

THE COMPUTER RAG

newsletter of the
Yokosuka Computer Club
August/September 1984

News, Gossip, and Inuendo from the Western Pacific

Local Gossip

September Meetings: There will be two meetings in September, the first on Wed., Sept. 12, and the second on Tues., Sept. 18, both 6 p.m., in OEC (top floor of Barracks C). YCC members are encouraged to attend and bring a guest. Topics to be discussed at the Wed. meeting include "How to interface the Radio Shack Model 100 with the Apple IIe," and an open forum on Apple and Apple clone compatibility. If a speaker can be solicited, there will also be a discussion of 40 versus 80 columns on the Apple. At the Tues. meeting there will be a repeat of the talk on "How to interface the Radio Shack Model 100 with the Apple IIe," as well as a demonstration of the advantages of a print buffer, and a presentation on Apple VisiCalc.

Last Meeting: Held Aug. 8, a huge crowd of maybe a dozen saw a thoroughly understandable presentation on modular programming, using a Radio Shack Color Computer and LOGO to demonstrate the concepts. Several announcements were made. The Navy and Air Force have amended their contract with Zenith to include sixteen-bit versions of WordStar 3.3, Lotus 1-2-3, dBASE II, and a terminal emulator (for use with Burroughs mainframe computers); negotiations are underway to add the Zenith Z-150 (an IBM-PC compatible) to the contract, as well as the low-profile Z-110. As reported in the July 1984 issue of CHIPS AHOY, Navy Micro '84 (the Navy's annual small computer conference) was an unqualified success, with 750 people from all over the world in attendance. The Fleet Exchange (A-33) now carries the Apple IIc, Apple IIe, and Macintosh. The *Ashai Shimbun* recently carried an article on *The Source*. There is growing interest on the part of computer users in Japan in accessing *The Source* (a subscription database service); perhaps a volunteer can demonstrate this at a future meeting. (Volunteers can contact any club officer to arrange a presentation.) The YCC library, located at the CFAY Library and accessible by presenting your YCC membership card, has a couple new games for ATARI, Apple II, PET, and TRS-80. There is a listing of "The Computer Stash" cassettes and diskettes in the top shelf, along with the checkout log book. The journals and books are not yet catalogued; you will have to look through the top three drawers to see what is available. It is a very eclectic collection. Back issues of *The Computer Rag* are also contained in the YCC library. Past President Jim Lee gleefully informed everyone that notorious Apple-hater (and current club President) Lawrence Charters has purchased an Apple Macintosh; Charters attempted to defend himself by pointing out he was not the one who wrote the check.

Semi-Local Gossip

Seahawk Goes Macintosh: In the Aug. 24 issue of the *Seahawk* the headline for the article, "The Great Kanto Earthquake" was prepared on an Apple Macintosh using MacPaint. After this fling with high-tech, the paper returned to IBM and Silver Reed typewriters, pencils, erasers, and white-out fluid.

Such a Deal: Bargain hunters, looking over the prices of Apples in the Exchange, may be interested in knowing the U.S. list price for Apple equipment: Apple IIc, \$1295; Apple IIe, \$895; Imagewriter printer with accessories kit, \$595; Macintosh, \$2495; Macwrite/MacPaint, \$195. While the Exchange is not presently carrying accessories, U.S. list prices for these items are: IIc disk, \$329; IIe disk and controller, \$429; IIe Duodisk, \$729; IIc monitor, \$199; IIe monitor, \$229; Macintosh external disk, \$495; Macintosh numeric keypad, \$99; Macintosh carrying case, \$99. Neither the Exchange nor the YCC carries the 3.5" hard-shell microdiskettes used by the Macintosh. Many Japanese stores carry 3.5" diskettes, but you must be sure to purchase **double density** 3.5" diskettes; most Japanese machines use the more common single density diskettes. The Japanese list price for genuine Apple 3.5" diskettes is ¥20,000, but Maxell MF1-DD diskettes are readily available for ¥12,000.

Non-Local Gossip

Big Blue Rescues jr: IBM, in a stunning move, announced it was introducing a real, typewriter-style keyboard for the IBM PCjr. Even more amazing, IBM said it would send all registered PCjr owners one of the new keyboards for free — they don't even have to turn in the old, calculator-style keyboards. IBM Vice President Phillip D. Estridge, when asked why IBM was being so un-IBM like by offering free keyboards, replied, "We don't need the [old] keyboards." Estridge also claimed "we had only two complaints" about the old keyboard. (Before this was announced, IBM sponsored an "Olympics Contest," with free tickets to the Olympics for any dealer selling 45 PCjr's in three months. There were no winners.)

Still More jr Goodies: IBM also announced a 128K memory expansion module for the PCjr, priced at

\$325. Using a new \$150 power attachment (to provide the wattage needed to power the memory), PCjr's can now be expanded to over 256K.

Even More jr News: Lotus has announced a ROM cartridge-based version of Lotus 1-2-3 for the IBM PCjr, priced at \$495.

Popcorn Salted and Buttered: IBM's long-awaited "Popcorn" computer has been formally announced under the name PC-AT. As expected, it is based on the 80286 microprocessor, has 256K of memory, 1.2 megabytes of disk storage, and operates under MSDOS 3.0. More surprising is the base price: a very low \$3,995. The unit can be expanded to 3 megabytes of memory, 41 megabytes of disk storage, and can handle up to three users at the same time. PC-DOS 3.0 cannot presently use more than 640K of RAM; the rest of memory is used as a "virtual disk." Full use of memory will have to wait for Xenix (UNIX), to be delivered in early 1985. Many dealers were upset with the low price; they wanted a \$10,000 machine, since the margins (profits) are higher.

VisiOn Sold: VisiCorp has sold the rights to its VisiOn integrated software system to Control Data Corp. Control Data will also take over development of future VisiOn products, and will use VisiOn in an undisclosed Control Data minicomputer system. VisiCorp swears it still has the utmost faith in VisiOn, swears it will continue to promote the system, etc.

Sharp Move: Sharp's excellent PC-5000, a "large lap" computer capable of using IBM PC software, will soon be able to use Venix-86. This will make it the only portable computer capable of running UNIX software.

Little Bitty Diskettes: Tabor, which tried with limited success to get people to use its 3.25" microfloppy disk drives, is abandoning 3.25" drives in favor of the far more popular 3.5" drives invented by Sony. Only Dysan was making 3.25" diskettes for Tabor drives; Verbatim, Memorex, Brown Disc, Maxell, and BASF were all producing 3.5" diskettes.

Tandon Tandy Clone: Tandon, noted for its disk drives, is rumored to be making an IBM PC clone for Tandy (Radio Shack). Tandon also just signed a \$130 million deal with Atari to supply disk drives.

Convergent Converges: Convergent Technologies, a well-respected manufacturer of "high-end" [expensive] micro and mini computers, has abandoned its WorkSlate lap computer. The WorkSlate, about the size of a Radio Shack Model 100, had a calculator-style keyboard and a built-in spreadsheet program. Convergent thought business men would really like it, but poor sales are forcing the company to write the whole effort off as a \$15 million loss.

Macintosh Murmurs: Apple is expected to release early next year a 512K version of the Macintosh [nicknamed "Fat Mac"], a laser printer based on Canon's excellent laser printer, and a file server. Already introduced are MacWrite/MacPaint, \$195, and MacTerminal, \$99. Still to come this year are Macintosh Pascal [an interactive Pascal interpreter], \$125; MacProject [project manager], \$125; MacDraw [business graphics], \$125; and Macintosh BASIC [multi-tasking BASIC], \$125. Microsoft has delayed release of Microsoft Word and Microsoft Chart for the Macintosh until September.

Get a Clone: GEA, the insurance company offering government employees Zenith computers at the same price paid by the Navy, is now also offering Sperry Univac's microcomputer, an IBM PC clone, at a very low price.

Zenith News: Heathkit, in its latest catalog, is offering MSDOS 2.0 for the H/Z-100 series, which means it will soon be available under the Navy/Zenith contract. You can also get MP/M-86 for the 100, allowing you to do "time-sharing" work on the Zenith. One government agency has also designed bulletin board software for the Z-100; it is free if you send them a 5 1/4 inch diskette. Write to: DCASR, Chicago / DCRI-CFP (Attn.: Len Johnson) / P.O. Box 66475 / O'Hare IAP / Chicago, IL 60666.

Commodore: Has signed an agreement to purchase Amiga, which is working on a 68000-based "super micro" (described by some as a "Color Macintosh"). Amiga was founded by ex-Atari employees. Atari is now owned by Jack Tramiel, who used to own Commodore. There is also a rumor Commodore, now that Tramiel has left, will be sold to AT&T, ITT, RCA, or Thyssen Bornemisza (a European trading company). Is all this clear?

Trivia: 15% of all VISA card holders own micros. How many micros own VISA cards is unknown.

Money: DEC, the second largest computer company in the U.S., made \$5.58 billion last year, a little behind first place IBM's \$4.4 billion. Microsoft made \$50 million in FY83, and in FY84 (ended June 30) they doubled that to \$100 million. IBM, Tandy, and Apple are all selling over \$1 billion in microcomputers per year.

Quote: "We don't want to comment on them. We feel that the more you talk about a company, the more likely they are to go out of business." Kenneth Linn, analyst at Dataquest, speaking of Eagle Computers, currently in Chapter 11.

More Chapter 11: Franklin Computers is not expected to survive Chap. 11 unless someone buys them out. Software Guild has filed for Chap. 11, and is also expected to fail. Actrix (formerly Access Matrix), makers of a very nice portable CP/M machine with built-in Epson printer, modem, graphics, and other goodies, has filed for Chap. 11. Osborne, on the other hand, may be out of Chap. 11 by the first of October.

Want-Ads

Wanted: Any and all kinds of technical information on the Apple Macintosh. The Mac's reference manuals contain very little hard information (though they are pretty), so it looks like you'll have to dig around to find something useful. Apple does publish an **Inside Macintosh** book — for \$150 — but that seems a bit steep.

Wanted: dBASE II users are asked to contact Jim Lee, former Club Prez, to share information on how to do strange and wonderous things with dBASE II.

Wanted: More participation in the club. Unless we hear from you soon (in the form of a presentation, or help with club logistics, or something) the officers will assume the treasury is theirs to use for experimentation, and they will experiment with buying goodies for their machines.

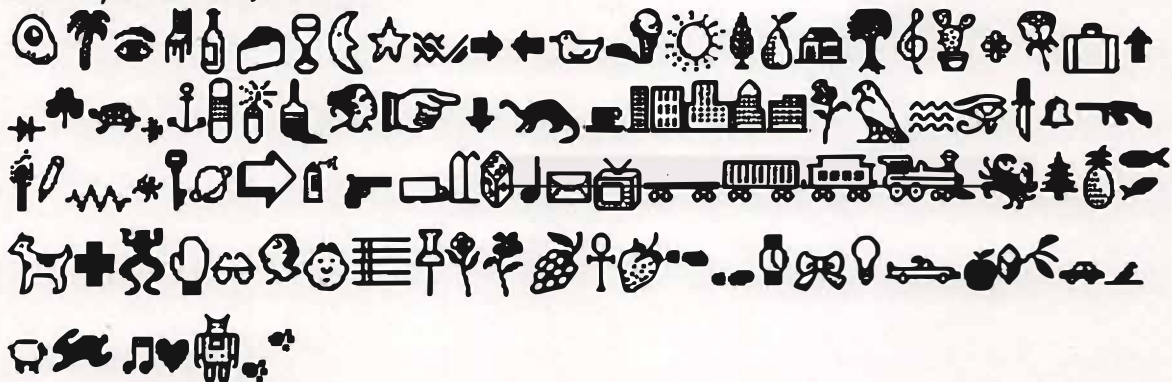
Technical Goodies

Macintosh Wees: If you buy a Macintosh at the Fleet Exchange, you will get a Mac with the latest software. Unfortunately, the Guided Tour diskettes that come with the system have an old version of the software on them, and if you use the new system diskette after first using the Guided Tour diskette, you could destroy the contents of either or both diskettes. What to do: first, determine which version of the operating system you are using. By pointing the mouse to the apple at the top of the screen, then dragging down to the Finder block, you can open the finder. If the Finder is Version 1.0, you are using the old version of the operating system. If the Finder is Version 1.1, a picture of some mountains will appear, and you are using the new version of the operating system. Always push the reset key, or turn the computer off, before switching between different versions.

Macintosh Characters: The Mac has a huge and varied character set, as this newsletter illustrates.

You can write in a large variety of type sizes, from 9 point to 24 point. You **can** also experiment with an extensive selection of **typefaces**. Text can be entered plain, or **boldface**, or *italicized*, or underlined, or **outlined**, or **shadowed**, or a combination of these characteristics. All of this, unfortunately, requires a huge amount of space; this newsletter, on most computers, would occupy maybe 4000 bytes, but on the Macintosh it eats up over 17000 bytes of disk storage.

One interesting capability is the ability to enter symbols and pictures directly from the keyboard. What kind of symbols? Well, how about —



What practical use these characters have is, of course, another matter entirely.

