

THE HALFLING

A NEWSLETTER OF THE FRESNO COMMODORE USER GROUP

HOLIDAY THANKS TO THREE OLD AND DEAR COMPANIONS

Christmas is here, and as I sit here typing on my 128, my companion Muffin sits under me playing with the cables, and yes there have been times when she does manage to pull the plug on the 128, forcing me to say a few choice words to her, but all in all we spend a happy time together.

This last summer thanks to another friend I got a new computer, a Mac. Which someday I plan to have it online, and maybe we'll see color graphics which right now I can't get on my 128. But I hear whispers that a web browser is in the making... hopefully.

But anyway I hardly use my Mac. The graphics are great-spectacular—they take my breath away. But it's speed frustrates me. Waiting for it to open a new file or for the screen to change. I'm use to the IBM's we have at the hospital.

The first time I complained about it's speed, I had to laugh to myself. A friend asked me how come I wasn't using the "new" computer, and I found myself telling her that it was too slow. I laughed at myself. Told myself how stupid, and reminded myself that the 128 was even slower.

But it never frustrates me.

Maybe because we have grown accustomed to each other. Its like a marriage of sorts. After 40 years the husband and wife are accustomed to each other—even bad habits.

So as I type in LOAD "*",8,1 and hit return, I'm thinking of what to snack on. As soon as I'm done typing I get up and start getting my snack. I start the popcorn in the microwave or bring out the bread and peanut butter. Then I stop, go back into the office and it's ready. I type in RUN and hit return and I go back into the kitchen to finish fixing my snack and get a coke. As I enter the office, I set the coke down, put my sandwich or popcorn on top of the disk drive and I am ready! The program is loaded and I got my food! These are our bad habits. My 128 is slow and I eat. We have grown to

compensate for each others faults. Besides the Mac takes up too much space. The whole desk. I barely have room to put my coke down. The 128D has all that "tabletop" room on top of the disk drive. Hide and flat. The surface is perfect for my lil' picnic. (WARNING: do NOT put your coke there!! Sandwiches, popcorn, chips, etc. are okay. But NO cokes! NO liquids!)

But anyway, my preference for my 128, I think has to do with devotion, love, and growing old together.

It has been 7 or 8 years since Muffin my cat caught a bluebird or brought home a gopher. She rather sleep underneath the sago palms these days.

I can recall when I use to be able to watch an entire movie on TV or read half a book or more at one sitting. Now I find myself waking up an hour or so later—the movie done ended or my book fallen on the carpet out of my hands.

I recall the day I bought my car. 1982. It only had 9 miles. Brand new. Shiny like a new penny. Now it has 116,000 miles on it. But it has been there for me—it brought my 128 home in the back from Toys R' us in '85 or '86. It has carried Muffin back and forth from the vet, and it has taken me wherever I wanted to go. Like my 128 it has entertained me and helped me through good and bad all these years.

So, this holiday season, I would like to give thanks for my cat and my car and my commodore, all which have been here for me through loneliness, depression, health—good & bad, and have even helped me say goodbye to family and friends over the years.

I take time out now to say thank you to them, my 3 friends.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

The sig group for January was cancelled due to the lack of interest. Updates for new schedules of classes will be discussed at the February Meeting.

More member participation is urged.

PRESIDENT ROBERT RE-ELECTED!!!

Ha-Ha-Ha!! Rah-Rah-Rah!!!! Do the Red Wave!!!
Oops, sorry, I got carried away. I thought I
was at a Bulldog game there for a minute.



Robert's
reaction
upon hearing
his re-election
for another
term

Doing the Red Wave that is, not the winning. .
. oops again, must not talk bad about our
own Bulldogs. Shame, shame.

Anyway, you have re-elected Robert for
another year. Which is very good. After all, I
voted for him, too. BUT I want you to know
that I (in french) only lost by 3 votes. Yes,
you heard right 3 votes. Hmmm, kinda
scary, huh? I might have to start acting like
Hillary, this coming year, instead of Al Gore,
so that I will be disliked, then I won't have to
worry about being elected. Hmmm.

President Robert was out of town attending
a class for those of you who didn't know
because you missed last month's meeting.
Anyway, I get a call in the first part of the
week from him, and of course, he's trying to
be real cool about it. Asks "how did the
meeting go?" You know, the concerned
President wondering how his flock did
without him. I wait. And wait some more
before returning his call. About the middle
of the week, he calls again. I'm sitting in my
recliner listening to the messages on my
machine, smiling to myself, because he wants
to know "am I still President or not?" I knew
that was what he wanted to know in the
first place. I decide to wait. Again. (Yes, my
fellow Commodoreans, I have an evil streak
in me. I confess.)

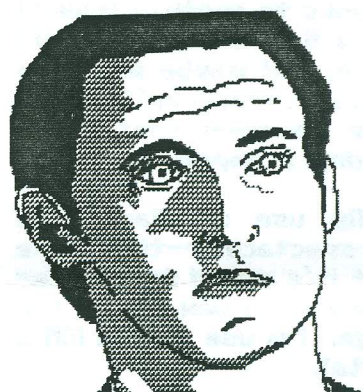
Not to get off the subject, but as I was
typing this out right now, I realized
something. The sentence 'my fellow
Commodoreans', that is a great word.
Commodoreans. I wonder why Gene
Roddenberry never used it. He was a genius,

but not a total genius, or he would have
stumbled on it. I mean, can you imagine a
Star Trek episode. . .

"Captain, Captain," shouts Number 1.
"Yes, Number 1", answers Capt. Picard.
"We are approaching Planet Commodore, in
the 64th Galaxy, of the 128th quadrant."
"Proceed, Number 1. Lt. Warf assemble an
Away Team, and let us prepare to meet with
the Commodoreans."

I think it sounds great. Its right up there
with the Kardashians, Killingtons, Farenghis,
and Volkans.

Too bad Roddenberry lost out on a great
idea.



Oh, well, now
where was I?
What was I
talking about?
Oh, yeah, the
election. I look
forward to
another great
and rewarding
year with the
club. And I did
congratulate
Robert on his
win, after all
that. CONGRATULATIONS, President Robert!!!

DECEMBER-YEAR END MEET

Well, our meeting was small. I think it was a
combination of the holiday rush, and it
seems as if whenever President Robert is
not presiding lots of members play hookey.
If I wasn't a strong, self confident kinda gal I
would take offense. But no offense taken.

In fact I like the smaller unstructured type
of meeting. As it is I am always nervous
conducting these meetings when the big guy
isn't around. Actually I think he is kinda
nervous himself leaving me in charge. He
always goes over the agenda with me
several times. Then afterwards, when I am
reporting back to him (yes, he does require
a report, must be the teacher in him), I
always seem to watch him sit there and
shake his head at least twice during the
report.

Anyway, the Disk of the Month was demoed
by Ralph Parrott, who is another one of our

DECEMBER-YEAR END MEET

outstanding members who I would like to say a big THANK YOU to because he puts up with all my madnnesses and hair brain ideas. He is also our past president, among many other positions that he has held within our club.

I like to also thank his wife, Reba, who graciously puts up with my many frantic phone calls, and frequent visits.

Ralph says he is retired, from his newspaper job, and also from the club. (as President) But I want you all to know that he does more than ten retired persons together. Especially for the club.

The D.O.M. for December was the xmas disk. Which contains as you guessed xmas music. A brief description of it can be found elsewhere in this newsletter.

Old Business---there was no old business, that I recall, except of course the election. Ballots were printed up and passed out to all attending members. Del Contreras and Chester Sohm did us the honors of counting them.

This was an important meeting, you know, as Americans we should all be used to voting. We should all make time to come and vote whether it is a political election or club election. Or a long awaited recall movement against that HORRIBLE mayor. For lack of a better word---this is a family publication after all. Oh, sorry, got side tracked again. Leave the mayor alone, Helen.

Anyway, I could tell it was an important meeting because Merrie Hudson from Squaw Valley showed up! And she doesnt show up too often, except maybe to pay her dues. I am always glad to see her. She even went and had lunch with the group of us after the meeting. Merrie needs help setting up her printer, and I guess after the snow melts (I think theres snow up there, only ice and fog down here) we need to help her with this.

There was also some information passed around on two people who were selling commodore stuff. No one said they were interested, but if you would like the information--name & number--just ask me or President Robert at the next meet or call us. President Robert will be contacting one of the persons to ask if he maybe would be interested in selling it piece by piece instead of as a package deal.

Our ad in the Thrifty Nickel has also been renewed for this month of December. We will discuss about further renewals, I guess at our next meeting.

Everyone seemed happy and having no computer problems since our question & answer period was about 5 seconds long. Which I guess is good. We have a lot of knowledgeable members in our club, I for one am grateful to know. Because us younger members, (yes, fellow Commodoreans, I am still only 21), need to rely on you for your knowledge and guidance.

Dick Estel demoed our Disk of the Quarter. You know I hadnt realized until right now that Dick also did last month's demo, on the Handyscanner, remember? This is why I try to always mention people and say thanks. Two months in a row. I hadnt realized this, and he never mentioned it. He could have told me when I asked him, "I already did it last month", but no, he told me "sure, okay". Thank you Dick, I hope you had a great Christmas, and I promise not to take you for granted this coming year.

The description of the Disk of the Quarter can also be found elsewhere in this newsletter. As you know, or dont know, these disks are put together by President Robert for you. A thank you goes out to him also.

Next we had our raffle, which Dick conducted for us. Which reminds me I havent updated the member disk yet, and the meeting is on Saturday! Yee, gads, for Christmas all I wanted was to quit being a procrastinator, become more organized and get things done on time! But I guess I was bad this year because I didnt get these things---Santa flew right over my house---laughing, thinking "she wishes. . ." So I will struggle along for another year like this.

Various prizes were won from software to hardware by lucky members who had winning tickets. The \$\$\$\$ of the month was won by Ralph Parrott. (didnt he update the member disk last time, hmmm). Just a thought. Our very own Secretary/Treasurer Zella Hallard was the first to win, so she is the lucky one to do the D.O.M. for next month. Also, I almost forgot (for shame on me) Zella was re-elected as our Secretary-Treasurer during the election. CONGRATULATIONS!! How could I forget! Such a great job that she does, and she also belongs on our Top Ten List of members!

DECEMBER-YEAR END MEET

Several members brought stuff to sell/trade or just give away. The club wishes to thank Ben Briscoe for donating last months printer that was raffled off, and for this months donations of an Okimate 20 color printer, interface, minimodem, and various software.

Also, the club voted to give Doug, (one of our technicians) a 64 computer & 1541 drive for the use of parts.

So, after all this, some coffee and donuts our meeting was adjourned.

EDITORS RAMBLINGS

First of all, I want to apologize for this newsletter being late. As you can see it is a double issue this time, though I didnt really say how often it would be published I had hoped it to be on a monthly basis. There still might be hope, but not this month, since the January meeting is just a few days away.

I have no valid reason, except the usual--procrastination and not making good use of free time. And a few personal upheavels along the way.

But its like what the Morton Salt box says--when it rains it pours. Not only it being the holidays when we are all extra busy, I had a few little upheavels like I mentioned earlier.

After about 15 years of being single and living alone (my daughter married in '81 and moved out), I find myself being aunt/mother again. Over the holidays I received custody of two teenage nieces, for how long, who knows. So my routine is a mess. Adjusting to living with two other people in the house I am finding is tenseful, for a person like me, who enjoys solitude and quiet times.

Besides I was used to sharing my house with a cat & a goldfish only. On top of all this, my car broke down (the alternator), so I had to deal with that, after all, I needed it by Saturday, to tote our equipment to the meeting. The awful part was that it decided to break down outside my doctors office, when I was running a temperature of 103.1 degrees. (NEWSFLASH: our computers dont have the degree symbol -- come to think

ofit--does any computer have a degree symbol?)

Enough sniveling, here I am FINALLY working on our newsletter, though I am still sick from the bronchitis.

So like I mentioned earlier this will be a double issue. I will try not to confuse you with the updates & minutes, since a lot of this will be about two meetings instead of one. Hopefully by next month this newsletter will be back to normal. I hope I will be back to normal!

DISK OF THE MONTH

--DECEMBER CHRISTMAS MUSIC--

Side 1

1. Twisted Christmas = various Christmas songs with graphics

2. Popples = a childrens christmas adventure with graphics and songs and words, a couple of games also

Side 2

A Xmas Album = christmas music with graphics

One of my favorite is Here Comes Santa Claus and watching Mr. and Mrs. Claus dance to the tune. Listening to these disks made me want to do xmas all over. I thought "can we do xmas over again?" I myself had a lousy one--home alone--sick in bed. Too bad life isnt like a VCR where we can push the rewind button whenever we want or fast forward for those not too memorable moments in life. Oh, well back to the DOMS.

Huggy = Childrens story

DISK OF THE MONTH (2)

-----MORE CHRISTMAS MUSIC-----

Side 1

1. Jingle tunes = holiday rhymes, tunes & graphics

Side 2

1. Holiday Greetings = make a holiday card

GEOS SIG GROUP NEWS

There will be a GEOS Sig Group meeting on February 7th right after the regular meeting. Which will probably be about 1 p.m. at my house. For those of you interested it will be announced again during the meeting,



and I will provide maps on how to get over here.

Before the holidays we were learning Geowrite, but I'm not sure what part of Geos we will be learning this time. I asked one of the Geo Professors and they are being mysterious about it. Hmmm...

JANUARY MEET NEWS

Well, what can I tell you about this meeting??? Presidente Robert was here, but not Dick!

There was no old business to report on. Its usually that way, you know. I wonder if it has to do with no one remembering if there was any business carried over from the previous meeting. I know I am the unofficial note taker, but as note takers go I do get distracted from time to time.

The new business was that Dick was not here. That is to attend the meeting but he did stop by before it to drop off a bunch of stuff for various people.

Also, we didn't have a Disk of the Month demo this time because of scheduling problems so that demo will be done during our next meeting which will be February 7, by Calla. Instead President Robert re-demoed the Winter Quarter disk again more intensely. The one with all the May files on it. He gets all of this stuff from the Internet. You realize how some people are

hooked on soap operas, or football games he is hooked online.

Someone informed the group that Loadstar 128 will cease publication with issue #40. Don't panic! That is just the 128 version, the 64 version will continue.

During our Question & Answer period there was just one by Ralph who is looking for a printer driver for a Gemini 10 to work on Geos. So if anyone knows or has one give Ralph a call. I'm not sure if he is still looking for one as of this week because ole Ralph went and got himself a brand new Bubblejet printer. Hmmm. I, myself am jealous. It sure makes Geos look real good. Only drawback so far is that it runs out of ink fast. But anyway you might just give him a call or corner him at our next meeting, because he might still need it because he has more than one system hooked up.

Our raffle didnt go very smooth due to Dick forgetting to drop off the raffle tickets before leaving. But I guess we can excuse one little mistake from him from time to time. So we used scraps of paper with the numbers written on them, and still had our raffle. Raffle prizes were as usual various types of software & some hardware. Sandy won the minimodem, and Bill Gilbert got the Cardco interface. Dell, Ralph and myself we were all generous enough to give our prizes to Matthew, Les Crites grandson, who has just starting out on his computer, and as far as I know is the youngest Commodorean.

The \$\$\$\$ of the month went to Sandy Dippollet, due to Silvano & Betty Vasquez not being present. Shame, shame, you two lost out on some money. But congratulations to Sandy!

After all these strenuous and mind-boggling activities, we decided to take a break. My favorite part of the meeting. Not to say that I don't enjoy the WHOLE meeting. In fact I don't think I have missed a single one since joining. I think that was about 3 years ago now. In school, my favorite part was recess also. But during break is when everyone can chit-chat with each other, browse through newsletters, magazines, the library disks & put in orders, and usually various software & hardware for sale or trade. And there is always coffee, tea chocolate and DONUTS!

The Demo of the Month was done by Robert. He brought in the Voice Messenger for the 64, to show because he really couldn't demo it too good because he said he needed a 13"

JANUARY MEET NEWS

T.V. set. I believe he will be continuing this demo at our next meeting, because I offered to bring in my little 13" t.v. for him to use. But he did demo the Voice Master, a speech and music processor, which plugs into the joystick port, and comes with a headset and microphone. It kinda like a voice recognition thing that OTHER computers have (I dont want to mention no names). I'm not exactly sure. I'm researching this. I put in a call to Robert to get a lil more info on it to put in here for you. But it is already 6 p.m. and he hasnt called back. Maybe he had a meeting after school, but more likely he got home from school, HAD to check his e-mail (online junkie, remember), and then he will return my call. So-o-o, when he does I will let you know more about this gadget of his. He also brought in a Digimaster which, he informs me captures sounds and saves them and then plays them back under 8 bits.

From our Thrifty Ad advertisement we got two calls. One person has a full set of Bible disks, I guess its the whole Bible, and they are willing to give it away free to anyone who may want it.

The other call was from someone in Tulare who is looking for any Indiana Jones games. Robert has more info on these two people so if you want the Bible set or have any Indiana Jones games you may no longer want or need, ask Robert for the information.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

The board meeting is usually held, when one is needed, right after our regular meeting, and it is open to all members who would like to seat in and listen.

Two new members were added--Sandy Dippollet, who is one of our past Presidents, and past Interface Editor, among alot of other duties. Like taking care of and updating our mailing list. The other new member is Ralph Parrott, who also is one of our past Presidents, and is a regular contributor to the Interface, and also deals with programs.

The board also will decide the next time it convenes as to whether to continue our Thrifty Ad and Fresno Bee advertisements. I myself feel that there is a need to look at

another means of spreading the word to the general public that we are still here. I have been lax in spreading around our flyers the last couple months but I will make an effort to put them out this week or next. Plus I will print more out for anyone in the club that would like to take some to pass out.

Also, Ralph is printing up more labels that we use to stick on Commodore hardware we encounter in yard sales or thrift stores. I do anyway. Its just a lil sticker that says something to the effect "need computer help? call . . ." and a phone number is listed. This way whoever happens to buy it will have our club number for help.

It was also discussed that someone was to check with the local Chamber of Commerce for a list of organizations and clubs and see if our club is listed and if not, how we can go about getting ourselves listed.

All this will probably be discussed at our next meeting under new business or we will have another board meeting after the regular one.

TIDBITS AND GOODIES

MEMBER ALERT # 2: Dick has donated a box of disks of other clubs D.O.M.'S. he thinks would be a good idea for someone to volunteer and browse through these, and select programs we can use for future D.O.M.s of our own.

LATE BREAKING NEWS

EXTRA!! EXTRA!! EXTRA!!

I have been given privileged information as of five minutes ago, and like the trusty & faithful news reporter that I am I ran all the way back to my computer to relate these late breaking news to all of you. . .
DICK ESTEL is not quitting as Editor of the Interface in August!!! I repeat is not quitting!!!!GREAT NEWS!!!!

Many Thanks to our contributors: Helen Silvas, Editor
FCUG, (who without you this newsletter would not be possible.

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