The Alternate Source
704 North Pennsylvania Avenue
Lansing, Michigan 48906
Phone (517) 482-8270

MCI Mail: 109-7407
Telex: 6501097407
(Answerback: 6501097407 MCI)
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TAS Update #12
06/01/85

What?! Time for a TAS UPDATE already? Yes. However, you may care to notice the "expiration date" on your label. The first two digits are the year and the last two digits are the month you last ordered from us. Starting with the last issue, all expiration codes less than 8401 were not a part of our mailing. This cut our printing and mailing cost in half, an important consideration in these lean times. If you have that expiration code or slightly later, you may want to order an issue of Northern Bytes (at least) in order to update your code. If you see any of the guys that had codes prior to 8401 at the user group, please tell them we miss them, but support, in its various manifestations, is terribly expensive.

FYI: The Alternate Source Information Outlet is a name that is protected only in the state of Michigan. There are several vendors who have registered to use some deriative of the name "Alternate Source" in other states. Someone once tried to make us pay a bill for an Alternate Source in Oregon. Recently, an MCI letter intended for TAS was sent to an Alternate Source in Wisconsin by mistake. Unfortunately, they never bothered to forward it to us. We are listed with MCI mail as "The Alternate Source" while they are listed as "Alternate Source". When corresponding with us, use only the numbers or return address listed on the top or back page of this flyer!

Much of the news in this UPDATE regards upgrades, a new volume for the TAS Public Domain Library, several new Montezuma Micro CP/M products and a new MSDOS product. New Model 4 (and 4P) owners, call for a special deal when ordering Montezuma Micro CP/M when ordering it WITH ANY CP/M PRODUCT in this flyer.

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One more pass has been made on TASMON4. The current version is 1.13. FYI, if you have the source code for 1.12, all you have to do to make things right is to change the ORG address to 6000H and change the version number to 1.13 and reassemble. Both changes are very important! The reasons why are beyond the scope of the UPDATE, but, if you want to make the changes yourself and send us a SASE, Vicki will forward you a copy of the notes to accompany the latest upgrade, which should explain everything. Thanks to Jack Decker for solving this mystery. If you want the 1.13 upgrade and you are a registered user, you may get it FREE by sending your master disk and a postage paid mailer or $7.50 by phone. If you would like to order the Model 4 version of TASMON, the price is $39.95.

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If you ordered TASMON4 source code, we initially promised a hard copy in addition to the code on disk. This is now available. If you ordered the source and haven't received it by the time this mailing reaches you, send us a postcard along with the approximate date you made the purchase and a hardcopy will be forwarded to you expediently, no charge. The charge for the hardcopy was included in the initial source code purchase, $30 for documented source code on both hardcopy and diskette. We didn't want to commit the code to print before final testing was done. With the latest changes, minor but important, we believe that the project is (pray!) finally finished and we have printed the hardcopy. After all these years...

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Jack Decker. Jack Decker? What am I supposed to tell you about Jack? Oh, yes! Northern Bytes, Volume 6, Number 4, is currently being printed! 6/4 should be printed by the time you receive this, barring major catastrophes like the press repairs that interferred with printing the last issue on time. If you order anything from TAS, the current issue of Northern Bytes is FREE. If you don't want to order now, the issue is only $2. If you are not on our REGULAR Northern Bytes list, a $2 bill will get you the latest copy shipped

anywhere in North America. $3 will get you the latest copy shipped just about anywhere in the world, although, if we get to the Post Office and they tell us, "$2.78 please" as happened last issue, we will charge you $1 more. Contrary to our accounting reports, we are not a non-profit organization, although we may be missing some opportunities there. We currently have 12 back issues of Northern Bytes available, only $2 each.

Jack has been making real serious, mumbling sounds about discontinuing that publication. Who knows which issue will be our last? I feel that would be disastrous both to The Alternate Source, specifically, and to TRS-80 I, III and 4 computers, generally. Could you help me talk him out of it? Here's our dream: We need to sell 1000 copies of each issue of Northern Bytes. That is less than 1% of what 80-Micro is (was?) doing. It is about 3% of what 80-US used to do. It seems like such a small amount, yet so large. We can even offer quantity breaks at 10, 20, 50 and 100. Your support for Northern Bytes will guarantee continued support for the TRS-80 Models I, III and 4.

There is absolutely NO shortage of material for printing a regular publication like Northern Bytes. Jack has become immensely critical of material crammed into his office box; he promptly shoves it back, saying, "naw" or "too long". You will eventually see some of the finer quality Northern Bytes material on public domain diskettes. If we can sell the quantity mentioned above, it would be possible to publish on a more regular basis, perhaps even 12 issues per year.

It is very easy to be placed on the Northern Bytes REGULAR list. Simply place your address, Visa or MasterCard number and expiration date on file with us. We do not bill you for ANY ISSUE until that issue has been mailed. This way, we can continue to offer you top quality information with absolutely no risk to you. There's no question of what to do about unfulfilled issues if we decide to quit publishing. Unless otherwise requested, we presume your subscription will extend through the month of your expiration date.

Don't have a charge card, huh? Neither Jack nor myself has a credit card. We understand the myriad of reasons for not having them and we feel that a "To-Be-Invoiced" policy could help increase the demand for Northern Bytes. If you'll do it for us, we'll do it for you. Would you like to be placed on a regular list TO BE BILLED for each issue? You could then send a check for the issues as they are mailed. If you didn't send a check, we would presume that your interest has died and discontinue your subscription. The only requirement for getting onto the list is to pay for the first issue up front; the next will be mailed automatically, if you request. You are insured that you will receive top of the line TRS-80 information as it is released. Ask to be placed on the NO RISK "To-Be-Invoiced Northern Byte's List".

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We now have source codes available for EDX 1.0 and ALE 1.5 or 1.6, your choice. Some of you may remember Mike's coding from past issues of The Programmer's Journal. Mike's "real job" is interfacing hardware with software. Studying his codes can be quite an experience. If you would like a source code for one of these fine programs, please order separate from any other items you order and make checks payable to Michael Schulze. You must place the order through TAS I/O, however. EDX 1.0 source code is $30. ALE 1.5 or 1.6 source code is $40.00, your choice, or $50.00 for both. You MUST be a registered user to obtain these source products! You may buy the source code at the same time you buy EDX and ALE. EDX is currently $29.95 and ALE is $49.95. In case you didn't notice the graph in Hardin Brother's "Mutual Understanding" article, ALE 1.5 is the ONLY editor/assembler package to read ALL the popular EDTASM formats! Just THAT piece of code could be worth the price of the entire source code package!

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"But Dennis!" I cried, "12k is not a big enough buffer." He agreed and the new versions of Micro Memo for TRSDOS 6.x and Montezuma Micro CP/M support the extra bank of memory on the Model 4. The MSDOS version was not suffering from this malady, but there have been a few revisions there, too. Dennis recommends that all owners get their version upgraded.

Dennis is using a unique type of file structure called a "skip sequential" file to make available a variety of features that your current word processor probably can't do. Incidentally, Micro Memo will handle files created by word processors that treat a paragraph as a sentence AND files that end every line with a carriage return and line feed, especially useful for online transmissions. Micro Memo is great for preparing files for transmission. Micro Memo is not designed to REPLACE your current word processor, it is designed to ENHANCE your current word processor.

Micro Memo is $49.95 for your choice of version, either TRSDOS 6.x, CP/M or MSDOS, or ALL THREE VERSIONS, $99.95. Anyone already purchasing any version of Micro Memo and wishing an upgrade can return either or all diskettes and a postage paid mailer and we'll upgrade them, no charge. Upgrades are available for ALL THREE versions.

Incidentally, there are two CP/M and MSDOS products announced in this issue that do not have a built-in editor. This means that you might be forced to use ED or EDLIN. If you are planning on using your favorite word processor for creating code, you might be surprised. Do you use Word Star? If so, the special configurations we've seen do not specifically allow for saving text in a standard ASCII format; certain "high-bits" will be set that will make the code look funny when you try to TYPE it. Perhaps you were planning on using MultiMate. Be forwarned that you will find lines broken and blank lines inserted at points where MultiMate decides your text is just a little too long or won't fit on MultiMate's own arbitrary page. Micro Memo avoids these problems and will work with most serious development tools. If you purchase either of the languages mentioned later with Micro Memo, ask for a special price.

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Volume 7 is now ready for The Alternate Source Public Domain Software Library. This volume is yet another 40-track, "flippy" diskette, punched for use on both sides even with single sided drives, chock full of top quality software for your TRS-80. Most of the 35 programs, demos or documentation files in this volume have appeared in Northern Bytes, Volume 6, issues 1, 2 and 3. A contents page is available upon request. Volume 7 of The Alternate Source Public Domain Software Library is only $10. Volumes 1 through 6 are still available, $10 each. Send a SASE for an index for all seven volumes. Note: All volumes of The Alternate Source PD Library are 40 tracks per side.

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We have the answer to every frustrated Z80 programmer's dream. XPL is an acronym for "eXtended Programming Language". The language looks very similar to Z80 assembly language, but XPL operates at a HIGHER LEVEL, which can be read as "easier".

If you are writing your first application, instead of learning BASIC, with it's string compression and other speed problems, may we suggest that you consider XPL

instead? By using THIS version of XPL, you'll gain the added advantage of PORTABILITY. Code written in this dialect of XPL can easily be moved between various Z80 (CP/M) and 8088 (MSDOS and PCDOS) machines. All you need is XPL! Other custom versions of XPL under development will require this XPL "core".

XPL is a compiler rather than an interpreter. This means that your code will be FAST! Plus, you will not be required to give away confidential source code in order for other people to execute your code. Engineers: XPL generates ROMable code.

XPL offers HIGH-LEVEL "structured constructs". This means you have DO WHILE/UNTIL loops, SWAP and other powerful statements that are executing in a LOW-LEVEL environment, which means faster code. Currently, versions of XPL are available for both CP/M and MSDOS (please specify); other versions are planned.

XPL uses a register set very similar to the Z80. With XPL you can express literal values five different ways: Binary, Decimal, Hexadecimal, Hex string format and ASCII. XPL names and Programmer Symbols can be up to 10 characters.

The complete XPL package includes an excellent manual detailing all components of the XPL system, the XPL assembler, the XPL linker and two additional utilities: XREF.COM generates a cross reference listing complete with all symbols and where they are referenced. PRINT.COM is a special utility for generating hard copy listings of a file or files. With PRINT.COM, you can generate specific pages of listings if you don't want to print the entire file. Also included at no extra charge is a special utility for converting WordStar files to standard ASCII!

The complete XPL package is only $79.95 for your choice of either CP/M or MSDOS. Add $49.95 if you want both versions. Your MSDOS master copy will be shipped on a 40-track, single sided disk. Please specify desired format for CP/M orders.

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A new TAS catalog is being prepared, hopefully to be shipped in July. If you are on our active mailing list, you'll receive the new catalog automatically.

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We are proud to announce a Modula-2 System for Z80 CP/M! This product was designed in Switzerland by Hochstrasser Computing AG. The development goals of the package were to create a compiler for an 8-bit machine that generates a reasonably small amount of code in a reasonably small amount of time leading to reasonably short execution times and allows the compilation of full Modula-2. These goals are now realities!

What makes Modula-2 so great? In several PASCAL dialects, there exists possibilities to split programs apart into different "modules". These modules are compiled as if they were complete programs just lacking the main program. You can freely use procedures declared in one such "module" in others. All you have to do is to declare how this procedure looks and indicate that it is "external". It is a tool that is indispensable for the successful mastery of large programming projects. It is especially helpful for projects that are carried out by groups of programmers. In programmer terms, Modula-2 takes the concept of "local" and "global" variables to new dimensions. The programmer has complete control.

The documentation (Manual Release 3-28-85/pwh -- almost 300 pages) is very complete and well indexed (nine pages of carefully thought out subjects and subdivisions). It is presumed that the user has a some familiarity with PASCAL. Please note that the current documentation has been updated since an older version of this product was critiqued in an issue of BYTE. For persons who get squeemish at the thought of spending money, we have constructed a "Modula Sales Kit" which includes the complete Table of Contents and other information from the manual. One of these is free upon request.

Included with this CP/M implementation of Modula-2 is a complete set of source code library routines including TERMINAL, SEQIO, TEXTS, REALTEXTS, INOUT, REALINOUT, MATHLIB, SYSTEM, ASCII, CHAINING, CMDLIN, CONTROLS, STRINGS, LONGSETS, CONVERSIONS, CONVERTREAL, FILENAMES, FILESYS, FILES, MOVES and OPSYS. The new documentation includes a START-UP GUIDE, INTRODUCTION TO MODULA-2, IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE, ADVANCED PROGRAMMING GUIDE and APPENDICES that detail error messages, object code format considerations, reserved words and symbols, the ASCII character set, language definition, a bibliography and 9 pages of index. A special section is devoted to Programming With Better Efficiency. The documentation is filled with small sample Modula-2 programs.

The Modula-2 System for the Z80 generates fast, ROMable, reentrant Z80 native code. Assembly language integration is supported, as well as assembly language compiler output.

The Modula-2 System features an Auto-Search-Mechanism. This allows the compiler to search other drives for files which cannot be found on a particular drive. The system distinguishes between two so called search paths: One for data files (input files) and one for the compiler's own program parts. With the aid of MP.COM, a special configuration program included with the package, these two paths can be installed into the system. Hard disk users: You can search between seven drives!

The Modula-2 Compiler Package for Z80 CP/M includes a linker, a reference lister, a converter, a system configuration package, two libraries (mentioned above) and three test programs. Complete step-by-step instructions are included for assembling the test programs.

Please note that this is a large system. The compiler itself uses about 170k of disk space. It is desirable to have at least two drives holding 350 Kilobytes of disk storage each to work comfortably with the system. A single double-sided eighty (holding 700k) would be ideal. Unless otherwise requested, the Modula-2 Compiler for Z80 CP/M will be shipped using the Montezuma Micro 40-track, single-side format. The compiler is only tested under CP/M 2.2. Eight inch CP/M formats are also available upon request.

Folks near the mid-Michigan area: This summer we are planning at least one seminar detailing the use of Modula-2. We have a special package price on the seminar, which includes the price of the compiler and complete documentation, along with PERSONAL INSTRUCTION and enough diskettes to make a backup of your software and for working/scratch purposes. The price of the Modula-2 Compiler Package for CP/M, including the seminar and all mentioned above is $200. This price requires that you bring YOUR OWN CP/M computer. The price for the seminar with OUR computer is $300. The price for the software without the seminar is $165. The seminar without the software (you provide your own Modula-2 compiler and computer) is $59.95. Advanced seminars are planned and will depend on the success of this seminar, naturally.

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Our ZEN editor and assembler package is now available for both versions of CP/M for the Model 4. This means you will no longer have to put up with 8080 mnemonics when writing assembly language programs for CP/M; you can use true Z80 code. The ZEN package for CP/M is a flippy diskette. One side contains ZEN for Montezuma Micro CP/M and the second contains ZEN for CP/M 3.0 Plus. Unfortunately they are different.

If you have a Z80 CP/M system not mentioned here, such as Osborne or KayPro, and wish to try ZEN on your machine, we will offer 100% refund if the program is not compatible with your system.

By the way, in Hardin Brother's recent article in 80-Micro, "Mutual Understanding", ZEN is listed as not being able to read and write it's own format! Obviously, ZEN does know how to do this. It is also the only Z80 assembler package that works in all Model I, III, 4(P) and CP/M native modes. If you learn ZEN's powerful command syntax for one operating system, you use the same commands no matter where you are programming.

Complete CP/M versions of ZEN are $39.95. The original TRSDOS version of ZEN contains program support for TRS-80 Models I, III and 4(P), all included on the master disk. The complete TRSDOS version of ZEN is $39.95. If you order both versions at the same time, the price is $69.95. If you have already ordered the TRSDOS version and wish to purchase just the CP/M version now, and you have returned your registration form, the price is $29.95. This latter option does not contain a complete manual, only information sheets specific to CP/M.

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For the longest time it seems we couldn't find a good price on flippy diskettes. Best prices we could find and we were still paying almost $2 per disk. That seemed a little excessive just for punching a couple more holes, so we punched our own (much cheaper). That is no longer the case. We are once again offering "flippy" diskettes. These disks are certified on both sides and are punched so that both sides may be accessed with a single sided drive. A box of ten is $16.95 or quantity 100 is $139.95. We are now stocking only diskettes that are certified on both sides, since we have to use them with MSDOS and other double-sided systems. Our "regular punch" diskettes are $14.95 for a box of 10, $110 per hundred or $99 per hundred in quantity of 250 or greater. All diskettes are unlabeled, boxed in tens and include labels and write protect tabs. Diskette holders for 50 or more diskettes are also available, $9.95 each. Extra labels and tyvec envelopes are also available in small and large quantities.

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We are having a closeout on two items: Dennis Allen has decided that they do not fit into the overall scheme of his conversion series. Since this is a closeout, you probably should get a copy now, since when they're gone, there will be no more.

BASANYO is a conversion utility that will convert code to the format required by the non-standard BASIC offered by the MSDOS Sanyo 550/555. Normal price on this is $39.95; on CLOSEOUT the price will be $19.95 until stock is exhausted.

BAS2000 is a similar utility that coverts code with consideration for the slightly non-standard version of Model 2000 BASIC code. Normal price is $39.95; CLOSEOUT at $19.95.

Mail all orders and inquiries to: TAS I/O, 704 N. Pennsylvania, Lansing, MI, 48906
Phone Orders (M/C, Visa and COD) may be placed by calling (517) 482-8270

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What computer models and/or other hardware and software considerations that may affect software performance will you be using with these TAS products?

Please add $3 shipping to your total order for postage and handling expenses.
Thank you for supporting The Alternate Source!