management in particular are much too difficult for people that think in IBMerese, compounded with sloppy English.''

''Many companies that have made themselves dependent on IBM equipment (and in doing so have sold their soul to the devil) will collapse under the sheer weight of the unmastered complexity of their data processing systems.''

''We can found no scientific discipline, nor a healthy profession, on the technical mistakes of the Department of Defense and, mainly, one computer manufacturer.''

Edsger W. Dijkstra, "Selected Writings on Computing: A Personal Perspective" Copyright (c) 1982 by Springer-Verlag New York Inc.

The Helping Hand



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

Astrology, Biorhythm
Marie Both

Cards, Posters & Signs
Fred Earley

Family Roots
Maxine Ulrich

GEOS
Fred Earley Dale Lutes

Internet Access
Shaun Halstead

Labels
Jerry Shook

Telecommunications
Robert Bales

Printing in Color
Don McManamey Jerry Shook

Programming
Dale Lutes

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

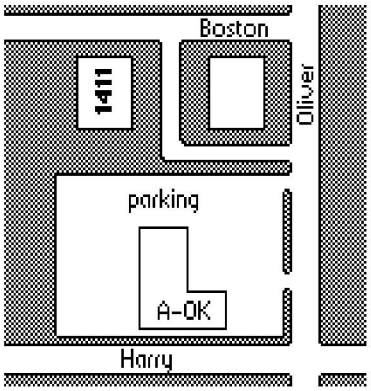
Helping Hand Volunteers

Robert Bales	744-2580
Marie Both	262-2338
Fred Earley	722-4044
Shaun Halstead	942-5809
Dale Lutes	721-0835
Don McManamey	265-2560
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 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) _____