

# The Computer Rag

newsletter of the Yokosuka Computer Club

News, Gossip & Innuendo from the Western Pacific

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Editor: USNH Box 65-1561, FPO Seattle, WA 98765  
or Box 65-1561, 1 Honcho, Yokosuka-shi, Kanagawa 238



## LOCAL GOSSIP



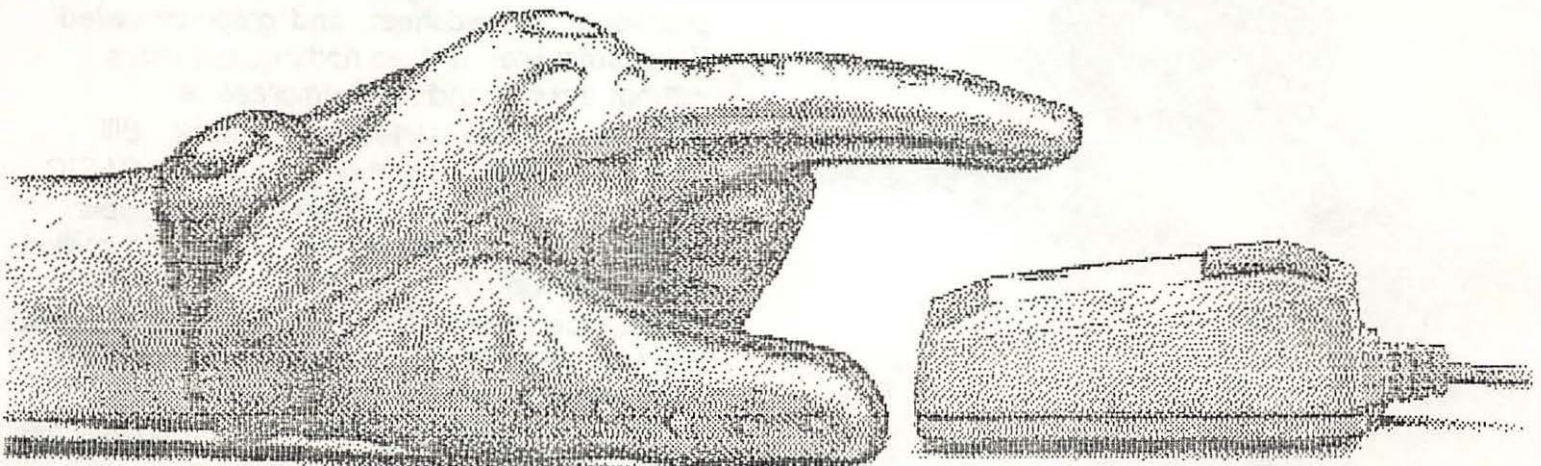
**May Meetings:** will be held on the second (2nd) Wed., May 14, and the third (3rd) Tues., May 20, both at 6 p.m. in the General Practice Clinic conference room at the hospital. Tentative topics include: a **model railroad system** for computers (design your own track layouts, cars, locomotives, and scenery, and then run them, without ever having to worry about losing pieces, having cars fall off the table, or the cat play with your favorite caboose), **computer movies** (movies generated on a computer, not movies about computers), **page layout programs** (software for designing newsletters, brochures, etc., such as **The Computer Rag**), and the **new Zenith contract** for the Navy, Air Force, Marines and Army.

**April Meetings:** at the Wed. meeting we had a demonstration of the Zenith Z-120, the Navy's standard microcomputer, along with a discussion of why it was selected, what you can do with it, and what you can't do with it. (Actually, there wasn't

much to say about what you can't do with it.) Richard Newton, LaVern May, and Dave Lyden demonstrated several interesting tricks, including the (virtually undocumented but clever) monitor ROM routines.

Some complaints were heard about the meeting being too technical. Strangely enough, none of the complaining parties came to the Tues. meeting, where we got down to some really heavy material: trying to sink ships using two submarine simulations. Using a Zenith Z-110 (identical to a Z-120, except the monitor is not built in) we did manage to crush our own submarine by diving too deeply, and put some extra holes in the wrong parts of a couple enemy freighters.

Newton supplied the Z-110, to which he has added a few goodies. It now has a full 768K of RAM, a fast clock crystal for zipping along at 8 MHz (instead of the usual 5 MHz), and the 8088 processor has been replaced with NEC's V20. Intel, which just suffered a 20% loss in sales last quarter, is suing NEC over the chip, which does everything the 8088 does, plus more, and does it

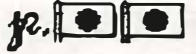
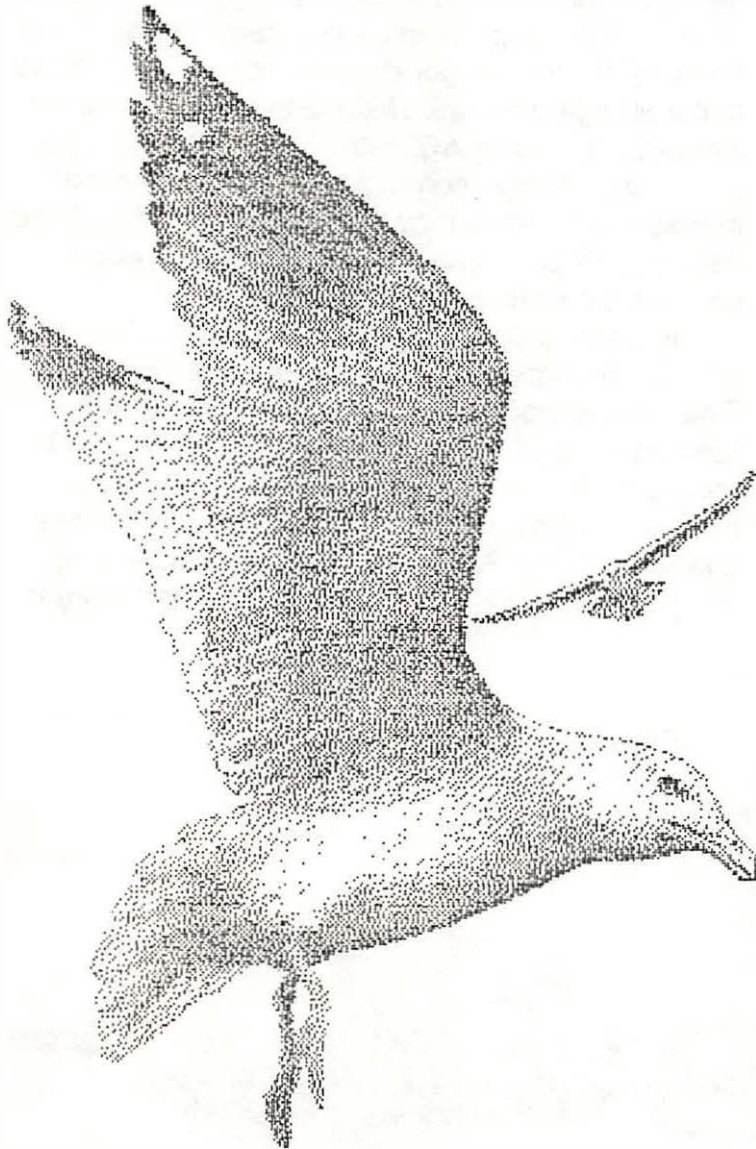


faster, too.

Thanks to a very nice RGB monitor, all this activity took place in vivid color. Newton also demonstrated the Z-100's very high resolution interlace mode, which permits roughly 160 characters across the screen by 50 rows down. Because of the small size, this isn't very practical for text, but it makes for incredible pictures.

**Amiga:** if we are all good, think nice thoughts, and, above all, believe in Tinkerbell, A-33 might have some Amigas for sale in June. The first person bringing an Amiga (or an Atari ST) to a meeting will have the club's eternal gratitude, and receive a free kiss from the editor's daughter. Believe me, you've never been kissed like this before!

**Special interest groups:** Negishi is setting up a special interest group (SIG) for Apple owners. Points of contact are CWO3 Metier and HMC Wilson, 232-4164, 4813, 4165. Meetings are planned for the



2nd and 4th Tues. of the month at 7 p.m. in the Negishi Community Center, Special Services Room 1.

Another SIG is forming for owners and users of Zenith computers. This group is just getting started, so come to the May meetings or call Newton at 234-5415 for details.

**Preview:** next month's issue of **The Computer Rag** should have maps of computer stores in Tokyo. If you want to contribute to the map (or contribute anything, for that matter), call the editor at 234-4326 or write to the address on the masthead.

**Postscript:** more than half the items on the last page of April's issue were true. Really.

## ★NON-LOCAL GOSSIP★



**Good Pretender:** Mac + II v. 3.0 allows the Mac to read, write and run Apple II programs saved to the new Apple II 3.5" Unidisk. It claims to be a complete emulation of a 128K IIe, IIc or 64K II+, right down to ROM peeks and pokes. Arch rival "II in a Mac" offers much the same, but even includes cartoon pictures of Apple II disk drives on the screen to open and close. If you're a wealthy Mac owner, you might want to consider the Hyperdrive 2000. It includes a 20 Mbyte internal hard disk, 12 MHz 68000 (replacing the Mac's 7.8 MHz chip), 1.5 Mbyte of RAM, and a 68881 floating point math chip. It is so fast, it finishes projects before they have been typed in.

**Constructive Software** has a new \$19.95 IBM PC integrated package with word processor, spreadsheet, and graphics called Fake Software. It does nothing, but loads without trouble and looks impressive.

**Microsoft** has started selling stock. Bill Gates, founder and author of Microsoft BASIC, will retain 49.2% of the shares, with a paper worth of around \$200 million. About 2.5 million shares are up for grabs, priced between \$21 and \$26 per share. Microsoft is not a bad stock bet, with \$58 million in the bank, no debt, and 1985 sales of around \$180 million.

**Tamron**, the photographic lens company, has

a clever new gadget, the Fotovix film video processor. Connected to a TV or VCR, the breadbox-size unit transmits images from slides and negatives over a standard RCA patch cord to the TV for display. Controls on the Fotovix allow images to be moved up and down, rotated and enlarged. If that doesn't impress you, one switch allows color negatives to be displayed on the TV as if they were positive prints. (The same trick is available in black and white.) A joystick allows you to change the tint on slides and negatives, or add color to B&W negatives. None of the local vendors seem to know if Fotovix can be hooked to a computer, or if it will work with an American TV, but on a Japanese Sony Profeel monitor the results are spectacular. All this for just (sigh) ¥278,000.

**Affinity Microsystems** has released **Tempo**, a \$99 program which automates almost everything on a Macintosh. Tempo stores "macros" which can automatically run programs, add information, save the information, print the information -- virtually any task imaginable -- using spreadsheets, word processors, data base programs, telecommunications programs, etc. Tempo should be a big seller if someone comes up with an easy explanation of what it can do.

**Sir Clive Sinclair**, inventor of the pocket TV, one of the first calculators, the C5 battery operated car, and the Timex/Sinclair line of computers, is



out of the computer business. He sold Sinclair Research to arch-rival Amstrad Consumer Electronics for £5 million, in return for which Amstrad will assume the company's £20 million debt. As part of the deal, Sinclair also sold the right to market computers under his own name. **Smalltalk-80**, a very powerful artificial intelligence language, is now available for the IBM PC -- sort of. **Digitalk, Inc.**, is selling **Methods**, a Smalltalk subset, for \$250. You must have a PC or compatible, 512K of memory, and (preferably) a mouse. On the PC AT, **Methods** is "reasonably fast," which when translated means that on a regular PC it is amazingly slow.

**Goodbye**, good old days: **Akihabara Jiyu Jizai '86** is now available for ¥780. This guidebook, in Japanese with English translations, lists over 450 stores in Akihabara. This hardly seems fair to the many veterans who have spent years exploring the rat mazes, but on the good side not everything is translated.

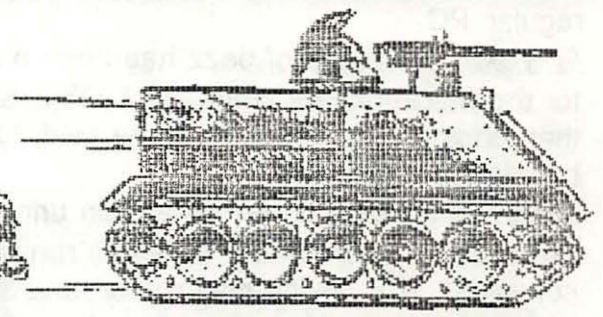
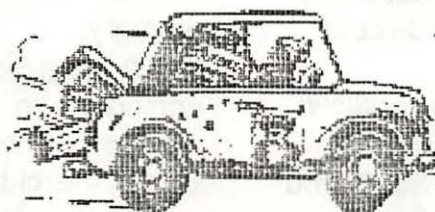
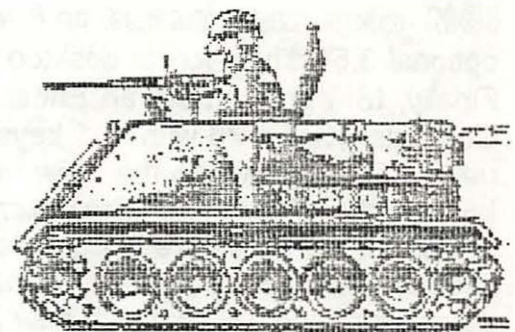
**Japan Travel Bureau**, incidentally, claims almost 400,000 foreign visitors stop by Akihabara every year, more than visit Fuji, and the shops have a gross yearly combined income of over \$4 billion.

**Commodore** has dropped the price of the Amiga to \$1295 until May 31. This price includes

### Apple Macintosh

#### Switcher memory sizes:

Finder 4.1 -- 106K  
 Helix -- 512K  
 Jazz -- 512K  
 MacDraft -- 256K  
 MacDraw -- 128K  
 MacPaint -- 178K  
 MacWrite -- 128K  
 Microsoft Chart -- 192K  
   Excel -- 304K  
   File -- 288K  
   Multiplan -- 160K  
   Word -- 160K  
 Overvue -- 128K  
 PageMaker -- 256K  
 Paint Cutter -- 244K  
 ReadySetGo -- 256K  
 ThinkTank 512 v. 1.2 -- 256K





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These prices are correct: under the new Zenith contract, you can get a Zenith Z-248 with two floppy drives, 512K memory, 80286 CPU running at 8 MHz, two serial and two parallel ports, keyboard, clock/calendar, RGB port and graphics adapter, 200 watt power supply, MSDOS 3.1, GW BASIC, and Microsoft Windows for \$1,103. The same system with a 20 Mbyte hard disk drive is \$1534, and with the hard disk and 1.1 Mbyte of memory the price is \$1658. An RGB monitor is \$302, a monochrome monitor is \$116, MS-COBOL compiler is \$15, etc. Honest.

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the Amiga and RGB monitor. Commodore is also selling a 5.25" drive and software to run IBM PC software; it runs 30-50% slower than on a real PC. IBM's new laptop, the PC Convertible, has been released after years of rumors. It comes with two 720K 3.5" drives, an 80C88 CPU, 256K RAM (expandable to 512K), PC-DOS 3.2, a 25x80 LCD screen, and has a 6-10 hour battery run time. Options include a battery-operated printer, internal modem, battery charger, monochrome and color CRT. The base price is \$1995. It is not 100% IBM PC compatible.

IBM also announced an 8 MHz PC-AT, and optional 3.5" drives for its desktop computers. Finally, IBM brought out an Enhanced Personal Computer Keyboard with 101 keys (instead of usual 83). This will be the "new standard keyboard" for IBM PCs. The return key is still small, but shift keys are in right place, and cursor keys are in separate pad. It has 12 function keys across top, and will ship with new XT and AT machines; it will not be available as upgrade to a regular PC.

A new version of Jazz has been announced for the Macintosh by Lotus, for \$395 - \$200 less than original. One recent review said, "Jazz is best left to musicians."

Atari is working on an expansion unit to allow Atari 520ST and 1040ST series to run IBM PC software. The device may run around \$500, and may include the drive as well as the software. Atari is also planning on shipping a 20 Mbyte hard

disk for the ST series for \$799, starting this month. Puma is marketing a running shoe with a built-in RS-232 port. It records a run, then dumps the results to an Apple IIe, Commodore 64/128, or IBM PC. It calculates time, distance, and calories expended, and compares all this to past performances and future goals. Really.

Not mentioned is exactly how all this works. Puma doesn't mention if the shoe has its own power supply, memory and CPU. If it doesn't, just imagine the fun you can have - and the exercise you'd get - going jogging with your IBM PC in your arms! You could probably get by with just a small monitor, and you might be able to strap the keyboard to the main case. You might want to get a friend to run with you, steadily reeling off the extension cord.

Apple is offering Lisa and Mac XL owners the opportunity to trade their machines for a Mac Plus and HD20 hard disk for \$1500.

Apple has replaced the original 512K Mac with the Mac 512K Enhanced. The "enhanced" Mac has an internal 800K drive and the new 128K ROM, just like the Mac Plus, but does not include the new keyboard, SCSI port, or megabyte of memory.

New regulations governing sales of computers in military exchanges have been drafted by the House Armed Services Committee. Under the old regulations, exchanges could not sell "business computers" or machines made outside the U.S. The new regs allow sale of any

U.S. computer priced \$2000 or less. This may open the door for the Mac Plus, IBM PC clones, and other powerful machines.

Apple is suing Video Technologies over the Laser 128. The Laser is making it through customs (Central Point Software has sold a bundle of them), but Apple is trying to have this stopped, too.

A contribution! One reader (in Europe, no less), with a computer named after an expression used in the game of Go, offers the following:

- A Commodore is a naval officer that understands ships and seas and things of water borne.

- A computer is a device that performs high-speed mathematical calculations and number crunching.

- Naval officers that get wet are called seasoned.

- Computers that get wet are ruined.

- Naval officers do not understand numbers (just ask the GAO).

- Computers use numbers called binary to operate.

- Numbers that get wet are soggy and



useless.

- Therefore a computer that is called commodore is soggy and useless."

The contribution concludes: "[My computer] is not something you eat, [and] is not named after something dead and rank." Included is a picture of a toilet seat featuring a famous logo and the caption: Commode Door. Rebuttals are encouraged.

If you want the latest information on computer technology, try the **Better Homes and Gardens "Kitchen and Bath Ideas"** for Spring, 1986.

Here you can learn all sorts of stuff, such as: "Generally, home computer systems are composed of three units: a TV-like monitor (could even be your TV), a keyboard similar to an electric typewriter's, and a portable cassette tape recorder or shoebox-size box with slots in the face." Note how advanced this machine is - no mention is made of the actual computer, and how many club members can hook shoeboxes with slots in them up to their computers? Also mentioned is the fact that computers (all of them, apparently) weigh "about 35 pounds."

### Ycc586News Pages 2 & 3

This is a very nice RGB monitor, all the enhanced color is 400 color. Screen size approximately 20-25cm very high resolution. Includes menu, which is very handy. The channels are the same as the more expensive monitors of the same size, this isn't recommended to use, as it makes for less than planned.



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Table with 2 columns: Item Name and Price. Includes items like 'Apple II', 'Apple II Plus', 'Apple II X', 'Apple II G', 'Apple II C', 'Apple II S', 'Apple II E', 'Apple II F', 'Apple II H', 'Apple II L', 'Apple II M', 'Apple II N', 'Apple II O', 'Apple II P', 'Apple II Q', 'Apple II R', 'Apple II S', 'Apple II T', 'Apple II U', 'Apple II V', 'Apple II W', 'Apple II X', 'Apple II Y', 'Apple II Z'.

