

# ADELAIDE MICRO USER News

The Adelaide Micro User Group Inc. was formed in 1979 as a forum for owners of Tandy computers to exchange information in a spirit of self-help.

Special interest sections form from time to time as members feel a need for them. Currently there are such groups for Tandy Models 1,3,4, and IBM-PC

AMUG has no commercial affiliations or interests.

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For particular information, please contact any committee member, who will direct you to someone whose interest is in that specific area.

## NEWS SPOT

The August Meeting of The Adelaide Micro User Group was opened by Chairman Erik at 8.02 pm with a request for members to place their names on the list to assist on the Camp Quality Fun Day to be held on the 19th of November. David Hales was welcomed to the meeting as well as his wife Pat who came as a visitor. The good news is Pat liked us so much that she also decided to become a member also. Welcome to the Club Pat and look forward to seeing you at the meetings in the future.

There was a very good attendance on the night for the informative talk presented by Bernie, Gary, and Grant on the use of computers and radio. Many of the members may have found some of the terminology a little hard to comprehend, but I think most were able to understand what was being explained. I think that

SEPTEMBER 1994

Postal address: G.P.O. Box 214, Adelaide 5001  
Annual membership \$25, expiry date shown on label

Next newsletter deadline is 6pm Sunday 18th September  
(or 6pm Saturday 17th on Tan80)

Next general meeting is Thursday 1st September, 8pm  
at Lutheran Church Hall, 15 Balmoral Street, Malvern  
There will be a presentation by Advanced Computers

## COMMITTEE

Erik Rasmussen (Chairman) - data by modem	326	1132
Norm Bullard (Secretary)	374	0355
Reg Pietsch (Treasurer)	384	3027
Rod Stevenson (Editor)	337	6682
Jack Birks (TRS public domain disks)	296	2995
Max Morris (PC shareware disks)	386	2284
James Fendler (librarian)	265	2395
Roy Martin (exchange newsletters)	278	3702
Ken Olliffe	45	2441
Laurie Agius	377	2845
Allan Dent	276	7233
Bob Mills	298	1089

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when it comes to relying on radio links and satellites to download programmes, our phone modems are definitely much faster. With the way the static and interference affects the downloading and the fact that a satellite is only able to be communicated with for twenty minutes at a time, it seems to get a programme could take days, even weeks. But I am sure all those present enjoyed this very informative presentation and at this stage thank these very knowledgeable people for their time and effort.

September Meeting. Peter Duncan from Advance Computers shall be giving a talk about Multi Media and Hardware information.

October Meeting. The October meeting is going to be a special, as all members are requested to attend and bring as many friends as possible. It is a requisite that at least 100 people be at this meeting for the

talk by MICROSOFT representatives. Please make every effort to be there and support the club.

Bits and Pieces. Several old monitors and keyboards are available to members for parts from 30 Conmurra Ave, Edwardstown. Do not expect too much as they are ex repair shop and are only for parts. Should you find anything you want, feel free to take it and make a donation to the club.

CAMP QUALITY. I don't wish to dwell on the subject but like most clubs the work for this day is being left to a few. After checking with the Treasurer it has been noted that there is no member with the name OTHERS. Therefore there is no point in leaving the work for Others to do, so why not ask how you help make this day a great day for the fifty or so children that will be relying on our members for a special time which your elected Chairman and Secretary are making an all out success. Feel free to make suggestions and offer to do some work, you could have talents that we need.

PROGRAM DISK SALES

Jack Birks has available TRS Public Domain software for sale at the very reasonable price of \$3.00, a wide variety of programs and interests for Model 1/3/4 users, as well as general information. Jack still provides AMUG members a very valuable service in this area. Also available are quick reference files for a number of operating systems (Mini Manuals), Shareware Programs, TRS Link Magazines on disk.

Max Morris is the one to see for PC shareware. He has a tape of the majority of popular programs from Tan80 for immediate supply at the meeting, and can custom-download for you if he hasn't what you require. It's also worth talking to Max in advance of the meeting if you have a specific requirement.

BLANK DISK SALES

We have blank disks for sale to members at meetings. Disks stocked are currently Gestetner (formerly Nashua) brand, formatted for MS-DOS and guaranteed error free.

Disks are made available to members and non-members, but as they are made available only slightly above cost, members will pay a lower price.

Current prices are (per 10 disks):

	Members	Non Members
5¼" DSDD	\$8.00	\$10.00
5¼" DSHD	\$13.00	\$15.00
3½" DSDD	\$11.00	\$13.00
3½" DSHD	\$11.00	\$13.00

Prices and brand subject to change. However, we endeavour to provide high quality disks as cheaply as possible.

See John Fielke at the monthly meeting. Alternatively, you can phone John on 258 8689 or Reg Pietsch on 384 3027.



FROM OUR CHAIRMAN ERIK

Greetings from the Chair.

Well Fellow AMUG members, only a very brief epistle this time. Firstly a warm thanks to the Boys from South Coast Radio for their effort last meeting; I know some of you got a bit restless, but it is such a large subject that even done briefly takes some time to explain.

This coming meeting you will hopefully learn something good about Multi-media and I think Tape drives.

Then in October you will all have to stir up a friend or two to ensure we get the hall full for the MicroSoft crowd (if we get a really good turnout it will be very much easier in the future to get that kind of show to come and demonstrate for us).

In the meantime I am very much occupied with the little November shinding for the kids. I am happy to say that the response from our members in getting behind the project has been good, but we can still use more people. There will be a need for help in setting up and cooking, supervising, entertaining, serving food and drinks, etc, etc; even cleaning up afterwards.

We can use any of your talents; let Norman or me know if you can be of service. Besides all the work I am sure we will all have a nice social gathering out of the event. And if you happen to know any business or manufacturer that can donate anything, ie. food, drinks (the first two we may have about enough of), or sweets, even cheap toys as we are going to have a stocking for each kid for father Christmas to hand out. We have a promise of stocking fillers from one firm that wishes to remain anonymous, but we can use more even if we use them as prizes in small competitions on the day.

We have asked for 50 kids for the day, but are gearing the show for 60 to be sure we can absorb a few extras if needed. It is anticipated there will be about 150 people present including children, carers and our workers.

See you at the meeting. Erik

PC CORNER

by Peter Lynn

AUGUST minor.

As the main talk for the evening extended past the normal time, there was no minor for August.

FUTURE TOPICS.

To be decided.

THIS MONTH'S MINOR TOPIC

A discussion about various graphics formats - this will be a general discussion with everybody present at the minor participating so come prepared for the discussion.

~~~~~

MODEL III/4 CORNER

by Jack Birks

The TRS-80 Public Domain disks contain a number of programs which can be very useful, depending on your use for the application involved. Some of them have been described before, but the undermentioned programs are also well worth looking at.

There is a Basic program which I have called CALENDR4/BAS. You state the number of months required and the starting month and year, and it will print a calendar page for each month. The pages are divided into squares and each one has a date for the month printed in it. There is a /DAT file where you can enter regular dates for birthdays, anniversaries, etc and these are included when the calendar is printed out. When the calendar has been printed, you can then add any special miscellaneous reminders. Another handy feature is that each month has a small calendar for the previous month and next month printed at the top of the page. This program is included on Model 4 public domain disk no. 47 under the archive name CLNDRGEN/LZH.

A program on disk no. 49 is DSKTMR4/LZH. One of the programs extracted from this archive is for timing the speed of your disk drives.

Another useful program on disk no. 48 is DISKMAP6 which shows you the location on cylinders and sectors of every file on the disk.

DNAME/CMD is a program on disk no. 44 which allows you to change the name on a disk. I use this frequently and can check what disk is in a drive, when I call for a DIR of that disk, as the name is displayed on the top line.

HEXPRINT/BAS is a program that prints out a list of decimal numbers and the equivalent HEX value. On disk number 43.

HEXSAY/BAS asks you to nominate a decimal or a Hex number and then prints the equivalent. This is also on disk no. 43.

ALPHAHEX/BAS prints a list of figures 0 to 9 and the alphabet in upper and lower case, and shows the equivalent hex value for each. On disk no. 43.

Another program which has not yet found its way into the Public Domain is UTILMENU/CMD. The program has the facilities COPY, BACKUP, FORMAT, REMOVE in a menu form and either can be activated by pressing a number in the menu.

These programs mentioned are all for use on a Model 4 and further information is available if required by any members.

A program for the Models I/III (also not yet in the Public Domain) is AERODYNA/BAS. The program guides you through the basics of how a light aeroplane works and tests your knowledge with a series of questions concerning yaw, pitch, roll and axis, etc. Illustrations are included.

After the September main meeting, a demonstration can be arranged of any of the above programs if anyone is interested.

~~~~~

CAMP QUALITY REPORT by Laurie Agius

Hiya Folks,

Just a quick word on happenings so far for the Camp Quality weekend, but first up I'll explain what it's all about. Camp Quality is an organisation that was formed to "..... improve the quality of life of children struck down with life threatening diseases, for the short time that they have to live."

The Organisation depends on others to donate selflessly, a bit of time to devote to these kids who through no fault of their own, are struck down with cancerous type of diseases, effectively giving them an early death sentence. The diseases do not usually discriminate between the rich and the poor either and many of the parents are usually broke by the time the disease takes its final toll.

I became obsessed with the idea of doing something after a friend of mine told me that he had become a "Companion" to one of these kids and went on to explain the function of the Organisation. I have also met one or two of them and the thing that strikes you the most is the innocence that they portray and yet they seem to have accepted their fate without too much complaining or self-pity. I felt compelled to do something for one of them, be it small, to give them a little bit of enjoyment.

I had the idea of a "Games Evening" and having been a member of AMUG for a few years, I approached Erik with the idea, (and admittedly at the time with a bit of scepticism at the organisational nightmare that it conjured), and just "flew" the idea past him. Well the "small" idea has now grown into a "mammoth" plan, due in no small manner to the hard work put in by Erik and our new Secretary, Norm. Whereas I was thinking along the line of 10 kids at a maximum, Erik and Norm were looking at fifty !!! And it is my pleasure to report to you the members, that their dream of having "the mother of all computer games day" looks like being realised to the fullest. So much so, that it is 99.9% certain that it will become an Annual Event on the AMUG calendar.

We have been inundated by a very large number of commercial organisations who are willing to donate goods and/or services for that day, and now there is only one small hurdle to get over, but one of the most important and vital to the scheme being 100% succesful.

And there fellow members, is where YOU come in. We have a small number of members who have committed themselves and their PC's for the day, but we need a hell of a lot more. WE NEED YOUR HELP TO JUMP THAT FINAL HURDLE !!!! Those that do not have a PC, or those who have family members who are also willing to help in other ways, please let us know. We can use anyone, anywhere and at anytime. The event has taken the theme of an "AMUG Family Day Event/BBQ" as well so you can imagine that any sort of help would be appreciated. By my calculations, there are 8,760 hours in 1 year, so 4 hours of your time, once a year, represents .05% "inconvenience".

But I guarantee that no-one will be disappointed when they see the gratifying smiles that you will receive. I will also guarantee that those that miss out on this great event WILL regret having done so. So once again I implore all members (and their friends who would like to help), to notify Erik and Norm of their availability for the day.

On the subject of PC's, I am naturally referring to ALL KINDS of computers, whether they be TRS-80s, IBM Clones, or whatever. Electrical power has been organised and all you'll need is your computer and accessories that may be needed (e.g. power cables, joysticks, mice etc). One of our newest members, an electrician by trade, has kindly donated the use of a large number of power boards for the day so no extension cords are necessary. Erik will supply a large variety of Shareware games for the day so please don't feel out of it if you don't have any immediately available.

What I'm trying to say is - THERE IS NO PLAUSIBLE EXCUSE THAT ANYONE CAN EVER COME UP WITH TO STAY AWAY

!!!! So once again I say "Let's show how AMUG Members can rally together to help those less fortunate than themselves and make this the BEST day that these kids could ever wish for !!!!!"  
~~~~~

GREMLINS IN THE WORKS

wonders Max Morris

In spite of the joint efforts of the Writer and the Editor, the article on Batch files and the Path in the July Newsletter suffered a serious gremlin.

Now Rod pleads for contributors to use a text editor which writes only ASCII text for the very good reason that it makes it easier to read and set out the articles he receives. I try to oblige and use mainly Qedit which usually pleases him. I can't recall what I used for the batch file article, but I hope it was Qedit, (one is sometimes forgetful!)

I sent the article to Rod and headed off on a holiday. I didn't get back until well after the Newsletter was posted out, so I didn't see the July issue. I got a phone call from a keen member who tries out the ideas he sees in the magazine. Very flattering to contributors don't you think? However, it also means that all contributors have a moral obligation to get the articles right. The batch file as published wouldn't work!

Somewhere between me writing it and Rod printing it some formatting codes got lost. (I blame Erik of course, after all the article spent some time on TAN80 waiting for Rod to get it.) Batch files, while being very simple, are fussy about layout and punctuation. Each DOS command must be on a new line.

[Editor's explanation: as Max rightly surmised, his file was indeed supplied in ASCII. However, with most PC files I need to use a utility to remove the extra CRs and LFs inserted by most PC wordprocessors, unless they have been written as detailed by Peter last issue without extra CRs and LFs. Being unaware that Max's required special formatting, I just used the utility as usual instead of doing it manually as I would have done had I known, thus removed his required CRs and LFs along with his unrequired ones. So when you send me a file that does require special formatting, please tell me so! Or even use Peter's technique so you retain maximum control yourself. Not a problem either way for me, just that I need to be told!]

The programme called DO.BAT should have been set out as follows.

```
rem*****
rem DO.BAT
rem*****
```

```
@echo off
IF %1 == wp goto WP
IF %1 == tx goto TELIX
(As many lines as you like can follow, set out as
above.)
```

```
rem labels
:WP
F:
cd \WP51
WP
goto END rem essential, see below
```

```
:TELIX
E:
cd \TELIX
TELIX
goto END
```

(More labels and batch files could follow)  
:END

To run WP.EXE just type DO WP. The batch file will read the WP, jump to the :WP label and then follow the instructions in the little batch file and run the programme. When you finish with WP the file executes the next line and jumps to the label :END. If you don't include the :END label the programme will (in this example) automatically execute TELIX, and then in succession each file that you put in the longer batch file. This is embarrassing.

I got back too late to publish this correction in the August News, so I apologise to any who were confused by the errors. I don't like, but don't worry very much when a typo like, here instead of there gets through. Most readers can guess what it should have been, but wrong commands are unforgivable.

Good luck this time.



MEMBERS' PROBLEMS

Peter Lynn replies to Roland Sutcliffe's letter

Regarding re-partitioning a hard drive no special equipment is required apart from a (very) large supply of floppy disks. It would probably be wise to backup each root sub-directory (and sub-bordinate) as individual backups. This could aid in restoring the sub-directories to different drives than where they originally resided.

Another method is to backup only the setup files and data files - all the programs can be re-installed from the original floppies. This reduces the backup time.

Proceed to re-partition the hard disk and then re-install the programs and other files.

With regard to the printouts of the Autoexec.bat and Config.sys files it is hard to comment in detail without more information on the individual programs mentioned in these files. But I will comment generally.

Three different boot configurations were mentioned but I can see only 2 in the MENU portion of the Config.sys. ie:

```
MENUIEM =CHAMP
MENUIEM =CDROM
```

whereas a third menuitem - MEMMAX - is mentioned further on in Config.sys and in Autoexec.bat. It would appear that MEMMAX cannot be selected at boot.

In Autoexec.bat there is a reference to SET SBMODE=SON A220 D1 I7 V14 F14 in both :CDROM and :END - only one is required, the last SET is the valid condition. It can be confusing during a debug session if there is more than one SET.

Also in the :CHAMP section of Autoexec.bat in the PATH there is a reference to C:\PKW and elsewhere the sub-directory is referred to as C:\PKWARE - this can cause "bad command" error when attempting to execute a program.

Maximum memory from 0 - 640K can be obtained by loading as many programs and drivers into the UMB (Upper Memory Blocks) area as possible. Such programs include SMARTDRIV.

Also using STACKS=0,0 can conserve memory - only increase the allocation of memory if one of the following error messages is encountered:

```
STACK OVERFLOW or
EXCEPTION ERROR 12
```

Also EMM386.EXE can be configured in Config.sys to allocate Extended memory and UMB's to Expanded memory as required by specifying AUTO and set the minimum Expanded memory to 0 with MIN=0 on the EMM386.EXE line.

I hope that the above is of help. Note that there are many ways to backup files and to partition hard drives. It depends on the programs and the individuals approach to storing data files etc.



Q. What do you call a fish with no eyes?  
A. A fsh.

How do you tell when you've run out of invisible ink?

I started out with nothing: I still have most of it.

Press any key to continue, or any other key to quit.

Townplanners do it with their eyes shut.

Multitasking: screwing up several things at once.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

from Kevin Parker

[Editor's Comments: Last Committee Meeting considered the following letter from Kevin at length and discussed several pertinent points stemming. To inform members, I put (in brackets) after each paragraph a synopsis of that Committee meeting's thoughts on that paragraph's point. We thank Kevin for his letter, and would point out that, as always, we welcome all feedback from members. As Kevin says, we hope his letter will stimulate such very feedback, and look forward to it in future issues.]

Dear Rod,

Before I get into the real basis for my letter let me first congratulate you on the excellent job you do as Editor of the AMUG Newsletter. Whilst not often said, I am sure I share the views of members at large when we say "Thank you for the great job!"  
[Thanks Kevin.]

Having been more specific in terms of delivering accolades both the Newsletter and meeting are generally abundant with comments about the great things that happen in AMUG and how various people contribute to that. I don't have problem with that and its good that we support and encourage effort and contributions where due. However, it seems rare that we level any criticism and I particularly mean constructive criticism. So in the face of being ex-communicated I have written to you for that purpose. I must stress that these should perhaps be viewed as suggestions with a view to improving the great job the committee and yourself already do. [We do genuinely welcome new ideas: this is the reason we have constantly sought out 'new blood' to be elected to Committee.]

Firstly I must point out that it has taken some time for me to address these issues and for any one taking note I haven't been to a meeting for some time. This has been due to University commitments which I would love to put down the priority list but out of necessity can't.  
[See comment next paragraph.]

Some time ago you took a leave of absence and solicited for a replacement Editor. Unfortunately two committee members ended up doing it. It seems that no one else came forward. Before expanding on that I must congratulate Peter and Bob on the job they did. Apart from actually doing the Newsletter and providing an alternate style (I'm not being critical about your style Rod), their input was timely. It was at about that time that my wife and I had decided to by a new PC (486 to be exact) and a new printer. Some of the options and features demonstrated by Peter and Rod gave us some necessary information to assist in

making our final choice, so thanks to those guys for helping in a more subtle and unseen way. However, its not the fact that no one came forward that I am being critical of here (although perhaps I should be), but rather it is the way that criticisms were levelled in the Newsletter. What wasn't acknowledged were those people who could have done it but for other reasonable and legitimate reasons couldn't. I thought the criticism was far too general and did little to encourage assistance in the future.

[I apologise if you Kevin, or any other member, has taken offence at my wording. I do wonder though if any offence is a result of some mis-placed feeling of guilt. I fully recognise that we all have our own priorities that we order as we see fit; I would never seek to change any individual's right to have that list of priorities. I consider my own duty is to bring the situation to the attention of members, certainly not to offend or harass members!]

There could be no doubt that AMUG is the members, not the committee or the Editor (although they do a great job) and one of the reasons for the club's existence is so that a forum is created for 'members helping members'. Some time ago a list of members was included with an issue of the Newsletter. I was both surprised and disappointed to see that against my name, and some others, appeared nothing. I wondered how anyone would know what I was interested in or how to contact me. I am well aware that the running of the club and its associated duties are done by people who give freely of their time but above all I believe that something like a members list should be up to date and kept up to date for the benefit of members. I wonder if the committee should consider what mechanisms can be employed to facilitate this process. Can the list be inserted more frequently to encourage members to communicate with each other, share similar interests or get help on a specific subject? I know that a help column is now published in the Newsletter and I think its a great idea but invariably the problems I might encounter on a computer require a NOW solution. An up to date and accurate membership list will enable other members and myself to communicate with the person who might be able to help when we need the help. Members should then be encouraged to communicate their problem and solution to you for publication.

[A very good suggestion thankyou Kevin, and one the Committee has resolved to adopt: to produce a list of members' interests, as opposed to the long-ago equipment list which became so out-of-date that we suspended publishing it. All we need to produce this list is a volunteer to collect the data by personally contacting each member (they won't respond to a mass invitation to tell us) for it and dispelling their paranoia about being on such a list. In the meantime, as stated on the front page, a contact to any Committee member will give the name of a member interested in any particular speciality.]

From time to time I find myself speaking to fellow computer enthusiast who are not members of AMUG. I have no hesitation in recommending membership to them (notwithstanding this letter). Invariably the problem I have is getting access to a membership application. Given that the Newsletter now comes with an insert I wonder if a membership application might be inserted say 2 or 3 times a year. Apart from making it available for occasions like that just described it might also encourage a member to discuss membership with a fellow enthusiast.

[Another very worthwhile suggestion thankyou Kevin. Bob will be adding such a segment to the bottom of the enclosure sheet. Pending this, just send the name and address with subscription to GPO Box 214 and we will follow-up.]

When I do get to meetings it is without exception that I enjoy whatever is being presented. However, it seems like I see the same old faces all the time. I can understand why because when these things are organised at committee level its fairly easy to select someone from the committee or for someone at the committee meeting to say "I'll get so and so to speak.....". I can't imagine that there are not club members who would like to share their knowledge and/or experience with us. So what's stopping this happening? I don't know but I can hazard a few guesses. Maybe someone is a bit shy and just needs to be asked. Of course without an up to date membership list we can't know what everyone's particular computer interest is (see my previous comments). Maybe members think they have to be expert speakers and presenters. Not so. If they can't speak then do a demonstration. You never know you might learn something from another members contribution (remember your frequent comment 'members helping members'). Maybe members see the same old faces doing presentations and think there is no room for them to do one. At the end of the day I think the presentations should come more from the wider member base and I think that the committee should be encouraging this more.

[We certainly wish the same Kevin! The majority of refusals to speak we get are from members! We see no point in publishing the list of refusals! Our stand is that if a member says "No", then that's it; we don't believe we should try to force him to speak if he doesn't want to, whatever his reason!]

I believe that the current membership is between 80 and 90 and we get about 30 to meetings. Does the committee know why the other 60 don't attend meetings? Is there anything (or anything else) that can be done to encourage a wider member turnout? [Right from the inception of AMUG in 1979 those proportions have remained constant. One-third is from country and interstate, one-third is from metropolitan Adelaide and choose to do something else (priorities again!), and the remaining third come.

Don't see that we can do much, nor have been able to over the last 14 years!]

Finally I turn my attention to the Newsletter itself. I'm like a lot like other members; as soon as I get the Newsletter I can't read it fast enough. Unfortunately an ever increasing percentage of it is being filled with calls for member's contributions. I don't know how many years such calls have been made but the bottom line is its not working because you're not getting any (or enough). However, I must admit that I don't have an immediate answer to this problem. Perhaps you should publish one edition just with members contributions and when we get a two page Newsletter we will all appreciate how much effort Jack, Eric and yourself (and other regulars) put in to make it the magazine it is.

[I've no wish to be more forceful than invite members to write as I do. If they don't want to, then I see that as their right in ordering their own priorities. I do think it worth stating repeatedly, both because of new members, and to show that contributions are very welcome: I belong to an organisation which does not welcome contributions to their newsletter!]

I also note that 'members seeking information, parts or things requests' or 'members for sales' tend to be inserted in the preamble on the second page. This the information that appears regularly such as disk sales etc. Because it is the same regular stuff I, and I'm sure other members, tend not to read it or read it too carefully. Can I suggest Rod that such requests etc appear in a more prominent location.

[The News Spot is not the same each issue Kevin. If you think it is, I suggest you read it more carefully!]

Having aired my opinions as a member I am optimistic that we can always improve things. I am available for discussion on any of these matters (and related ones) although I would prefer that members answer any of these points by submitting a letter to the Newsletter for publication.

[Likewise from the Committee. And thankyou Kevin.]

~~~~~

I don't have a solution, but I greatly admire your grasp of the problem.

The one charm of marriage is that it makes a life of deception a necessity.

Death to all fanatics!

Why are there Interstate Highways in Hawaii?

I don't want the world, just your half.

A gentleman: one who can play the bagpipes, but chooses not to.

. . . FROM DAVID HALES

A little bit of interesting information on new technology for television broadcasting.

M.A.R.C. System by PANASONIC Multiple Automated Recording/Playback Cassette System...

Television stations are currently installing new systems to handle on-air playback of commercials and program with full automation. The MARC system I have seen operating holds 472 cassettes. All are barcoded for error free selection.

The MARC system is of modular design, so more cassette storage can be added. Five 1/2 inch digital VTRs are stacked vertically at one end of the unit, which stands 6ft6in tall by 7.5ft long by 4ft11in deep (including cassette storage) and weighing in at some 2.2 tonnes..

One of the systems more advanced functions is to run a back-up copy of the current on-air tape in sync. So if the main tape fails the operator can switch to the back up without any loss of synchronisation.

Tape selection is by one of two robotic actuator arms. The first arm has two selection heads (one main-one redundant) and the second arm is a complete redundant unit.

These arms move at the rate of 1.2 metres per second, hence the generous use of safety interlocks on all places you can stick your body parts into..

You are now all asking "what controls this little beastie?" well to my surprise a Compaq 386 20mHz computer. It controls all the MARC functions from play list execution, cassette database management, system control, diagnostic routines as well as data exchange with other computers in the broadcasting station.

The system uses the SCO Xenix 386 Operating system to provide a multi-tasking, multi-user environment for parallel operation of the MARC application.

Database management is by Informix software. The database contains the barcode ID, Title, Duration, and start of message data for all the program and commercial elements in the system.

The Informix software can reside in the local MARC console or in a file server interconnected with Ethernet LAN.

All VTR repairs can be done online as the VTRS can be removed from the rear on slide out shelves. Out of the five VTRs only two need be in service for normal operation.

With all of this automated gear coming to Adelaide it is hard to hold back the thought that we will soon be nothing more than a 30 minute U-Point from Sydney or Melbourne with virtually no local input here.

I am the first one to admit I am not much good at writing articles and this one really needed pictures to help it along.



TEXT EDITORS explained by Max Morris

There has been a bit of discussion at meetings lately about the way to produce plain ASCII files by using a simple text editor. If you want somebody else to be able to read any file that you have produced and perhaps print it on a different, or even similar machine to yours it is an advantage to write the file in plain ASCII text.

Files written in plain ASCII do not have any of the formatting codes that more sophisticated word processors put in. These codes can include line feeds, carriage returns, bolding, italics, underlining, and many others that are included for use of the word processor. Some word processors, like Word Star, even have ways of compressing the text so that it occupies less disc space. This is great unless the file is to be read by somebody who does not use that processor.

Now to text editors. What is the difference? Well they usually are much smaller, and naturally do not have all the "features". The most popular text editor with Club Members is undoubtedly QEDIT. The latest version (Share ware) is available on TAN80 or from me at meetings. The archived file is called QEDIT3C.zip, and is 135k long. This unzips into eleven files totalling 350K, including a manual 250K long.

After you have read all the mandatory copyright notices etc, you can reduce the list to three "working" files totalling 75K. They are Q.EXE, QCONFIG.EXE, and QEDIT.DAT. The DAT file tells you of more macros than anybody would ever want to use, and the config programme allows you to make QEDIT look like an expensive word processor, with pulldown menus, word wrap, multicoloured display of text and menus, and so on.

Once configured to your taste you can reduce the files to one, just Q.EXE which is only 46K long. QEDIT is quite extraordinary. ESC is the menu key, strike it and the menu bar appears at the top with these options; FILE, WINDOW, BLOCK, SEARCH, PRINT, MACRO, EDITING, OTHER, and QUIT. Many full featured word processors can't equal that choice. Typing the initial letter will pull down the desired menu.

What hasn't it got? Well it can't handle fonts apart

from very basic bolding. What you see on the screen is what it prints, but you can get 9T024.ZIP, which is a TSR that has a number of unusual fonts (including gothic and Greek) and will run with QEDIT. There is a very good stand alone Spell checker that will also run with it.

I use QEDIT in a directory of 75K as I like to have the config file handy in case I get the urge to change anything, but it works quite well just as Q.EXE alone at 46K.

If you haven't got it, how can you go on without it? See me at the next meeting for a copy. I have written much of this in an earlier newsletter, but as we have had a number of new members lately it is worth repeating it. If you want to send Rod articles for the newsletter they should be written using a text editor like Qedit. You can produce pure ASCII from a word processor if you instruct it to save the file in a text only format, but make sure that it does that.

A third alternative is to use the edit programme that comes with DOS. It also produces ASCII files and has most of the features mentioned for Qedit. Also it comes with all versions of DOS after DOS 3.3, I think.. One other feature of text editors that I have never seen mentioned is the small size of files they produce. As a tryout I used Qedit to type the phrase "The quick brown fox." and saved it. Then I used Microsoft Word to type the same phrase. When I looked at the resulting files, Foxy.txt was 22 bytes long, but guess how long Foxy.doc was. 6650 bytes! Amazing!. You see clever word processors always add at the start of documents the facts that it was typed in Times Roman 10 point, that my printer is an Epson LX80, that the programme is registered to me, (full name and address), a few copyright notices, and a lot of other strange characters which I can't read. EVERY letter etc that I write has the same 6000 odd bytes at the start. Unless I choose to save the file in text only this great waste of disc space is repeated for every document.

In case members think that I have shares in Qedit, I have several other text editors on board if preferred. I have Boxer600, VDE, Starwriter, and there are many more with names like Gedit, Zedit, and even one called simply E.

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According to my calculations, the problem doesn't exist.

He who hesitates is last.

A chicken is an egg's way of producing more eggs.

No problem is so formidable that you can't just walk away from it.

## LANGUAGE IS A LIVING MATTER

by Ronald Hass (2:240/5311) Hamburg, Germany  
Downloaded from FIDONEWS on Tan80 BBS

I am now part of the FidoNet community for about 2 years and reading FidoNews for about one year. Although being just another user and thus not listed in the nodelist I hereby dare to throw in a few words which every now and then cross my mind when encountering another of "those articles".

The articles meant are the ones that complain about the nasty bad language that certain people dare to use in FidoNews. Is it really that bad after all? And what is "bad language" anyway?

Our language - and this means every mother tongue that is spoken on this planet - is a living matter and hence changing continuously. It reflects the culture with all its ups and downs and the people living within it. It cannot be clinical clean and I rather would not like it to be. There have been several attempts in history to force language into specific channels by certain governments. The reason was always to chain and brainwash the people. Ten years after Orwell's 1984 still nobody in the world brought it to that final scenario he outlined in his novel, thank God.

So there still are four-letter-words and other stuff of that kind in it and there belongs a certain place to it. But I think the bare use of them does not make up a so called bad language. It is always the context and the way in which these words are used. In that one year of my readership of FidoNews I never found what I for my part would call really bad language. And to ban certain words does not make them disappear, does it?

The most used reason for complaints is that FidoNews is read by children. People want a "family type" of FidoNews. Let me tell you a short story which explains best what I am going to say.

I remember myself as a child of about three years coming from the playground and asking my father, what in the world an a\*\*h\*\*e is. I had been called one by another child but never heard the word before. Instead of shouting at me and forbidding to ever use this word again my father took time and explained not just the mere part of the body it stands for :-)) but the context in which it is usually used to give me a feeling for the word. Henceforth I knew when to use it and in which situations it is better to use a synonym with - lets say - more anatomical meaning. Much more important though was that in the future I was able to interpret the chatter of other people and react in the right way.

Things like that happened quite often in my childhood

and I still am thankful to my father having given me explanations instead of prohibitions. He rather taught me feeling for the language and the use of it.

I sometimes suspect that parents fear to give those explanations to their children. I promise you: they get into contact with so-called bad language anyway. It is a lot easier to say "You are too young, dear. This is nasty, you'd better forget it" than explaining the place of a word in the complicated system of a language with all its facettes. But on the other side in my opinion it is a lot easier to explain the word pussy in certain contexts than words like holocaust or genocide. Would you call those bad language? Give it a try, think about it!

To make it clear: I am not encouraging people to use that type of language here in FidoNews or anywhere else. But the way it has been used in this publication up to now in my opinion is not that bad that it should be banned or censored. It sometimes just calls for explanation to younger children and parents should provide them with it. It always has been the type of eye-twinkling tease which normally does not hurt the addressed person. I just call for a bit more tolerance and fun in using language. There is a lot more to it than just placing bare words from a dictionary in one line forming a sentence. The sense in between the lines quite often is even more important. Teach your children proper use of the whole of it rather than trying to leave the part out that you do not like.

And please stop to call for censorship in FidoNews, may it be certain words or whole articles! I do not want to end up being allowed only to use the phrase "doubleplusungood" instead of "worst" or any other synonym of it (see Orwell's 1984). This strips language bare of any fine tunes condemning it to state mere facts without any emotional and personal nature.

Finally I want to thank the editors for the good job they are doing against all criticism and well meant advices how it should be done. I apologize for any grammatical errors in this article for English is not my mother tongue. I am still practicing and learning from reading and writing on the FidoNet. =:-)

Thanks for your attention.

A response from Shawn McMahon Fidonet: 1:19/34

This is to everybody who wants to control what others say in the 'snooze, whether that be encryption, humor, or "profanity."

dyxj tiy

That's an encrypted message above, folks. Gonna sue me?

All would-be censors take note; the world is still spinning. Communism hasn't rushed in to topple apple pie, hotdogs, baseball, and your mother. The sun is still burning, the Earth is still turning, and 5 billion people (give or take a couple lunatics) don't care what kind of language is used in this publication. Don't like it? Don't read it. Nobody says you have to learn anything; ignorance is your right, no matter in what country you happen to live.

Just don't try to force the rest of us down to your level, 'k?

P.S. I still haven't seen anything in the 'snooze to date that I wouldn't let my kids see. Feel free not to give \*YOUR\* kids a copy of any issue with which you take offense.

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#### RANDOM KINDNESS . . .

Practice Random Kindness & Senseless Acts of Beauty  
From: Matt Ion (1:153/7040.106)  
Downloaded from FIDONEWS on Tan80 BBS.

This anonymous article was taken from a computer network where it had been mailed out to all subscribers. Then I got a photocopy and now that I'm a mad modemmer, I'm reseeding the cycle.

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It's a crisp winter day in San Francisco. A woman in a red Honda, Christmas presents piled in the back, drives up to the Bay Bridge toll booth. "I'm paying for myself, and for the six cars behind me," she says with smile. One after another, the next six drivers arrive at the toll booth, dollars in hand, only to be told, "Some lady up ahead already paid your fare. Have a nice day."

The woman in the Honda, it turned out had read something on an index card taped to a friend's refrigerator: "Practice random kindness and senseless acts of beauty." The phrase seemed to leap out at her and she copied it down.

Judy Foreman spotted the same phrase spray-painted on a warehouse wall a hundred miles from her home. When it stayed on her mind for days, she gave up and drove all the way back to copy it down. "I thought it was incredibly beautiful," she said, explaining why she's taken to writing it at the bottom of all her letters, "like a message from above."

Her husband, Frank, liked the phrase so much that he put it up on the wall for his seventh graders, one of whom was the daughter of a local columnist. The columnist put it in the paper, admitting that though

she liked it, she didn't know where it came from or what it really meant.

Two days later, she heard from Anne Herbert. Tall, blonde and forty, Herbert lives in Marin, one of the country's ten richest counties, where she house-sits, takes odd jobs and gets by. It was in a Sausalito restaurant that Herbert jotted the phrase down on a paper place mat, after turning it around in her mind for days. "That's wonderful!" said a man sitting nearby, and he copied it down carefully on his own place mat.

"Here's the idea," Herbert says. "Anything you think there should be more of, do it randomly." Her own fantasies include: 1) breaking into depressing-looking schools to paint the classrooms, 2) leaving hot meals on kitchen tables in the poor parts of town, 3) slipping money into a proud old woman's purse. Says Herbert, "Kindness can build on itself as much as violence can" Now the phrase is spreading, on bumper stickers, on walls, at the bottom of letters and business cards. And as it spreads, so does a vision of guerrilla goodness.

In Portland, Oregon, a man might plunk a coin into a stranger's meter just in time. In Patterson, New Jersey, a dozen people with pails and mops and tulip bulbs might descend on a rundown house and clean it from top to bottom while the frail elderly owners look on, dazed and smiling. In Chicago, a teenage boy may be shovelling off the driveway when the impulse strikes. What the hell, nobody's looking, he thinks, and shovels the neighbor's driveway too.

It's positive anarchy, disorder, a sweet disturbance. A woman in Boston writes "Merry Christmas" to the tellers on the backs of her checks. A man in St. Louis, whose car has just been rear-ended by a young woman, waves her away, saying, "It's just a scratch. Don't worry."

Senseless acts of beauty spread: a man plants daffodils along the road way, his shirt billowing in the breeze from passing cars. In Seattle, a man appoints himself a one-man vigilante sanitation service and roams the concrete hills collecting litter in a supermarket cart. In Atlanta, a man scrubs graffiti from a green park bench.

They say you can't smile without cheering yourself up a little -- likewise, you can't commit a random act of kindness without feeling as if your own troubles have been lightened if only because the world has become a slightly better place.

And you can't be a recipient without feeling a shock, a pleasant jolt. If you were one of those rush-hour drivers who found your bridge fare paid, who knows what you might have been inspired to do for someone

else later. Wave someone on in the intersection? Smile at a tired clerk? Or something larger, greater? Like all revolutions, guerrilla goodness begins slowly, with a single act. Let it be yours.

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WHY USE A TRS-80 Model I/III/4?

By Timothy E. Sewell - Reprinted from SYDTRUG N/ltr May 1994 and from TRSLINK 53 APRIL 1993.  
AMUG input by Jack Birks

In my opinion, the average TRS-80 user falls into one of two categories:

THE DEVOTED USER

The devoted TRS-80 user who has come to appreciate what an excellent computer he owns. Most people who use home computers do just that: USE them. The TRS-80 "hacker" loves to explore the "ins" and "outs" of his machine, to find a new "trick" for it to perform, or to find a way to make it do something that everyone said couldn't be done. The devoted user is very generous and is willing to share any bit of information that is available for the benefit of another user. Many new users have found that the "older" users are always willing to help with a problem and "walk" a person through something if necessary until they are comfortable with what they are doing.

THE NEW USER

The new user very rarely goes out and buys a new TRS-80. Most are hand-me-downs from parents who have gone on to the flashier MS-DOS computers, or are picked up at bargain shows or garage sales. This type of user either does not want to or cannot afford to spend thousands of dollars on one of the more popular systems. These people are hungry for information about their computers as Radio Shack offered virtually no support for their machines. These are the users that are amazed when they find out just what their computer can do if given a chance. They only need someone to show them where and how to get such information.

The TRS-80 line of computers were cursed with such nick names as "TRASH-80" by a consuming public suspicious of a company who would not let them know just how good a computer they have. At one time there were more TRS-80 computers in homes and schools than ANY other computer system. TANDY decided not to release such figures to the public for whatever reason, and other "new" companies were more than happy to take advantage of it. Why could Apple say that they had more computers in schools than any other company? Simple: TANDY would not dispute the claim and kept themselves locked away in their own little world and pretended that the outside world didn't exist. Sure, TANDY has some of the best HARDWARE support in the industry, but when it came to

software support of their TRS-80 line, the owners were forced to use the limited software that TANDY offered or hack out their own.

This may have proved to be a blessing in disguise. By hacking out their own programs, the owners found out that their machine could do things that TANDY insisted could NEVER be done. Hundreds of these hackers flooded the market in the early 80s with software that could run circles around anything that was being produced then for other systems. Unfortunately, TANDY denied the existence of these third party authors, and TRS-80s faded slightly from the public's fickle eye.

The TRS-80 is a USER supported computer. In the case of the TRS-80 Model 4, it is actually 3 different computers in one. The TRS-80 Model 4 can run all of the older software that was written for the earlier Model I and Model III, and the Model 4 can be a full featured CP/M machine with the "Montezuma Micro" CP/M operating system. Many TRS-80 users frequent CP/M Bulletin Boards and CP/M sections of the big network systems. With the addition of a High Resolution upgrade, TRS-80 owners frequent the Macintosh, IBM, Atari and Color Computer sections of such boards looking for graphic files to display and manipulate on their computers.

The TRS-80 is also a popular Bulletin Board (BBS) computer. Many owners who have moved on to other systems keep their trusty TRS-80 operating on-line for the benefit of others. Programs such as TBBS and Fast Plus make users forget that they are on one of those "Trash" machines. The TRS-80 is a work horse and rarely has anything go wrong with it.

The TRS-80 community has survived because the users who have access to the "old timers" eventually become "old timers" themselves. The "established" users see themselves as explorers of a fine computer that is very friendly to use. The owners of other systems in addition to their TRS-80 agree that their other computers are cold hearted machines that one USES, but the TRS-80 will always be family.

There are literally thousands of programs available for the TRS-80 computers with more being added on a frequent basis. The problem appears to lie in how to make the bulk of TRS-80 owners aware of this wealth of information that is available. Users of local BBS systems, and users of larger systems such as GENIE and Compuserve only make up a small portion of the millions of computers that were sold by Radio Shack. Printed magazines such as "Computer News 80" and "TRS-Times" as well as Public Domain Software houses like "The File Cabinet" have helped to broaden this audience but more still needs to be done.

Many local newspapers have user group listings and

list them for free. Some Radio Shack managers allow user groups to post meeting information in their stores and some of the larger stores with training centers allow the meetings to be held right there in their classrooms, free of charge.

Many newspapers have a community awareness section. The Valley TRS-80 Hackers Users Group (VTHUG) were featured in the "L.A.Life" section of the "Valley Daily News" not too long ago and their membership increased by over 20 people who weren't even aware that such a group existed. Call the editor of your paper and let them know you exist. The worst that could happen is that they will say no, so what have you got to lose?

The TRS-80 community is still very strong and can be stronger with your help. Don't be afraid to let others know about your computer. Get yourself involved with other TRS-80 users and spread the word on what a fine computer we possess. The future of our computer is in the hands of the users. Are we up to it?

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The Tao gave birth to machine language. Machine language gave birth to assembler. The assembler gave birth to the computer. Now there are ten thousand languages. Each language has its purpose, however humble. Each language expresses the yin and yang of software. Each language has its place within the Tao. But do not program in Cobol if you can avoid it. -- The Tao of Programming by Geoffrey James.

Give: support the helpless victims of computer error.

Health is merely the slowest possible rate at which one can die.

Computer programmers never die, they just get lost in the programming.

Programming Department: mistakes made while you wait.

If debugging is the process of removing bugs, then programming must be the process of putting them in.

An expert is someone from out of town.

Poverty begins at home.

The bearing of a child takes nine months, no matter how many women are assigned to the project.

It works better if you plug it in.

Experiments should be reproducible: they should all fail the same way.

A closed mouth gathers no feet.