

TPUG Newsletter

Views and News of Toronto Pet Users Group
c/o John Easton, 258 Lake Promenade, Etobicoke, Ontario, M8W 1B3 phone (416) 251-1511

Fall— 2009

From the President -

This fall season brings with it lots of changes and anticipation of things to come. No, I'm not talking about the leaves falling off the trees and the first snow of the year! I'm talking about the newest club initiatives and the World of Commodore show. We've been making changes and progress on many fronts this year. One of the most exciting changes is our website. Our website has undergone many changes over the years, from dull grey to bright colours and now to content management and forums! We've switched our website over to Netfirms for our hosting needs, which allow us to grow with the needs of the club. The address remains the same <www.tpug.ca>, and we still have our ever expanding content (such as archives, links and the TPUG store), and now we have a forum! The forum page allows TPUG members to keep in touch, share information and generally chat about all things related to Commodore.

The **annual general meeting** will be coming up on the third Thursday of January. Last year we held the AGM on the third Thursday of January (same night as our chapter meeting) and it was a successful evening. Also, starting next year, TPUG will be taking memberships based on current membership year, so you will pay for a 2010 membership which expires at the end of the year (a small grace period applies if you're late with your renewal, plus you can always renew at the AGM). There's definitely more to come, and more to do. TPUG is a volunteer organization that is looking for help in various areas, specifically when it comes to our main event: World of Commodore.

This year is our 30th year as a Commodore user club and the biggest change for the World of Commodore is that it will be held at the **Admiral Inn Hotel in Mississauga**. (phone (905) 403-9777) That's right, were back at a hotel, which allows both the event and the accommodations to be at the same location, with all the amenities like swimming pool, lounge, restaurants nearby, etc. It's located at 2161 North Sheridan Way (Erin Mills Parkway & Queen Elizabeth Way). Special thanks to Golan and Ian Colquhoun for securing this amazing facility!

The first World of Commodore was held at the Belair hotel in 2004. It was a successful event all around. Hosting World of Commodore at a hotel is the ideal arrangement, but volunteer clubs like TPUG are always mindful of the bottom line and a hotel can be expensive. When the show committee searched for a hotel for the 2004 show, several factors were considered. We had to find the cheapest weekend demo/vendor room rate, a suitably sized room with plugs and internet access, the cheapest hotel room rate, proximity to restaurants, etc. Quite a lot of planning and searching goes into finding the right venue, and it's always a mixture of frustration and challenge.

We had a great show back in 2004, but our post-show situation was bleak. Although we wanted to go back to the hotel, our financial position was weak and membership was still low. The cost for the rooms at these hotels back in 2004 was high and nobody was willing to lower the price on the use of the room. Even mentioning that we were a non-profit computer users group did nothing to lower the cost, plus in 2004 the economy was doing well (a far different picture than now), so the hotels didn't budge on the pricing. In 2005 we faced a grim decision: either hold the World of Commodore back at our home base (Alderwood church), or go back to the hotel and face possible bankruptcy. We decided to retreat to the church, which in the end was a wise decision. This allowed us to build the club financially, build our membership, and get on better footing as a club.

We made a lot of memories at the World of Commodore shows that were held at the church and each year had it's share of challenges. In 2005 we were very short staffed, 2006 helped us learn from mistakes, execute the show better and we finally got media coverage, 2007 when we had to deal with the loss of our friend Jim Butterfield, and 2008 was our best show yet in terms of execution and turnout. But there was still something missing: the cohesion of having all the amenities in the same spot. If you wanted to go back to your hotel room, it was two miles away. If you wanted food we offered pizza, but anything else was two miles or more away. Saturday evening's

Member Information

Voice Info

We have discontinued our TPUG phone listing - contact members as listed here at home phones.

Website: www.tpug.ca
e-mail: info@tpug.ca

Membership Rates

NEW \$15 per year
see note page 3

Board of Directors

President	Greg VanLaere
Vice President	John Easton
Secretary	Ernie Chorny
Membership Sec.	Ian Colquhoun
Treasurer	George Turek
Director	Leif Bloomquist
Director	Tom Luff
Director	Ian McIntosh
Director	Joe Palumbo
Director	Tom Williams

Librarians

Head Librarian	Greg VanLaer
Amiga	Ernie Chorny
C128	Tom Luff
CP/M	Ernie Chorny
GEOS	Joe Palumbo
C64	Joe Palumbo
C64 Education	Greg VanLaer
Comal	Ernie Chorny
Plus/4	Ernie Chorny
Vic 20	Ernie Chorny
PET/CBM/SuperPET	John Easton

Support

Mail	Tom Luff
Telephone	John Easton
Disk Orders	Librarians
Member Records	Ian Colquhoun
Meetings	Leif Bloomquist
	and Ernie Chorny
Shows	Tom Luff & Ernie Chorny
Webmaster	Leif Bloomquist

Newsletter

Editor John Easton (416) 251-1511
jeaston@rogers.com

Meeting Schedule

Westside and Amiga West: Third Thursday of the month (except summer) at Alderwood United Church, 44 Delma Drive. Delma Drive is just west of and parallel to Browns Line, south of the Queen Elizabeth Highway, north of Horner Avenue. From the west, exit QEW at Evans Avenue, east on Evans to next stoplight, south on Gair to Delma Drive. From the north or east, follow signs from QEW or Hwy. 427 to Browns Line, exit right to Evans Avenue, turn south on Gair (first stoplight) to Delma.

Contact - **Leif Bloomquist** (416) 221-2328 leif@schemafactor.com
or **Ernie Chorny**(905) 279-2730 chorny@tamcotec.com

From your Editor ...

Well now, ...

We're back at it again ... the **World of Commodore** ... this year at a REAL venue. Ya see, some thought that it was really inconvenient to have to sleep (sleep ... what's that?) somewhere separate from the actual location of the meeting and resultant lack of all-night hacking adventures.

Well, this year Golan and Ian have come up with an apparent winner. Not only is the rate within our projected budget, but the amenities are certainly not to be overlooked. Think of this when trying to explain to your significant other that a weekend away could be worse. Why not encourage the **family** to join us at this fabulous resort (well, you can try) where not only is there a fairly large shopping mall across the street, but the Admiral Inn has all the amenities of a **resort Spa**. Hey, where else are you going to find a **Saltwater Swimming Pool** and associated hot baths and pools. Hey, with luck, we might be at the start of new trend in Commodore weekends, the Wives World of Commodore, though, truth be known, it will still take a bit more than that to encourage my wife to attend what appears to her as merely a Nerd Heaven weekend for geeks (her words, not mine).

In the rumour (*that's Canadjin for rumor—but try to tell this spell-checker that*) department, word is out that for this show we are attempting to gather together a display of the **complete line** of Commodore technology. As a preview, take a peek at Steve Gray's collection mentioned on page 11.

See ya there!

John

*TPUG Newsletter is meant to be published somewhat quarterly by the Toronto Pet Users Group (TPUG). TPUG is a volunteer non-profit club dedicated to the service and support of owners and users of Commodore computers. All rights to material published in TPUG Newsletter are reserved by TPUG, and no material may be reprinted without written permission, except where specifically stated. When reprinting is authorized, please credit TPUG Newsletter, the issue date, and the author. (note - electronic copy *may* be available, please enquire)*

Articles, letters, tips, questions, art, etc. are welcome. Send hardcopy or disks "Attn: TPUG Newsletter", or use Internet e-mail.

Advertisements are also welcome. Member's small ads are free. Commercial ads are \$100 per page with a \$10 minimum.

Notice to new owners of SuperPet and CBM 8296 machines

TPUG has copies of the Waterloo LANGUAGE DISKS (3 in 4040 format) as supplied with the SuperPet on original purchase.

TPUG has the EXECUDESK disk (8050 format) as supplied with the CBM 8296 on original purchase.

These disks are an integral part of the operating systems of the above machines and since Commodore insisted on referring owners of these machines to TPUG for service, we have added these somewhat proprietary (and also virtually unobtainable) disks to our library - all part of the TPUG mandate of service to our members.

We also will attempt to search out copies of original program disks to replace corrupted disks. In this category you will find such programs as VISICALC, WordPro, and PaperClip.

TPUG Annual General Meeting

Take notice that the annual meeting of TPUG will be held in conjunction with the regular January 21st meeting, only earlier—7:00 p.m. This is your opportunity to discuss club issues and to contribute to the organization as desired.

Typical items covered at an Annual Meeting are, but not limited to: quorum, minutes of the previous meeting, reports on activities within the club, new business, nominations of officers and election of officers.

If you are unable to attend, and wish your proxy vote counted, please ensure that your assigned proxy is in the hands of the Board prior to the meeting. E-mail to the vice-president, *jeaston@rogers.com* will be considered a legitimate means of submitting a proxy to the Board.

Typical Proxy Voting Format —

This will allow to vote on my behalf on all matters at the Annual Meeting of TPUG held 21 January 2010.

Name TPUG Member #

Signature(difficult via e-mail)..... Date

At our 2009 Annual General Meeting the **annual Membership fee was raised to \$15.00**. However, in an effort to pacify the budget-minded, it was decided to allow our members the option of either receiving a newsletter by mail, or on-line in PDF format.

This option allows us to save printing and mailing costs. Should you indicate such a preference on your membership application, these savings will be passed on to those who decline the paper-and-mail route ... your membership rate in this case will remain as previous ... i.e. \$10.00

Remember to indicate this choice on your renewal form ... and, should you choose the on-line newsletter discount, we'll certainly need your current e-mail address.

And note ... the membership year now runs from year-end to year-end.

INSTANT 1581 DRIVE KIT
(Just add a standard PC floppy drive)

\$49.95

Includes upper and lower shell with logic board & faceplate, a serial cord and power supply box.

- Power Supply only (1581/41-II) \$24.95
- Upper case only \$ 7.95
- Lower case only \$ 7.95
- 1581 Logic Board only \$19.95
- Serial Cable only \$ 8.95

OPTIONAL:

- 1581 JIFFYDOS ROM add \$32.95
- plus 10% shipping (15% USA)

Taxes are extra for Ontario and Canada residents (PST/GST)

Mail cheque or Money Order to:
JP PBM Products by Mail
Box 60515, Jane/Wilson P/O
Downsview, ON, M3L 1B0

Note: Dealers and User Groups Welcome

JP. PBM Products by Mail is the NEW Manufacturer of Super Snapshot Cartridge V5.22 - NOW SHIPPING

*CURRENT Commodore Club MEMBERS SAVE \$5 MORE off the regular price before freight and taxes.

Mail Cheque/M.O. to:	SSv5.22 Cartridge	\$ 74.95
JP PBM Products by Mail	*C= Club members (-\$5)	\$ _____
BOX 60515 JANE/WILSON P/O	32K RAM add \$19	+\$ _____
DOWNSVIEW, ONTARIO		
CANADA M3L 1B0	subtotal	\$ _____
	+10% Freight (15% USA)	\$ _____

All Prices Are Cdn. Funds	Subtotal	\$ _____
US Funds at par	Ontario Res. add 8% PST+	\$ _____
Send \$2 for a catalogue	Canada Res. add 5% GST+	\$ _____
on disk (1541 format)	TOTAL (CDN. FUNDS)	\$ _____

Visit JPPBM.COM for full product listings and PayPal ordering information.

Joe's World – 5 ... Constants and Variables

INPUT routines

For a simple delay, for example to check whether an input is without typing mistake, do nothing if OK, or quickly press stop if a change is needed:

```
10 ? "Any input here"
12 fO i=1 to 1000:nE
14 stop
```

Or using, for example, the f1 function key:

```
20 ? "If this needs a change press f1"
22 fO i=1 to 1000:get g$:if g$=cH(135) tH ? "CHANGE!":
    stop
24 nE
26 stop
```

for f1 use 135, f3=134, f5=135, f7=136,f2=137, f4=138, f6=139 and f8=140

Or, as a subroutine, just waiting until any key (except the stop key) has been pressed, with the cursor blinking until then:

```
997 pO204,0:get g$:if g$="" tH 997
998 if pE(207) tH 998
999 pO204.1:reT
```

That subroutine is useful for menu trees such as:

```
30 ? "    MENU:"
31 ? " 1. To go to 1000, press 1"
32 ? " 2. To go to 2000, press 2"
49 ? "    WHICH?":goS 997:? g$
131 if g$="1" tH 1000
132 if g$="2" tH 2000
199 gO 49
1000 ? "1000 here!":stop
2000 ? "2000 here!":stop
```

Constants and Variables in BASIC

1) Mostly used, only **numerical constants and variables** are called "floating point" because their positive and negative value can vary widely, with the minimum value being zero or 2.93873588e-39, and the maximum being 1.70141183e38 (*e means "10 to the power of"*). They are given names at first, after which the use of a name calls the value involved. Undefined constants or variables have a value of zero. Names can be any length, but only the first two characters are used, with the first one being alphabetic, and the second one being either alphabetic or numeric. Some names, such as **st** or **to**, cannot be used because BASIC uses these reserved names. To see whether a certain name is acceptable, try this:

```
10 name=1234 (substitute the `name' you wish to test)
20 ? name:stop
```

2) **String constants and variables** have a dollar sign following the end of their names. All sorts of characters (alphanumeric, symbols, control characters and spaces), but NOT double quotes, can be put together between the required double quotes, such as:

```
50 a$="Ab1%$"
51 ? a$: rem "This will print it (will put string a$ onto the
    screen)."
52 ? "Entered from the keyboard no ";
53 ? "more than 80 characters can form a string, but
    strings can be combined";
54 ? " using semicolon and plus marks. Strings that have
    nothing in them, ";
55 ? "have just the 2 needed double quote marks."
56 b$="" :c$=" This is c$"
57 ? a$+b$+c$
58 ? "To put double quote marks `inside' a string use
    chr$(34)"
59 ? "Try "chr$(34)" inside "chr$(34)" a string."
```

To list a program type list or II, end (pairs of?) lines with return, and finally type run to start execution of the program.

BASIC stores strings in memory at the time they are used in programs and in programs that use strings a lot, it eventually runs out of space then it closes down other activities, possibly for as long as several minutes, for "garbage collection", discarding all the no longer needed storage of strings, thereby regaining space for more string storage - until the next garbage collection. Just wait while this is going on, even though it looks like a major malfunction of the computer.

3) There are also **Integer (whole number) constants and variables**. They have a % mark at the end of their names and are limited to the range minus 32768 to plus 32767.

4) **Arrays** are a family of constants or variables; they are either numeric (floating point or integer) or strings and, unless only one dimension with no more than 10 elements, must have been defined by a dimension (dim) statement (up to 255 dimensions, with up to 32767 elements per dimension) before they are used. Integer arrays can save a lot of memory space. For example, dim a(11) permits a(0), a(1), ... a(10) and a(11) to be used. Similarly, dim a\$(11) permits a\$(0) to a\$(11), and dim a%(11) permits a%(0) to a%(11) to be used.

For another example, in a graphics application 5 x-y pairs can be put into an array dimensioned as xy(4,1); the first x will then go into xy(0,0), the first y into xy(0,1), the second x into xy(1,0), the second y into xy(1,1) the fifth x into xy(4,0) and the fifth y into x(whole number) xy(4,1)

Here is a subroutine to show floating point and string variables:

```

10 a=12.343:a$="Example only":gosub 42000:print a$:end
42000 rem "Variables used so far. By Joe Quittner,
    TPUG, October 18, 2007."
42002 print chr$(144)chr$(14)
42010 def fnc(xi)=peek(xi)+256*peek(xi+1)
42012 for xi=fnc(45) to fnc(47)-1 step 7
42014 if peek(xi)>127 or peek(xi+1)>127 then next:
    goto 42040
42015 xp$=chr$(peek(xi)):xq$=chr$(peek(xi+1))
42016 if xp$="x" and (xq$="a" or xq$="b" or xq$="c" or
xq$="d" or xq$="e") then 42039
42017 if xp$="x" and (xq$="i" or xq$="j" or xq$="y")
    then 42039
42018 if xp$="y" and xq$="b" then 42039
42019 print chr$(peek(xi)) chr$(peek(xi+1))="";
42020 xa=peek(xi+2)-129:xa=2xa
42022 yb=peek(xi+3):xb=(yb and 127) / 128:if yb>127
    then xa=xa
42024 xc=peek(xi+4):xc=xc/32768
42026 xd=peek(xi+5):xd=xd/8388608
42028 xe=peek(xi+6):xe=xe/2147483648
42030 xy=xb+xc+xd+xe:xy=xa*(1+xy)
42038 print xy
42039 next:gosub 42060
42040 rem "STRINGS
42042 for xi=fnc(45)to fnc(47)-1 step 7
42044 if peek(xi)>128 or peek(xi+1)<128 then 42056
42045 xp$=chr$(peek(xi)):xq$=chr$(peek(xi+1) and 127)
42046 if xp$="x" and (xq$="a" or xq$="p" or xq$="q"
    or xq$="y") then 42056
42047 print xp$xq$"$=";
42050 xa=peek(xi+2)
42052 xb=peek(xi+3)
42054 xc=peek(xi+4):xc=xb+256*xc
42055 for xj=xc to xc+xa-1:xp$=chr$(peek(xj)):
    print xp$;:next:print
42056 next
42059 gosub 42060:return
42060 poke 204,0:get xa$:if xa$=""then 42060
42061 if peek(207) then 42061
42062 poke 204,1:return

```

by Joe Quittner, TPUG, October 18, 2007

C128 Program Merge

reprinted from *Midnite Software Gazette*, Issue 35 - 1986
as found by **Jim Butterfield**

Mr. Butterfield put a message on QuantumLink's C128 message base telling how to merge two program files, and was kind enough to demonstrate it when he came to Champaign IL to speak to the local users group.

Merging two programs is a relatively easy process on the C128, and it does not require any special utilities or hardware. All you need to do to merge `PROGRAM 1' and `PROGRAM 2' is:

```

DLOAD"PROGRAM 1"
DOPEN#8,"P1",W
CMD8:LIST
DCLOSE#8
NEW
:
DLOAD"PROGRAM 2"
DOPEN#8,"P1"
SYS(DEC("FFC6")),0,8,0
wait until things calm down
SYS(DEC("FFCC"))
DCLOSE#8

```

This will give you a fully merged, ready to run program. It is easy, relatively quick, and you cannot beat the price. Many thanks to Mr. Butterfield for finding this feature, and for all the work he has done over the years to make things easier for all Commodore users.



Using the C64 NIC card

The 64NIC+ provides Ethernet access for the Commodore 64 and 128 systems. It offers low-cost RR-NET/TFE/FB-NET compatibility. *Jim Brain designed the cartridge*, based on an earlier Eric Pratt design and incorporating ideas from Fotios' FB-NET design. Bil Herd (of C128 design fame) provided assistance on the design as well. The device's development was sponsored by the Cincinnati Commodore Computer Club and currently offers the unit for sale. While there are many multi-purpose cards with Network Interface Card (NIC) functionality today (1541U, Retro Replay +RR-NET), 64NIC+ provides dedicated NIC functionality.

Much like contemporary network cards, the 64NIC+ provides support for an optional "boot ROM". If a suitable EPROM is installed, the device can boot a ROM-based OS or load an OS from the network. Switches offer the option of booting into 64 mode or 128 mode (on a C128).

History

At the 2008 World of Commodore Expo, CCCC asked Jim Brain about the possibility of a low-cost Ethernet cartridge. Initial ideas were to clone the FB-NET cartridge or produce Pratt's C64NIC design. The FB-NET design was discarded, due to cost issues and a desire to fit the design in a standard cartridge case. An initial design based on C64NIC was created, and a subsequent design revision added ROM capabilities based both on suggestions from buyers and also realization of much unused board space in the design. As the design progressed, Bil Herd offered some suggestions to decrease signal degradation and clean up read/write signal timing to allow C128 FAST mode operation.

Hardware

The unit contains a Crystal CS8900A Ethernet controller and the necessary 6502/6510 to ISA interface logic. On-board switches select the IO bank in use and register mappings.

The optional ROM socket supports 8kB to 256kB EPROMs, offering 1-16 16 kB ROM "images", selectable via a 16 position rotary switch. By default, the boards are configured for a 27C010-27C020 (32 pin JEDEC) ROM. They can be switched to 27(c)64 to 27(c)512 ROMs by cutting the '32' side of JP4 and soldering the '28' side. This will direct Vcc to pin 28 instead of pin 32. Additionally, jumper JP2 can be removed to allow 8kB ROM images to be used on the C64.

Note that images are 16kB in size (unless JP2 is changed), so 8kB C64 images need to be padded with a copy of BASIC v2 in the upper 8kB bank of the image. As well, if the 16 position image selector switch is not in-

stalled, only the highest bank will be visible. There are two versions of the hardware:

Model v1.0
Model v1.0a

The difference is the lack of a jumper from switch S3 to switch S2. The missing pin on S3 must have a jumper wire connected to the middle of S2 for the EPROM socket to work correctly. With this modification, the boards function identically.

Hardware Features

Hex switch

FAQ

Where can I find more information? The Pictures of the C64NIC+ Page. See this thread over at retro-hackers.

How do I get one?

Contact the Cincinnati Commodore Computer Club [1]

Will it play nice with a 1541U batch 1, or AR cart on a 2+1 extender? ?

It mainly depends on whether those cartridges decode IO1 or IO2 addresses. If they leave one of the IO banks available, the 64NIC+ (or any other Ethernet cart) will work. If they take over both IO ranges on the cart port, then it will not work.

What do the switches do?

S1 selects whether standard or "RR-NET" register mappings are to be used
S2 selects EPROM usage
S3 selects C128 or C64 EPROM usage
S4 selects IO1 or IO2 register space.

What do the LEDs mean?

RED : Power
Green : Activity

Software

something

Contiki

See also
netboot65-alpha
Retro Replay
Protovision

Individual Computers

Retrieved from "<http://www.c64-wiki.com/index.php/C64NIC%2B>"

Category: Hardware

In answer to a request by Leif for possible topics of discussion for the next TPUG meeting ...

From: "Jim Brain" <brain@jbrain.com>
 To: <torontocbm@freelists.org>
 Subject: [torontocbm] Re: TPUG Meeting - October 15th
 Date: Friday, October 09, 2009 2:00 PM

Miraglia, Walter wrote:

> Possible Topic: using the C64Nic card...
 > I will be picking mine up from
 > Ian at the meeting, and would love to know what
 > I can do with it... :)

- * World Domination
 - * Gaze at the perfection of your Printed Circuit Board investment
 - * Store on shelf for obvious long term value increase.
 - * Frame as electronic artwork
 - * Find the hidden easter eggs
 - * Practice switch flipping hand-eye coordination
- (Quick, go from RR-NET IO1 128 MODE to STD IO1 64 NO ROM)
- * Turn upside down and make a PCB rubbing (crayons work best, ensure you're grounded, no warrantee for ESD discharge)
 - * Immediately after receiving, hold above your head and run around the church yelling: I HAVE A "BRAIN"!
 - * Insert into C64 or C128 and telnet into a shell account somewhere. Run IRC and exclaim your undying devotion to the 64NIC+
 - * Buy 20 more, as Christmas presents
 - * Enter the "decorate your 64NIC+ cart case" artwork contest. Remember, the case is clear, so you can paint on the inside and it will show through, to avoid scratches and blemishes.
 - * Find 16 friends with CMD EX-2+1 expansion boards and 31 64NIC+ friends. Daisy chain all expansions to create a 32 slot expansion port. Plug all 32 64NIC+ units in, being careful to set each one with a different 4 digit address (the jumpers on top) and set half for IO1 and the rest for IO2. Write appropriate Layer 3 IP code for 64, and utilize as 32 port switch (if you're good with code) or hub (if you're not) for your lowly PC/Mac/etc.
 - * Dress in goth trench coat and whip it out when you greet people.
 - * Evangelize the fact the 64NIC+ has no user's manual is a HUGE Feature, not an oversight.
 - * Slay those who disagree
 - * Go online as two different personalities. Use one to preach the 64NIC+ religion. Use the other to trash the product, paying special attention to lack of color coordination between the PCB and the switches, lamenting the size of the integrated circuits and the fact that it won't boil soup for you. Use the first account to attack each

point in excruciating detail. Lather, rinse, repeat. Come out with a "Best Of" book in a few years, profit!

* Try to work the term '64NIC' into conversations and business documents. Double points for adding the '+' in inconspicuous ways. Triple points if you can get it into a Powerpoint unnoticed.

* Challenge the designer to a duel. Forty paces with 64NIC+ cards. First one to get one stuck in his mouth loses.

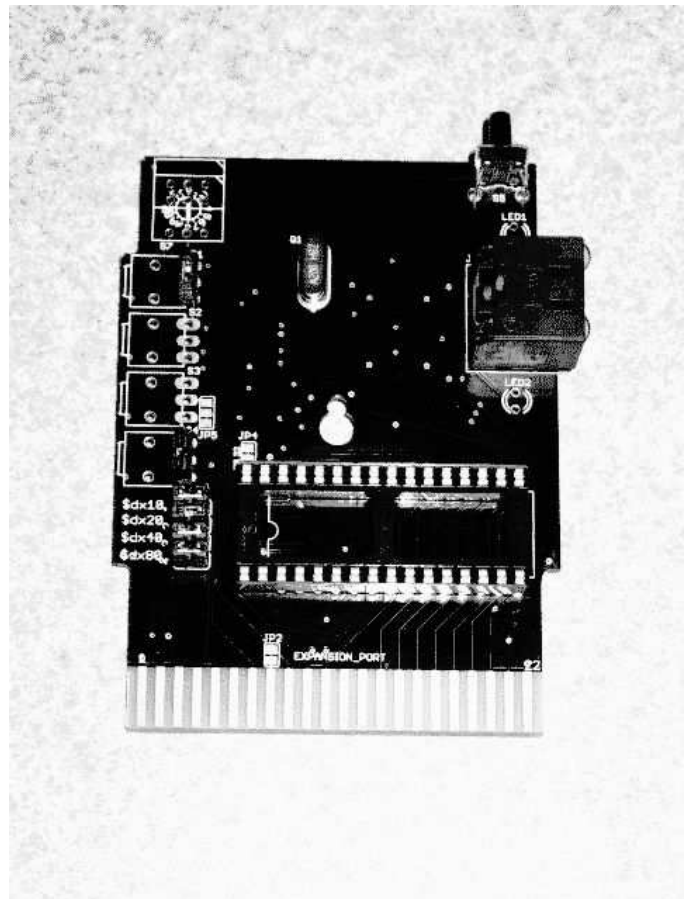
* Enlarge the middle mounting hold and mount a clock mechanism through the board. Sell as extremely expensive analog clockpieces.

* Insert unit into machine and wait for the 64 to disperse money. Exclaim to others that it is part of the design.

* Resell on eBay under headings like "L@@K! RARE 64NIC+ board, New In Box!" Of course, make sure you keep the NIB box. No, the clear case does not count.

Let me know if you need more. Rumor is the designer is a real piece of work. I mean, anyone who creates CBM hardware has to be a few pickles short of a jar, right? Dunno, though, some say he's a rather approachable person, but I'm betting on the lack of pickles theory.

Jim



Crazy Canucks Checkout Chicago

THE TRIP

Once again it was time to drive down to Chicago for the annual "Emergency Chicagoland Commodore Convention", hosted by Jason Compton. The name of the event has always been tongue-in-cheek, but this year the name turned out to be quite appropriate...



THE BORDER

Crossing the border into the USA is sometimes tricky, especially with a car filled with retro computer equipment.

First, I stopped at the Canada Customs office and filled out a Y38 form. This form proves that all the computer equipment I had with me (VIC-20, monitor, laptop, and MIDI gear) were all originally from Canada. This would save me trouble at customs on the way back into Canada. The Y38 form has no expiry date, and can be kept for all future trips. I highly recommend everyone get one filled out for their computer equipment (retro and otherwise) equipment when they travel to the USA.

The customs officer came out to the car to double-check the serial numbers. She did a double-take when she saw the 1702 monitor. "You don't see those too often anymore!", she said. I agreed, she stamped the form, and I went on my way.

Next was the border crossing into the USA itself. The border agent saw all the computer equipment in the back of my SUV and asked, "What are you carrying with you?"

"A Commodore VIC-20," I replied.

"And what's that?" he barked.

I didn't think a discourse on the history of this great little computer was called for, so I settled for "Ummm...an 80's video game system."

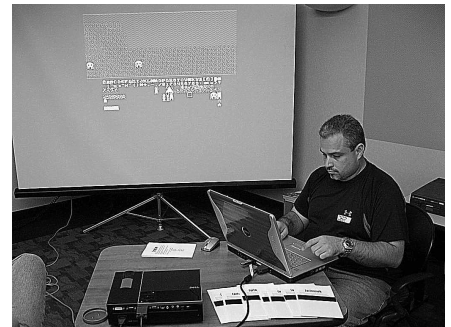
"OK, go ahead." and he waved me on through. Phew.

The rest of the drive was straightforward. Those of you who've taken this trip in years past will be glad to know the construction along I 294 is nearly finished and didn't slow us down at all. We arrived at the hotel (thanks to crossing the time zone) at 6 PM, just in time for an informal dinner at Aurelio's Pizza.

THE EXPO

The expo started at 9 AM "sharp" on Saturday morning. While the past "big" vendors, Cincinnati Commodore Computer Club and Joe Palumbo Products By Mail weren't there this year, there were still plenty of walk-in vendors selling miscellaneous hardware and software. I picked up a pristine 1541-II for a measly \$10, an Incredible Music Keyboard overlay for \$20, and the new 64NIC+ network card for \$60.

The demos started at 11 AM with Dustin "Fuzz" Chambers and Raymond "WizardNJ" Lejuez showing their map-making tool, "Cartograph". Cartograph can be used to make maps for any kind of game, with an emphasis on RPGs (Role Playing Games). It's a very slick tool that includes custom character sets and even animation. To complete the demo they showed a preview of their new RPG



"Crimson Twilight" which includes music and a few locations you can walk around in.

Jim Brain was on at 2 PM, and he gave us an overview of how he creates his products, starting from an idea, to a design, to completed circuit boards. He shared some of what he's learned over the years about electronics design. Finally, he showed the first few of his "ROM-el" boards. These are "ROM Eliminators" that can be used in place of Commodore ROM chips, i.e. to replace the Kernal. He will be using the ROM-el to distribute JiffyDOS soon, and will sell them blank or pre-programmed with your own custom ROMs.

I did my demo next. I've been working on MIDI software for the VIC-20, using a prototype cartridge built by Francois "eslapion" Levielle. The software turns a VIC-20 into a MIDI instrument that can be controlled from a keyboard, synthesizer, or sequencer software. I gave a short talk on MIDI and how the software works, and entertained the crowd with a short song I've written to demonstrate the software.



Afterwards, Marty Goldberg gave a talk on some of the history surrounding Commodore, Atari, and Jack Tramiel's involvement in both companies.

Chris "THEWIZ" McBride gave the last formal demo. He demonstrated "Xider", a sophisticated Integrated Development Environment (IDE) that helps you cross-develop C64 software on Windows. Xider enables you to step through your machine language programs while debugging, using the original source code instead of the disassembly - nice! It also helps you link in object files like music or graphics, and it ties in nicely with the VICE emulator.

There were some informal demos running all day, too: Jeff "Jeff-20" Daniels showed off some new VIC-20 games he wrote recently, and Glenn "ShadowM" Holmer demonstrated...geoChat! Yes, it's a GEOS-based chat client that works with the RR-Net, 64NIC+ and other compatible network cartridges. It's still in early days, and he spent most of the day looking through geoDebugger code, but we should see a more polished version soon.



One other curiosity was the discovery of many large custom cartridge boards that ran a "Community Information" type of kiosk on a C128. Someone got one of them working - from Fargo, North Dakota I believe and we spent some time watching the old-skool commercials, done with sprites and custom character sets! Several inspired hackers began reverse-engineering the design.

The crowd then split into small groups for dinner, and the festivities resumed for the rest of the evening. Someone brought LEGO which added a bit of variety, and the socializing, hacking, and game-playing continued until 1 AM or so, when we had to clean up the room and get out.

Stop the presses ... Transactor lives!

*From: "Dan Gahlinger" <dgahling@gmail.com>
To: <torontocbm@freelists.org>
Subject: Finally Available - Every Transactor Magazine ever published
Date: Monday, November 09, 2009 6:15 PM*

Well I've finally finished work on it, Every Transactor Magazine ever published. All the compendiums, extras, Disk Magazines, Specials, and more!

And, yes, every volume, every issue. It's the first complete set ever made, over 2.4 gigs of data now on a single DVD.

EMERGENCY!

At usual at ECCC, the crowd moved to the hotel lobby to continue socializing until the wee hours. Only this time, we weren't alone. A large wedding party had taken over part of the lobby, so there were men in tuxedos and suits, women in elegant dresses...and several cases of beer.

Then someone noticed there were police officers milling around too.

The rest of the events are a bit of a blur, but the police began to clear out the lobby and sending us back to our rooms (including us, even though we were just sitting quietly with out laptops) and then things got even more crazy. One of the revellers pulled a fire alarm, the sprinkler system went off causing a flood in one of the stairwells, and several of the partiers (including, apparently, the groom himself) were arrested.

In total there were an estimated nine to fourteen police cars, three fire trucks, and twenty-four arrests that night. We all stood around in the hotel parking lot until approximately 3 AM when the firemen gave the all-clear to go back in. But soon afterwards, the alarm went off again and we were back out in the parking lot for another hour.

Finally, the next morning, we all sleepily met in the lobby for a late breakfast, shaking our heads at the craziness of the night before. Then the final straw - the fire alarm went off a third time, but this time we were all packed and ready to go, so we all said our goodbyes and headed home.

Overall, the expo was well-attended and very successful, and demonstrated once again that the Commodore user community is as bustling and busy as ever.

Leif Bloomquist pics thanks to Glenn Holmer

The Magazines are all high-quality PDF scans, all the articles, all the advertising, even some subscription cards and other letters.

I'm making this available in a limited distribution, I can't put it online, it's too much data ... so contact me off-list if you're interested. And yes this includes all the exceptionally rare volume 1 and volume 2 issues, complete.

I might be willing to bring some DVDs to WOC next month, depending on interest.

Dan

Computer Gender?

A SPANISH Teacher was explaining to her class that in Spanish, unlike English, nouns are designated as either masculine or feminine.

'House' for instance, is feminine: 'la Casa.'

'Pencil,' however, is masculine: 'el lapiz.'

A student asked, "What gender is *computer*?"

Instead of giving the answer, the teacher split the class into two groups, male and female, and asked them to decide for themselves whether *computer* should be a masculine or a feminine noun. Each group

was asked to give four reasons for its recommendation.

The men's group decided that 'computer' should definitely be of the feminine gender ('la computadora'), because:

1. No one but their creator understands their internal logic;
2. The native language they use to communicate with other computers is incomprehensible to everyone else;
3. Even the smallest mistakes are stored in long term memory for possible later retrieval; and
4. As soon as you make a commitment to one, you find yourself spending half your paycheck on accessories for it.

The women's group, however, concluded that computers should be Masculine ('el computador'), because:

1. In order to do anything with them, you have to turn them on;
2. They have a lot of data but still can't think for themselves;
3. They are supposed to help you solve problems, but half the time they ARE the problem; and
4. As soon as you commit to one, you realize that if you had waited a little longer, you could have gotten a better model.

The women won. Though (ed. Note), personally, I'd request a review.

From the President ... continued from page 1

activities were also two miles away (at the Stay Inn, which had a very small room) and if you needed extra Commodore equipment for the evening you either brought it with you or, it was two miles away.

The downturn in the economy has actually worked out in TPUG's favour. Back in 2004, it was much different: fewer suitable hotels and high room rates that wouldn't budge, but since then there have been more hotels built and the room rates have come down to earth. We have managed to secure a hotel room that is large enough to accommodate the show but with a price tag small enough for a volunteer club like ours to afford.

This year's show will focus on Commodore products as well as other 8-bit platforms. There will be PET, VIC-20, Commodore 64, Commodore 128, and Amiga. In past years it seems that the Commodore 64 is well represented at the show but it seemed to many in attendance that the Amiga was not. Let me say this: this was not intentional. TPUG exists to promote and support the entire Commodore line including the Amiga and Amiga will be well represented at the show. Besides, I (and many others) like the Amiga. I've always thought that it was a super computer that was years ahead of it's time in terms of multi-tasking, graphics and sound. It was able to integrate well as a graphics powerhouse and companies like Disney still use the Amiga for its graphics capabilities.

I bought my first Amiga around 1990. It was an Amiga 2000 with 1084 monitor and 2088 (IBM bridgecard) installed. This allowed me the best of both worlds. I could use my IBM programs on the bridgecard and use the incredibly powerful applications that the Amiga had to offer.

I saw the Amiga in action at a friend's house and I had to get one. Word of mouth sold the Amiga well. The Amiga had tons of software to support it (much of which was included in impressive package designs). I was amazed at the program debugger, where you could step through a program line by line to find out the 'oops' part of your program. I was impressed by the graphics capabilities of programs like Sculpt 3D, Zoetrope Studios Animator and Deluxe Paint, blown away by music programs like Deluxe Music, Sonix and Bars & Pipes, and swept away by the amazing games like The Pawn, Battle Chess and (of course) Lemmings.

The Amiga was like a dream machine, highly expandable and unlike anything that was on the market at the time (I still think that its capabilities far exceed the standard IBM based platforms of today). For me, the best feature of the Amiga was the icons. Not like today's icons where you click and they just dim out. The Amiga had 'action icons'. When you clicked on them they changed, they sprang into action! Everything about the Amiga was unique: the graphics chipset, the CLI interface, the 'wait' icon (Zzzzz), the speech software (standard with Workbench), and the analog clock that you could expand to take up the entire screen area (yep, you tried it too!).

So whether it's the Amiga, the Commodore 64, the Commodore 128, PET, VIC-20 or any other of Commodore's diverse line of computers, you'll find it at World of Commodore. The hardware, the software, the old, the new, the common, the rare, the demos, the vendors, and the company of your fellow Commodorians all combine to make the World of Commodore show the place to be on Dec 5, 2009!

Greg vanLaere

From: "STEVE GRAY" <sjgray@rogers.com>
 To: "Toronto CBM" <torontocbm@freelists.org>
 Subject: [torontocbm] My new web site
 Date: Tuesday, October 20, 2009 1:39 PM

Steve's Collection

Hi all,

If you remember a while back, my free geocities webspace was closing and I needed a new site. Well, I'm happy to announce that I have a new location and have taken the opportunity to re-vamp all my pages, add some new ones and expand and add more pictures to others. If you have some spare time please check it out!

www.6502.org/users/sjgray/index.html

Some highlights:

- The CBM-II Page
 - CBMXfer
 - The UltraPET Project
 - The DX-64 Project
 - My Commodore Collection (now with some pictures...more to come)
 - My PC freeware
- Feedback is appreciated.
Steve



And now, for something completely different ...

Now that Vancouver will be hosting the 2010 Winter Olympics, (and with TPUG once again hosting the World of Commodore) these are some questions people from all over the world are asking. Believe it or not these questions about Canada were posted on an International Tourism Website.

Q: I have never seen it warm on Canadian TV, so how do the plants grow? (England)
 A: We import all plants fully grown and then just sit around and watch them die.

Q: Will I be able to see Polar Bears in the street? (USA)
 A: Depends on how much you've been drinking.

Q: I want to walk from Vancouver to Toronto - can I follow the Railroad tracks? (Sweden)
 A: Sure, it's only Four thousand miles, take lots of water.

Q: Is it safe to run around in the bushes in Canada ? (Sweden)
 A: So it's true what they say about Swedes.

Q: Are there any ATM's (cash machines) in Canada ? Can you send me a list of them in Toronto, Vancouver, Edmonton and Halifax ? (England)

A: No, but you'd better bring a few extra furs for trading purposes.

Q: Can you give me some information about hippo racing in Canada ? (USA)

A: A-fri-ca is the big triangle shaped continent south of Europe Ca-na-da is that big country to your North...oh forget it. Sure, the hippo racing is every Tuesday night in Calgary. Come naked.

Q: Which direction is North in Canada ? (USA)

A: Face south and then turn 180 degrees. Contact us when you get here and we'll send the rest of the directions.

Q: Can I bring cutlery into Canada ? (England)

A: Why? Just use your fingers like we do.

Q: Can you send me the Vienna Boys' Choir schedule? (USA)

A: Aus-t-ri-a is that quaint little country bordering Ger-many, which is...oh forget it. Sure, the Vienna Boys Choir plays every Tuesday night in Vancouver and in Calgary straight after the hippo races. Come naked.

Q: Do you have perfume in Canada ? (Germany)

A: No, WE don't stink.

Q: I have developed a new product that is the fountain of youth. Where can I sell it in Canada ? (USA)

A: Anywhere significant numbers of Americans gather.

Q: Can you tell me the regions in British Columbia where the female population is smaller than the male population? (Italy)

A: Yes, gay nightclubs.

Q: Do you celebrate Thanksgiving in Canada? (USA)

A: Only at Thanksgiving.

Q: Are there supermarkets in Toronto and is milk available all year round? (Germany)

A: No, we are a peaceful civilization of Vegan hunter/gathers. Milk is illegal.

Q: I have a question about a famous animal in Canada , but I forget its name. It's a kind of big horse with horns. (USA)

A: It's called a Moose. They are tall and very violent, eating the brains of anyone walking close to them. You can scare them off by spraying yourself with human urine before you go out walking.

Q: Will I be able to speak English most places I go? (USA)

A: Yes, but first, you will have to learn it.

The World Of Commodore

December 5, 2009 from 10AM

At the Admiral Inn which is located on the north side of the QEW, just west of Erin Mills Parkway
Mississauga, Ontario, Canada

Come see demos, vendors and guest speakers regarding new and innovative products for Commodore computers.

Visit us at: www.worldofcommodore.ca



**TORONTO PET USERS GROUP
C/O JOHN EASTON
258 LAKE PROMENADE
ETOBICOKE, ONTARIO M8W 1B3**

— FALL 2009 —

We're on the web

www.tpug.ca

