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Net

Next meeting JAN. 2nd At the North Richland Hills Community Center at 9:30 AM

President: Gary Higgs
v. President: James Crosson

Treasurer: Ken Dominiec
Secretary: Richard Beckman

Editor
Ken Dominiec

Newsletter Staff
Ken & Pat Dominiec & Doc Graves

MERRY CHRISTMAS MERRY CHRISTMAS MERRY CHRISTMAS MERRY CHRISTMAS MERRY CHRISTMAS

THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS IN TEXAS

TWAS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS IN TEXAS, YOU KNOW,
WAY OUT ON THE PRARIE (WITH OUT ANY SNOW).

ASLEEP IN THEIR CABIN WERE BUDDY AND SUE,
A-DREAMING OF CHRISTMAS, LIKE ME AND LIKE YOU.

NOT STOCKINGS, BUT BOOTS, AT THE FOOT OF THEIR BEDS
FOR THIS WAS IN TEXAS WHAT MORE NEED BE SAID.

WHEN ALL OF A SUDDEN, FROM OUT OF THE NIGHT,
THERE CAME SUCH A RUCKUS, IT GAVE ME A FRIGHT!!!!

AND I SAW 'ROSS THE PRARIE. LIKE A SHOT FROM A GUN,
A LOADED-UP BUCKBOARD COME ON AT A RUN.

THE DRIVER WAS 'GEEING" AND 'HAWING' WITH A WILL.
THE HOSSES (NOT REINDEER) HE DROVE WITH SUCH SKILL.

"COME THERE, BUCK, PONCHO, AND PRINCE: TO THE RIGHT!
THERE'LL BE PLENTY OT TRAVELIN' FOR YOU-ALL TONIGHT.

THE DRIVER IN LEVI'S AND A SHIRT THAT WAS RED,
HAD A TEN-GALLON STETSON ON TOP OF HIS HEAD.

AS HE STEPPED FROM THE BUCKBOARD, HE WAS REALLY A SIGHT,
WITH HIS HEAD AND MUSTACHES, SO CURLY AND WHITE.

AS HE BURST IN THE CABIN, THE CHILDREN AWAKE,
AND BOTH SO ASTONISHED, THAT NEITHER ONE SPOKE.

AS HE FILLED UP THEIR BOOTS, WITH SUCH PRESENTS GALORE
THAT NEITHER COULD THINK, OF A SINGLE THING MORE,

WHEN BUDDY RECOVERED THE USE OF HIS JAWS,
HE ASKED, IN A WHISPER, "ARE YOU SANTA CLAUSE?"

"AM I THE REAL SANTA? WELL, WHAT DO YOU THINK?"
AND HE SMILED AS HE GAVE A MYSTERIOUS WINK.

THEN HE LEFT IN HIS BUCKBOARD, AND CALLED BACK IN HIS DRAWL,
"TO ALL THE CHILDREN OF TEXAS, MERRY CHRISTMAS YOU ALL!"

MERRY CHRISTMAS MERRY CHRISTMAS MERRY CHRISTMAS MERRY CHRISTMAS MERRY CHRISTMAS

President's Memory Dump

Well....looks like it 2-fer time as far as the newsletter goes, seems like everything gets hectic right at the end of the year. Hope nobody minds too much that we combined the newsletters this way one time. I would like to thank all of the officers and committee-men that made this past year for our club what it has been. I hope that the membership will continue to give their support to the new slate of officers that will be elected at our next meeting which will be on January 2, 1988 at 9:30am at our new location, the North Richland Hill's Community Center. I apologize for those of you that were misled into believing that it was at the NRH's library...I wasn't real sure myself just where in the complex we would be until someone else showed me! I think it will be a good spot to hold all future meetings...the Euless Library is just a bit too far for most, so looks like we will stay where we are now. I would like to thank Tom Hall for his efforts though, it's people like him that make our club what it is.

I took a poll at the last meeting to see if we had any parties that were interested in holding office next year and I would like to thank all those who made their intentions known. We still need a few more folks though, so come out and give your club the support it deserves. Our new club system seemed to perform well at the last meeting and Ron Miller has made some additional enhancements to it, so hopefully any hardware problems we have had in the past are behind us now. We are still going to try and get our proposed BBS up and running, hopefully no later than February. There are also still plans to get our library catalog out of Companion format and into TI-Writer format, so stand by for further information concerning that matter. The cassette and module libraries continue to grow and I hope those of you that have a need for them will utilize them. If you have anything to donate to further either library, your contributions are welcome and appreciated. A lot of new things, hardware and software wise, are on the horizon and it looks like 1988 will be another good year for the TI 99/4A and the Myarc 9640. With your continued support I know that next year will be a good one for the NET 99'er HCU6.

Memory Empty

Gary

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VP Review

Whee !!! we made it. It has been a long year, and yet it has been a good year. I have enjoyed serving the club this year, and I have learned much thanks to some of the talented people we have in our club. I hope the new officers have as much support as we did and I intend to still be around if I can be of help. I believe that the newly nominated people, if elected will serve the club very well, and if supported properly, should do a very good job.

I would like to say again, it has been fun, informative, and sometimes hectic, but never boring. Due to so many equipment problems that we experienced this year, I hope that the new equipment we purchased, and had assembled by our very own Curtis Fredeck, will do the trick and hopefully end the curse of the down system we have put up with for the last six months.

This last year has seen many new and wonderful things come about for our little orphan computer. With the ram disks, and super-carts, and the 9640, and tons of new software, our little orphan is not only, still alive, but actually doing better than ever before. While this last year has been fun, and I hope useful, I would like to see this next year be even better. And it can be, if everybody will do just a little to help. So lets do our part, and make 1988 the best year the club has ever seen. Thanks to all that helped this past year and lets not stop just because someone else takes over, after all its your club, remember ?

† James †

DEPT OF THE TREASURY

Hello from the checkbook. Glad to see someone else take this job. Not that it is hard but I would like to do other things I always wanted to do but didn't have the time. With the newsletter also out of the way I hope to help the new officers in some way. As the last report we have \$717.13. Thanks to all those who supported the Disk of the Month and Game of the Month. And those who joined us and stayed with us. The club is what you make it and the more you input the more you see will get done. Thanks for a great year. Ken

-----NET99'ER MINUTES-----

DEC 5, 1987

The meeting started with Christmas music and display coming from the clubs system which included a newly acquired PE BOX. This meeting was at a new location, North Richland Hills Recreation center. The presence of many members indicated that the notices were received of the new place and time. The room was small at \$5.00 dollars cheaper per month. It could be reserved for six months at a time with the chairs and tables setup by the recreation center.

The Eulless library is another meeting place, that could be gotten for free. It could be reserved for a year at a time. One draw back maybe that the meetings could not start until 10:00 or 10:30 AM. Decisions of where to hold the meetings will be thought over and not made until the new officers take office.

The Financial report was given with a total of \$749.44. This was accepted. Then the minutes of the last meeting were given and accepted.

The Southern Nevada User Group is putting on a TI XPO February 27th and 28th in Las Vegas Nevada. Information was given to those interested.

Corcomp is celebrating the 3rd anniversary of the revival of the TI99/4a with special T-Shirts and bags including an anniversary logo on them. The Logo can include the User Group's name.

Besides the usual Disk of the month and Game disk, James also had a special Christmas disk offered. Roy Willis offered 8 full disks of REL pictures to be put in the club Library.

A discussion was had concerning new officers for next year. Following are the names taken for each position:

- President - Bill Duncan
- Vice Pres - Doc Graves
- Treasurer - Lee Deforest
- Secretary - David Shivers
- Member at large - Phillip Chappell

Two other positions which could use a volunteer are Newsletter Editor and Membership chairman. This would give the well needed break to Ken and John.

A thermal printer and two cassette recorders have been donated to the club by Ron Miller. The printer can be borrowed with a deposit left to insure it's return.

Three consoles have been donated to North Richland Hills library. Two of them have 32k of extend memory put in them.

The Discovery SIG is canceled for December because of the Holidays. The SIG meetings will be back to a normal schedule next month. On Roy Willis' suggestion the club will donate \$50.00 dollars to C-CAD. Also on John Lambert's suggestion a donation will be made to the Goodfellow fund in the name of Gene Mouser.

The buy/sell/swap session was held followed by a break.

Gary Higgs then demonstrated a program to change the cursor. This was followed by a demonstration of the Archiver program which is on the Disk of the month.

-----END OF MINUTES-----

December 5, 1987

No new members this month

The following members renewed their membership:

James H Clay M1/89
Cal K Koether M11/87
Ronald R Miller M10/87
John B Rizo M10/87

Unfortunately we had some members who did not renew their membership:

Donna Chesser
Charles B Guy
John S Kishpaugh
James T Long
Sidney Parker

The following members have been reinstated:

Frank Cross M11/88
Rt 1 Box 354
Waco Tx 76710
(817)848-4589
(817)772-0110

Ward Ray M11/88
3540 Brandon Ln
Fort Worth Tx 76116
244-2988
731-7581

The following members will be dropped if dues are not paid at the next meeting:

Sam Bishop
Tom D Brown
Jeff Gatlin

A NOTE TO ALL MEMBERS. Look on your mailing label on your newsletter for the date that your membership is renewable, such as M1/86 is January 1986, M5/86 is May 1986, etc.. The club does not send out reminders on dues because the postage is prohibitive. If you know any of the members who did not renew, please give them a call and see if you can learn the reason. Let your officers know so they can look into the reasons. Your help on this will be greatly appreciated.

John Lambert
Membership Chairman

Cassette

Would you believe that again someone in the name of Ron Miller donated some more cassettes of Adventure games to the library. Whoa boy !!!!, I mean, like are we growing or what. If this keeps up, I will have to have a wheel barrow to transport all the equipment to the meetings. Actually, I'm kidding, we can use all of the donated material, even if I have to get a wheel barrow. In fact we did some kind of fantastic at the last meeting. I counted the disk of the month sales that Saturday and it was over a hundred and sixty dollars, I

mean like wow !!. And if that isn't enough, Lou Stone donated a new cassette recorder to the library and again Ron Miller donated a thermal printer to the library for check-out purposes. Yes, I did say for check-out purposes. If you have a need of a printer for a week at no charge, heres your chance. All you have to do is: 1 be a up-to-date member in good standing and give us a check to hold for security until you bring it back in good condition and you cheerfully get your check back at no charge, I mean where can you beat a deal like that.

Lately the cassette library has started to grow again for the first time in many a moon, thanks largely to all of you people out there that have donated the material for the library. Only a handful of people are currently useing the cassette library at this time, yet when I asked recently for a show of hands of people that still use cassettes I counted over a dozen people that held their hands up. I still feel that many people are not using the library because they are a little neverous about using something that they have never used before. Come on now, if you never checked out the library how are you going to know what your missing. Come on now, do your part, get informed, now is the time to catch up on whats been going on, and if you have some problems getting started just let someone know and I'll bet someone will volunteer to help. You'll never know till you try, and besides I believe you will be amazed at what you can do, if only you give it a try.

If everything works out right, I'll see everyone at the next meeting at the North Richland Hills Library on Saturday the second of January, 1988. Remember that we meet at 9:30 a.m. not 9:00 like we used to at the Hurst library. Well, I suppose that wraps it up for another month, so until then see ya at the meeting.

† James †

THE GRANULATOR FOR THE TI-99/4A

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(The following is a slightly edited news release from Mark Van Coppenole)

At last! A direct equivalent for the popular but out-of-production Gram Kracker has been designed by an engineer in Massachusetts. It's called the Gramulator.

A wire-wrapped prototype was demonstrated to the MAGNETIC User Group in Andover, MA at their September meeting and to the Boston Computer Society TI-99 User Group at their November meeting. It performed flawlessly at both meetings. The Gramulator offers virtually all of the features of the Gram Kracker, but it is targeted to cost less.

No production Gramulators have been built yet. To go from a prototype to a production model requires an investment of about \$1000. As with anything else, the more that can be made on one batch, the cheaper they will be.

You are invited to respond to this offer if you would consider purchasing this product. Technical questions are welcome. Please write to:

Mark Van Coppenole
52 Audobon Road
Haverhill, MA 01830
(617) 372-0336

Features:

The Gramulator simulates 64k of GRAM and 16k of RAM (in two 8k banks at >6000 - >7FFF).

1) You can customize the built-in TI operating system in GROM 0 and TI BASIC in GROM's 1 and 2.

2) You can backup your GROM and ROM cartridges to disk to protect your investment and reduce wear on the cartridge port. All TI, Atarisoft and Parker Brothers cartridges can be backed up. (Does not work with MBX.)

3) Acts as a "Super Space" cartridge allowing you to run programs requiring RAM at >6000->7FFF (including MYARC's XBII).

4) Allows you to use a customized GROM 0, 1, or 2, while a cartridge is in the slot. One application is that you can use your own character set with a cartridge like TI-Writer.

5) Capable of loading user written GPL code.

6) A total of 80k of memory with lithium battery backup.

The software needed to load and save GRAM and GROM will be built-in for instant access. A memory editor, which will be supplied on disk, will allow you to alter and save any program loaded into the built-in GRAM or RAM. User documentation and technical information will be included.

Memory expansion and a disk drive are required to take full advantage fo the Gramulator.

Added notes by Walt Howe:

1. I saw the demonstration at the Boston meeting and was very impressed. Mark has designed the Gramulator to take advantage of inexpensive, readily available components that should help keep the price down.

2. One improvement over the Gram Kracker will be an external, easily accessed battery for quick replacement.

3. If you are at all interested in this, drop Mark a note. Without good evidence of user support, it will never be built. Make copies of this and pass it around on bulletin boards and hand it out at user group meetings. This project should really be supported!

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Hardware

For those people that were left out in the cold when Craig Miller announced that he would not produce any more of the Gram Krackers, there is something that has come along to take its place, and maybe even better than the original. An engineer from Haverhill, Mass. has come up with a model that emulates the Gram Kracker and does a few things that it didn't do. He demonstrated it to the users group of Andover, and it worked flawlessly as reported. He says in order to go into production and make these available to everybody he has to know how many would be interested in buying one if he does decide to produce them. In order to tool up it would take roughly a thousand dollars just to get started, but he can't afford to do this if it won't sell. So here's your big chance to have a Gramulator that you've been waiting for. If you think that you would be interested in purchasing one, just write to Mark Van Coopenole, 52 Audoban road, Haverhill, Ma 01830 or call (617) 372-0336.

JAMES

THE EVOLUTION OF A FAILURE
-The Story of IBM By Chris Bobbitt-

The story of IBM's efforts in the microcomputer industry is a story of a company's inability to adapt to a marketplace. In short, IBM has ultimately been a failure in imposing its will on the computer industry. This story is a parable of the danger of corporate gigantism, and an illustration yet again of how a properly motivated David can knock off a Goliath anytime and anywhere.

In 1982 IBM placed its seal of approval on the microcomputer industry with the introduction of the IBM PC. Micros had been in constant use, particularly in small businesses and by professionals and farmers since the introduction of CP/M in 1977 by DRI. The early microcomputers, by the standards of today (which have in no part been set by IBM, but I'm getting ahead of myself now), were clunky and slow. They used little graphics or

sound(this was reserved for home computers like the Apple II, Atari 400, Commodore 64 and TI 99/4), but were very functional. Visicalc, the forerunner of all spreadsheets(now considered an indispensable tool by all businesses), was invented and propagated on such machines. Word processors, databases, and telecommunications flourished years before IBM ever sold a single computer for less than \$25,000. Until 1979, basically the computer industry was IBM and everyone else. By 1982, it was IBM, everyone else, and Apple, Atari, Commodore, Texas Instruments, Radio Shack, etc.

It was at this point that IBM decided to make their own entry into the micro world. Like a dinosaur sensing its own extinction unless moved to action, IBM set up an "entrepreneurial corporate unit," basically a company within a company, to design and build a computer aimed at small businesses and individuals. This machine, by corporate dictum, was to "break no new ground." The designers succeeded with flying colors, later to the ultimate dismay of the very corporation that sponsored it. They basically designed a machine that was obsolete three years before it was introduced. Most aspects of the machine were basically a retrogression to an earlier era. IBM used strictly off-the-shelf components that they could purchase cheaply(the better the profit margin, my friend), and an obsolete design based on a horrible misfit of a chip manufactured by Intel, a then half-bankrupt microprocessor house. The only saving grace of the chip was that it has "16-bits." This made the IBM PC, as it was dubbed, the second widely available 16-bit machine. The other was based on a strange chip called the 9900, by TI, which was so off the wall and unique in its design approach that normally conservative computer system designers couldn't make heads or tails of it, even though it was the most innovative chip ever released at that time. It was a chip only a hard-boiled techie could love, and has since been relegated to same. The 9900 later became a commercial failure, due to TI's inability to sell to anyone but the government, but that's a different story.

When it came time to find an operating system for this machine, IBM went to a small company called Microsoft, whose major claim to fame at the time was its Microsoft BASIC, the standard for BASIC languages now, and then. Microsoft was told to get an operating system fast, but not to tell anyone who it was for. Bill Gates, president of Microsoft, approached DRI(then second largest software company in the world after Visicorp, maker of Visicalc), and asked them to do a custom operating system for an unspecified manufacturer within three months. Dr. Kildall of DRI basically told him to take a number since he was busy supporting CP/M to twenty or so machines at the time. Gates' response was to dust off a CP/M clone that had been lying on a back shelf since 1978, purchased for \$4000 from two brothers in Oregon, rename it MS/DOS, and offered it to IBM. IBM's response was "We don't care what it is as long as it works." Thus was born MS-DOS, and the source of Microsoft's fortune since.

The IBM PC was released in the early part of 1982 to generally bad reviews. Most of the computer magazines of the time were run by people who had a good knowledge of computers, and they recognized the PC as what it was - a real piece of garbage(or at least nothing compared to your average S-100 system). Despite the efforts of a number of anti-establishment heroes of the early computer revolution, this was to become the standard, at least until recently.

While the computer press wrote the machine off, the big business press went wild over it. Companies who had never dreamed previously of purchasing a computer for less than \$300,000 were now given the green light to buy a machine for, gosh, individual users, for \$3,000. A popular phrase of the time, "No one was ever fired for buying IBM," took on new significance as suddenly the Fortune 500 set woke up and realized that micros could do things-useful, productive things. A small company called Lotus Development Corp, sensed an opportunity and introduced a Visicalc knock-off call "Lotus 1-2-3" for the PC, and the machine took off. Soon, every big accounting company in New York had hundreds of the things, and were wildly recommending their usefulness to their big clients. Within two years, all the early critics of the machine were either out of business, or sold out to the new faith. A standard was born.

The seeds of the PC's rise were later its doom. While the PC itself was a machine of marginal, even poor capability, it had what is known as an "open architecture." Since all the components for the machine were easy to find as well as technical information for it, by 1984 there were hundreds of devices on the market to correct the many shortcomings of the machine. With an infusion of cash, the failing Intel took off and produced the 8086,(thus was born the IBM PC XT) and then 80286(introducing the IBM PC AT). While the later chips corrected the many problems with the 8088(which reportedly was so ill-designed that it had bugs in the built-in controlling software that sometimes made a program never run the same each time), they basically expanded upon a design ideology that was reaching its physical limit of expansion.

Another difficulty was rising in the east, the far east actually. Because the components of the IBM PC were basically low-technology items in the scale of thing the "clone" was born. This is a machine that is basically a copy of the IBM PC. Because many of the makers of the clones included things as standard that were optional fixes for the problems with the PC series (such as faster memory and processors) it soon became apparent the the IBM PC family was technically to its imitators (not too difficult a thing to be actually). Because components were standardized so much and the construction process downright simple, the only real basis of comparison between machines became price, not quality, features or technology. As a result, within a two year period most computer component production in the United States fled overseas where it was cheaper to build the machines. The IBM standard had a stranglehold on 70% of the market, and the only way to compete for this 70% was if you were cheaper than the other guy. Hence was born the "competitiveness" issue so popular recently in political circles -IBM basically stabbed the American high-tech industry in the back. Production shifted almost completely overseas in response to a more price sensitive situation (early computers were almost always completely constructed in the U.S -as a matter of fact, the last micro to be wholly made over here was the TI 99/4A, in Lubbock). Between the years of 1982 and 1985 more than 50,000 jobs in the high-tech industry fled overseas because of the IBM standard.

So, a number of simultaneous events were happening. The IBM standard was approaching the limits of its inherent expandability, production was rapidly shifting off-shore as the basis of competition became price, and the number of clone manufacturers jumped from 10 to 500. At the same time, IBM's market share dropped from 50% of the micro market to 25%, and their profit margin fell in half due to competition. If this wasn't bad enough, the Fortune 500 crowd soon became familiar enough with micros that they were now unafraid to buy clones that were technically superior -so much so that the catchphrase today is "You may be fired for buying IBM". Even the U.S government was purchasing Zenith, Compaq, and HP clones! The last nail in the coffin was struck by a small competitor of IBM, Apple.

In 1982 Apple had 40% of the computer market. By 1984 it had dropped to 12%. However, through this period Apple's profitability trebled, and it introduced a machine that was so obviously technologically superior that it has become a legend, the Macintosh. While never the success of the PC in big business. The Mac founded an industry, electronic publishing (the art of using a computer to combine words and text on a page in typeset quality), and a niche in art departments, newspapers, and small business all over the country. While software development for the Mac never began to approach that of the IBM world, what has been produced is so obviously of high quality that John Davorak of the industry newspaper, Inforworld, which is dominated by IBM standard, was so moved to declare that "all innovative software being produced today is on the Mac." The Mac, while never a big success, has a profitable niche market that is expanding to other areas so users in big business have begun to realize its utility elsewhere, shown the possibilities of graphics, sound, and ease of use. This was the straw that broke the camel's back so to speak. The basic IBM PC lacks all those things.

By 1986 it was obvious that the IBM standard was going to fade into oblivion, and IBM with it if IBM'S profits were any indicator. As a matter of fact, in late 1986 IBM posted its first loss ever, including during the Great Depression. All due to the failure of its micro standard. "SOMETHING HAD TO BE DONE" was heard throughout the hallowed halls of the corporate bureaucracy. IBM had stepped on its cape. It had discovered that even the largest computer company in the world cannot ignore a basically technology driven market forever. The reaction was the birth of the rumors of a "clone killer."

These rumors materialized a few weeks ago with the introductions of the PS/2 series of computers. Within the next eighteen months, it will become laughably obvious how much of a failure IBM is. If the PC was IBM stumbling, the PS/2 is an outright fall. The PS/2 is IBM's attempt to imitate the Mac.

The net effect of the PS/2 series is to raise the costs of producing a clone of it dramatically. Since it was proprietary technology called "gate arrays," which cost anywhere between \$20-100,000 each to produce, it effectively raises the cost of producing a clone out of the reach of 99% of clone manufacturers. However, the PS/2 is never going to have to worry much about clones. In fact it is a failure on arrival.

IBM will sell thousands of them to large corporations, but for the foreseeable future no company is ever again going to dominate the microcomputer market so. As the PC standard gets older and its limitations get more obvious, the number of companies producing computers will dramatically rise, while clone makers will drop like flies. By the fact that IBM has used so much proprietary technology, the new companies by necessity will produce non-IBM machines. For the first time since 1961, computer companies will be owned by engineers again.

and will look to the future, and not the past. The types of computers available will increase dramatically. There will again be several different popular chips available on the market supporting hundreds of operating systems.

One thing is for sure, though, many of the machines will run PC software, even though they may not resemble a PC in the least on the inside or out. All will run clones of PC software. The number of niche markets will rise dramatically as again computers will be marketed specifically to particular market segments. The total effect of all this is the verticalization of the marketplace. The world, as we know it, will never be the same.

Oh yes, the PC has a future, but the same future afforded other abandoned computers -ignominy and the eventual death of major support. If you buy a PC now, you are either crazy, or you really don't care about support. If the latter is the case, then you can be proud to be known as an "orphan." The joke is definitely on you if you bought a PC to escape that possibility!

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*****EDITOR'S NOTE:**

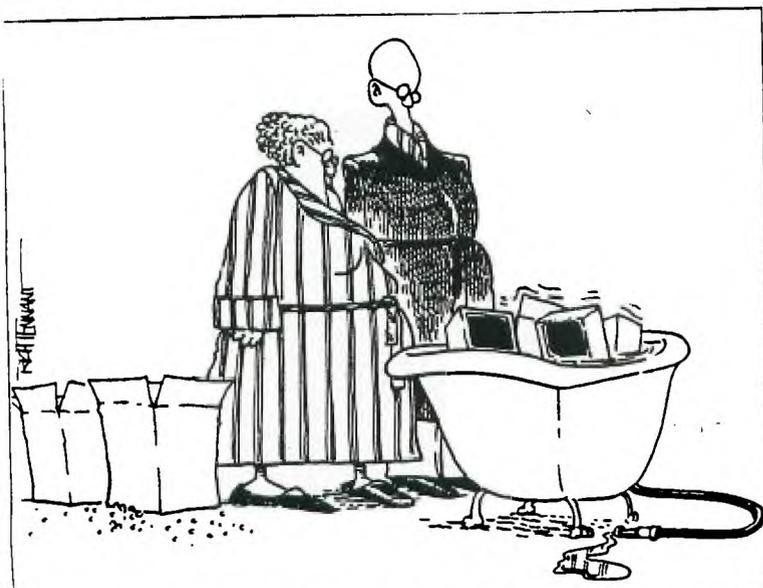
The deadline for contributions for the JAN. newsletter is Sat. DEC. 16th

Comments or questions about anything? Contact your officers:

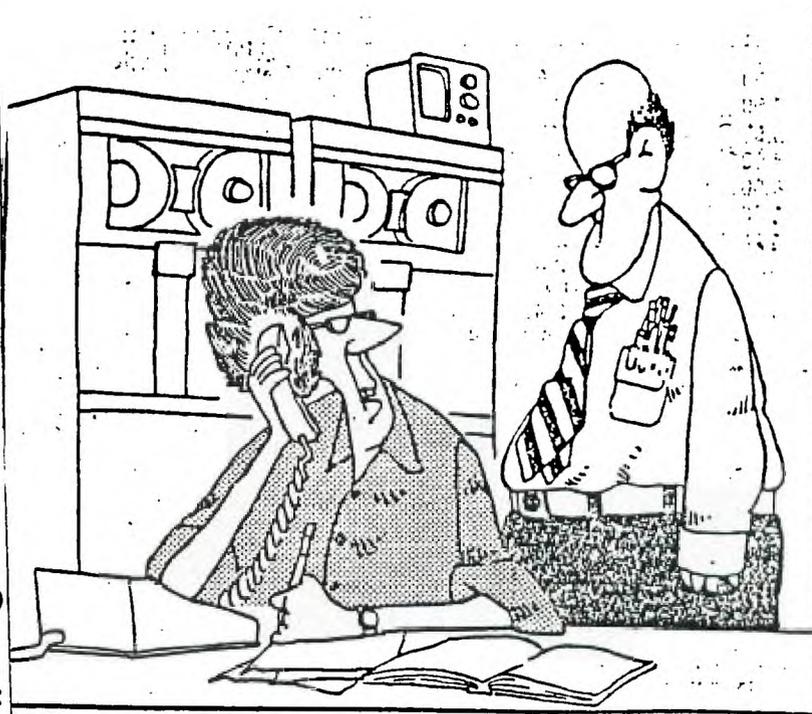
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- V.PRESIDENT--: James Crosson, 817-291-4868 Startext MC167798
- SECRETARY---: Richard Beckman, 817-232-2852 Startext MC160589
- TREASURER---: Ken Dominiec 817-656-1473 Startext MC151357

Got some interesting info to share? Articles, letters, paragraphs, & words of wisdom are yours to contribute. Contact Ken Dominiec, editor. 817-656-1473. Startext MC151357

THE END



"GARY AND SOME OF HIS FRIENDS WANTED TO BOB FOR APPLES THIS YEAR I GUESS IT CAN'T HURT AS LONG AS THEY'RE NOT PLUGGED IN."



THE ENTIRE SYSTEM IS DOWN. THE COMPUTER PEOPLE BLAME THE MODEM PEOPLE WHO BLAME THE PHONE PEOPLE WHO BLAME IT ON OUR MOON BEING IN THE FIFTH HOUSE WITH VENUS ASCENDING."

Rich Tennant

SIX EASY STEPS TO START MOONLIGHTING WITH YOUR COMPUTER



by
John R. Mortz

Success in any field is always the result of technical knowledge and mental preparedness. Being prepared mentally to seize your opportunities is always more important than business know-how, because you can achieve the competence you need along the way. When you have looked into yourself and found the courage to become financially independent, you will also be ready to start gathering the technical competence to succeed as well. This article can't give you mental toughness. It can, however, give you insight into the steps you must take to start your own business, moonlighting with your computer. As Confucius said, "The longest journey begins with a single step." In this article, you are going to learn six easy steps to begin moonlighting with your computer.

Step One: Start Moonlight Today. There are lots of ways of using your computer to produce goods and services that other people want and are willing to pay good money to receive. But you must start, today, utilizing your talents in order to get started in your own business. Do not wait until you have discovered the perfect moonlighting idea or until you have completed a prescribed course of study, before starting your own computer-business. Courses of study and academic credentials will not attract your potential clients. Your clients and customers want practical know-how that is developed only through on the job experience. Start looking, today, for that first moonlighting opportunity. It may not be the perfect assignment that you have dreamed of, but it will give you on the job experience. Best of all, you will be getting paid while you are learning.

Step Two: Use Your Competition. Don't be frightened by the idea that you may have competitors. They can help you in many ways. Start collecting information on people doing the things that you would like to do. Find out how many people are doing it; how much they charge; where they do it; what people think of it; and what they will be doing next. Buy their books, subscribe

to their publications, attend their seminars, and hire them for an hour or two to find out everything else that you may need to know.

Although this kind of information is easy to obtain, don't let them know that you are thinking of starting your own business. Downplay the competitor idea. If they believe that you are potential competition, they may clam-up and not tell you anything worthwhile. If this happens, it may be necessary for you to consult people in other cities where your business will not represent a threat to their own.

Gathering information about potential competition is one of the most important aspects of getting started in your own business. Not only will you learn what the traps and pitfalls are, and how to avoid them, you may discover a gold mine in an unfilled niche waiting for you to take advantage of it.

Step Three: Build A Hierarchy Of Contacts. Networking is the modern concept of knowing the right person in the right spot at the right time. Developing your own "Ole Boy" network is one of the most powerful and productive long-term marketing strategies that we know of. Actual implementation techniques are not documented in other publications. However, in our 288 page manual *How To Moonlight With Your Computer*, the networking concept is reviewed in detail. Techniques are discussed for developing your own business contacts, handling the networking conversation, and preserving the network.

There are many different types of networks: Political Networks, Social Butterfly Networks, and Promotional Networks. As a moonlighter the network that you are most concerned about is your Next Job Network. Think of it as a reservoir of all the people who can buy your services right now, or sometime in the future.

How do you recruit people for this network? First, by performing an analysis of your needs to determine who will best fit into its structure. Second, by remaining alert, at all times, to opportunity of drafting people into your network to fill those needs. Third, by recognizing what contacts your friends and acquaintances have and convincing them to utilize those contacts on your behalf.

Step Four: Assemble Your Team. No one can succeed alone. Although you will begin your moonlighting career as a single person business, you will need the assistance of other people to help you along the way. Before you get started, start assembling a team of professionals to assist you in your quest. You will need a good attorney, a good CPA, and a good banker. It is never too soon to start developing these relationships.

Another group of people, that you will need to help you along your way, is other moonlighters or independent consultants. You may need answering services, secretarial services, printing services, and even contract programming services. It's possible to obtain a client who needs services that you can't provide, but you can still make money if you know someone who can provide those services and you broker those

Continued On Page 7

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Continued From Page 6
services to your client.

These people are not your employees. It is not advisable for you to have employees when you are just starting out in business. It may be best to sign independent contractor agreements with each person who does any work for you. If any of them gives any indication that they might challenge your territory and someday strike off on his or her own, be sure that you include a non-competition clause in those agreements. This will prevent them from offering similar services to your clients within a certain geographic area for a certain time.

Step Five: Become An Expert In Your Field. There are two types of experts: an Actual Expert and a Perceived Expert. You may already be an expert in your field, but your potential clients are not aware of your expertise. As a beginning moonlighter, it is only necessary that you be recognized or perceived as an expert. How do you become an expert? It's not difficult. You seek out opportunities with the media. Successful Moonlighters understand that the media needs them just as much as they need the media. This reciprocal need with the media gives rise to a mutually beneficial relationship.

Write a simple "How To" article about your moonlighting idea. Then bring it to the attention of your local newspapers and magazines. Don't be bashful. You are providing a service both to the media, and to the public that the media serves. As a Moonlighter, you possess information, products, and services which will make life easier for a large number of people. These people are your potential clients and deserve to know about you. The media is tired of publicizing problems. They want to publicize solutions to those problems. When you begin to look at yourself as a person who has solutions to someone else's problems, you will become very successful.

Remember, there are two very important reasons for establishing yourself as a Perceived Expert: First, clients will seek you out. Second, you will be able to charge more money. It's really worth all the time and effort that you will need to spend developing this image.

Step Six: Expansion: The Key To Wealth. By starting-up your business as a moonlighter, you gain a very important advantage. That advantage is that you keep your full time job and develop your moonlighting venture as a sideline. When it starts to grow, you can quit your job and run it full time. It is only by expanding your business that will give you the key to wealth, leisure, and financial independence. It is very difficult to get rich by working for an

hourly wage, no matter how much you are able to charge or how many hours you actually work. By hiring other moonlighters and independent contractors, you will be able to extend your operation by degrees. Not only will you be able to make more money from the efforts of other people, but you will be able to expand your business into other product areas which promote your basic business.

Editors Note: The American Institute Of Computer Technology has just published a 288 page manual *How To Moonlight With Your Computer* by John R. Mortz. For free information including a list of 102 ways to make money with your computer, write, AICTE, P.O. Box 2615, Pasadena, CA 91102. In Southern California call 1-800-762-5300, x4906.

L.A. STUDENT WINS AFEI "FUTURE OF ENERGY" ESSAY CONTEST

Benjamin Goldsmith of Van Nuys, a student at the Grover Cleveland Humanities Magnet High School in Reseda, won first prize in AFEI's first essay contest — a summer's employment as a "technology intern" at TRW with a salary of over \$1,200 per month.

Daniel Chang won the \$300 second prize; David Baron won the third prize of \$150, and Rose Dao won fourth prize of \$50. All are students at Grover Cleveland High School.

The participating students addressed the questions: "Is U.S. energy independence a realistic goal? How can we accomplish it? What may be the political, environmental,

economic, and social consequences to our society if we do accomplish it?"

These issues were the subject of an essay contest organized and sponsored by the California Chapter of AFEI and supported by TRW of Redondo Beach by providing the internship and Ebasco Engineering of New York by providing the cash prizes.

The experimental essay program, which was almost four years in development, was tested first in cooperation with Grover Cleveland High School in Los Angeles. AFEI was invited to work with student members of the JETS — Junior Engineering Technical Society — who were asked to

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