



## THE EDITOR'S GODZILLA

by Lenard R. Roach

### THE RISE AND FALL OF SOOCU

Things seemed to be floundering at the Commodore Users Group of Kansas City. A few offices needed to be filled on the board, one of which was newsletter editor. With my prior record of success with breathing a little "life" into our paper and unknowingly helping other clubs as well through reprint in the process I thought I would be nominated right after The Elder gave up newsletter duties, but alas, I was walked over time and time again. Needless to say I was getting pretty hurt, so much so that, in my hurt, I decided that I would go out on a limb and create my own newsletter and then present it to the CUGKC and show them that, not only was I a good writer, but an excellent newsletter editor as well.

When I got home from a club meeting one Wednesday night, I immediately sat down at the Commodore, booted my copy of The Newsroom, and started to work on issue one. I was blessed to have in my arsenal a plethora of newsletter column ideas and stories like I Live With A Commodore Nut and The Magazine Review along with featurettes that, under the rush of sheer power itself, I had the first issue done in less a month and ready for presentation at the next club meeting.

But, before I introduced the newsletter to the club, I couldn't call it after the club's title of their paper, RYTE Bytes, so I had to come up with a new title. After careful consideration I decided on The Secret Organization of Commodore Users or SOOCU for short. I brought SOOCU to the CUGKC for their blessing.

The CUGKC didn't receive the paper very well, considering it a direct competition with RYTE Bytes. Anger mixed with some unmitigated gall filled my soul, so much so that I set out solo from the CUGKC to create a mail order "club" where we would swap newsletters for a fee.

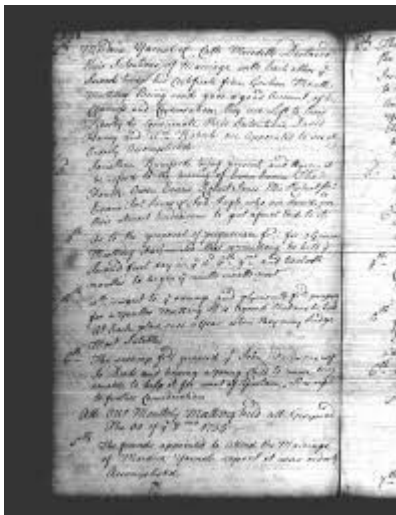
The first thing I did was get on the Internet and download a list of all the clubs in the United States and Canada, print it off, and mailed each one a copy. To my dismay, about 80% of my requests came back as Return To Sender. A handful responded positively, and only one sent me a scathing letter telling me my newsletter was a "piece of \*\*\*\*" and don't send any more, which I didn't. As usual, I wrote with my own style of humor and those who enjoyed it couldn't wait for more. However, I started to run out of content and subscriptions started falling off in about two years due to clubs closing at the turn into the 21st century. Soon I was left with no means, a broken heart, and a frustrated spirit. By 2004, I closed the doors on SOOCU and, with my hat in my hands, went back to the CUGKC, who graciously accepted me back in the fold and I got the position of newsletter editor when votes for officers came up in December.

A lot was learned during my tenure with SOOCU and RYTE Bytes. The first thing I learned was this cannot be a solo adventure; you need some help. Half way through SOOCU's life, my wife saw I was more interested in content and less on structure, so she decided that she should be my editor, and we corralled my youngest son into becoming Clip Art editor (my oldest son was too involved in other activities to help). The wife

cleaned up a lot of my redneck jargon and made the paper a more pleasant read for all ages.

I also started a new Commodore Christmas novel in the magazine trying to make it more into the style of a Perry Mason mystery which I never received neither good nor bad comments on same. I almost finished the book but was cut short by the demise of the magazine.

Structure was also a big factor that I learned and I am still learning more about every time I sit down at the keyboard. The people at the club are teaching me more all the time on how things should be done and how to avoid repeating mistakes. FresnoDick was a former editor of The Interface so he is showing me a few tricks that make work easier on a person, I appreciate all the help that people give me on the paper to make The Interface a great paper.



### MONTHLY MEETING REPORTS

by Robert Bernardo & Dick Estel

MAY 2019

We met for the second time at our new location, Panera Bread Restaurant on West Shaw Ave. in

Fresno. Robert had come from Stockton, and though he had left early from that city, he had to pick up Roger who had no ride. Even so, they were able to arrive a bit early and set up the club equipment.

Because the weather was cool and there was a nice breeze, this time we met in the covered patio, and we were free to spread out our equipment over several tables. In attendance were Robert, Roger, David, and Brad.

Robert gave a report on the April Commodore Los Angeles Super Show. The show was a success with about 40 attendees, good presentations and exhibits, and a lot of enthusiasm for the venue, Toolbox LA in Chatsworth. Most importantly, the show made back its cost with a little bit of money left over.

The next event would be the May 17-19 Bay Area Maker Faire in San Mateo, and Robert intends to exhibit only two systems – an Amiga CD32 and the Ultimate 64 -- to that show. For backup, he will bring an Amiga 600 system. He will leave the rest of the Commodore hardware and software in his station wagon for the June 8-9 Pacific Commodore Expo NW in Seattle.

The big topic of software discussion was Super Mario 64, which had only been released a few days before our meeting. The programmer had worked on it 7 years, porting it from the Super Nintendo version. He then uploaded it to various websites so that people could download it for free. When Nintendo found out about the program, the company started sending cease-and-desist orders to those websites that carried the game. The game was erased off those sites; however, with some digging, a user can still find the game on-line!

Roger and David knew nothing of the furor. However, Brad had brought a disk copy of Super Mario 64, and that was run on the club C128.

Robert also had his copy of SM 64, and that was run on his Ultimate 64 which had been upgraded to firmware v1.10. There it was, the game being run on 2 screens at the same time! Roger got behind one of the computers. With the game in his expert gaming hands, he noted that it was extremely accurate to the arcade version, even down to the hidden world.

Naturally, all this gaming brought out the interest of others sitting in the patio, especially from one little girl (Destiny?). She was very bright and inquisitive. She played with SM 64 for quite awhile, and afterwards, she kept asking for more and different games to play. Because the U64 was set up with a lot of games on its SD card, Robert had her play from that computer. Meantime, the two women that had brought her were content to continue talking with each other.

All the time was taken up with the games, and there was none left over for VIC-20 or Amiga software. Those computers would have to wait for another meeting.

## JUNE 2019

For the most part, the usual suspects showed up for the June meeting. Dick made what is becoming a rare appearance, his first since February and his first at the new location of Panera Bread Restaurant. Also present were Robert, Roger, Dave, and Randy. Dick observed that the new venue has a lot going for it, and he enjoyed the healthier food available at Panera Bread.

It's the season of shows, and Robert hasn't missed very many. He was at a William Shatner Weekend recently, and as usual got "Bill" to autograph a couple pieces of Commodore equipment – a VIC-1525 printer and an Amiga 600. In early June Robert and his big station wagon battled the steep mountains of Oregon, en route to the third annual Pacific Commodore Expo NW at the Living

Computers: Museum + Labs in Seattle. Robert wisely took three days each way for this 2,000 mile round trip journey, and he and the vehicle both arrived safely, with stops in both directions to drop off and pick up equipment at Ray Carlsen's repair depot in southern Washington.

Attendance was down slightly at this expo, attributed to the fact that the weather was nice and people were taking advantage of the rare opportunity to be outside. Still there were nearly 100 people going through the museum on Saturday and maybe 60 on Sunday.

Now Robert is getting ready for a trip to Las Vegas, first for the Creation Star Trek Convention and then for the final edition of CommVEx at the Plaza Hotel and Casino, August 10 and 11.

Robert attended the recent Maker Faire in the Bay Area, where he saw and captured on film quick shots of a few Commodore luminaries – Leonard Tramiel, son of Commodore founder Jack Tramiel; Bill Seiler, Commodore engineer; and Jeri Ellsworth, who is developing augmented reality (AR) goggles for gaming. This turned out to be the final "big" Maker Faire, but a one-day event will continue in downtown Los Angeles.

As many of our readers know, Robert has a lot of Commodore equipment – in every room in his house, in a house that his mother owns in Stockton, and of course, in his vehicles. The house in Stockton has to be cleared out so it can be rented, which has led Robert to order a big 10 x 16 storage shed for his yard. While awaiting assembly, he has been forced to rent a storage unit in Stockton, so he gets to move that stuff twice. We encouraged him to take inventory and store everything in an organized manner. We concluded several years ago that he needs an intern to help with this task. Any volunteers?

After lunch, the presentations began. Robert connected the Tech Sketch Music Port keyboard

to the club C128 and ran the software. The Music Port was the hit of the Commodore Los Angeles Super Show and the Pacific Commodore Expo NW, and Robert showed off new features of the software that he had learned at those shows. It was very sophisticated software which allows the user to choose instruments, to create custom sounds, and to record compositions.

Robert had recently picked up a collection of Commodore equipment and software from the San Diego area. He had given away most of that collection to the members of the Southern California Commodore & Amiga Network. However, he kept one item – the classic Zoomer flight controller/steering wheel which connects to the joystick port. He found out that the Zoomer worked better as a steering wheel than as a flight controller, and so, the Pole Position driving game was loaded up from Roger's SD2IEC drive. The game worked very well with the Zoomer.

The Ultimate 64 was connected, and Super Mario 64 was loaded up. Randy tried out that combination for awhile, and afterwards, some SID music was played on the U64 so that the UltiSIDs in the machine could be compared to the original SID sound.

Finally, the Shatner-autographed Amiga 600 was connected, and Robert ran the game, Battle Squadron, which was popular at CLASS and PaCommEx. Roger commented that the game was true to the arcade version of Battle Squadron.



## PACOMMEX 2019 SHOW

by Robert Bernardo

97 people came to the museum on Saturday, June 9, and almost all had to go through our PaCommEx exhibits on the way to the second floor. About 20 were in attendance for Eric Hill's excellent and comprehensive presentations on the Amiga 1000 Development System and the "new" Commodore 64's (Reloaded and Ultimate). I think Eric gained a number of new members for the Seattle Commodore Computer Club. The C64 raffle prize went to a nice lady who was very happy to receive it!

With the longer museum hours ('til 6 p.m.), PaCommEx ran longer, which meant I also had to stay longer, too.

In the late afternoon, Justin of the Living Computers: Museum + Labs conquered a song on the C64 (Ultimate 64) with the HardSync program, PSX64 adapter, and Playstation dancepad. His dance went on for 4+ minutes, but only the conclusion of his dance was filmed and posted to Youtube.

Some expected exhibitors did not show - Gordon Steemson from the Seattle Retro-Computing Society and Ryan Sherwood from the Puget Sound Commodore User Group. However, Christian Stich did exhibit for a few hours, and

he had the rare Dynalogue Hyperion MS-DOS machine from Commodore! It came out before the Amiga 1000 introduction in 1985.

There were a number of hardware failures -- the Plus/4 that I picked up from Ray Carlsen on Friday lost all video, an Amiga mouse stopped working (bad left button), and the PSX64 board stopped working after awhile (enough for some to enjoy the HardSync dancepad program but not for Shredz64 on the Playstation 2 guitar). One success... while I was away, somebody managed to fix the video display problems on the Amiga 2000 with Video Toaster. The VT now was displaying correctly on video input and preview output.

On Sunday, June 9, I arrived one hour early in order to get all the computers going and rearrange the chairs/tables/cables/devices. Like on Saturday, it was slow going when the museum opened but became busier during the early afternoon. I had left extra table space for my friends (mentioned above) who were to bring their computer systems over, but they never showed up. Nevertheless, Kai (sp?) from the Seattle Retro-Computing Society and Ben (I think that was his name) from the Puget Sound Commodore User Group showed up, and I thanked them for their support.

The Commodore video started an hour late, because the lab set-up wouldn't recognize my laptop, and when the switch was made to a museum laptop, the controls and audio had to be set (museum people trying over and over to make their system work). Finally, they got their system going, and I showed the video taken at the Commodore Los Angeles Super Show, "Marc Rifkin of Commodore Business Machines." Yes, the PaCommEx website said that the video of Roger Van Pelt and the Giga-CAD program for the C64 would be shown, but it wasn't not ready.

The crowd watching the video were very patient, and at the one-hour mark, I stopped the video so

that the drawing for the VIC-20 could be done. A young adult man won the computer, but before I let him have it, I had to test it out quickly. I plugged it in, and no screen was displayed! I thought quickly, and the C64C that had been running that day (it was a replacement for the Plus/4 that burned out on Saturday) was given to him. He seemed very satisfied with the replacement!

As mentioned in my Saturday summary, the PSX64 adapter had failed, though its 12V power supply tested out fine. Without the PSX64, I couldn't run Shredz64 with the Guitar Hero guitar nor the HardSync program with the Playstation dancepad. Yeah, people wanted to try those on Sunday. Sorry!

However, the Tech Sketch Music Port keyboard worked fine with the other C64C on exhibit, and I was given some instruction on its use by others who knew musical keyboards and music theory. They even showed me that the program had a type of "auto-tuning", i.e., hit a wrong chord note and the program would correct it! Thanks for the instruction!

Since some kind soul had fixed the display on the Amiga 2000 Video Toaster on Saturday, the attendees could play with the controls of the VT, and I could tell them about what VT did back in the day.

At the end of the day, I had to tear down everything very quickly, because the museum people wanted to leave quickly. With their help, the station wagon was reloaded with all the Commodore and Amiga gear in about 2 hours. After dinner at a Hawaiian barbecue restaurant in Burlien, Washington (next door to Seatac where I was staying), I went back to my hotel and slept for 10 hours! I must have been exhausted.

That Monday I took it easy. Using the Link light rail service, I went to the trendy Capitol Hill area

of Seattle to meet a friend for a late lunch/early dinner at Cocina and Bar Santiago.

Tuesday I started the long, multi-day drive back to California.

# NEXT ISSUE

Thank You For Everyone's Help And Patience As I Slowly Got It Together And We Now Are Caught Up On Issues Of The Interface. However Due To CommVEx Being In The Same Month As The July/August Issue Would Be Released, We Are Most Likely To Put Off Bringing Out That Issue In Either Late August Or Early September. As Your Editor I Wish All Attendees Good Fun And Great Learning As You Enjoy The Last Show In The Las Vegas Area. Skoal!

## Club Officers

### >>--> Officers and Keypersons <--<<

President .....	Robert Bernardo
Vice-president .....	Roger Van Pelt
Secretary/Treasurer .....	Dick Estel
The Interface Editor .....	Lenard Roach
Librarian .....	Dick Estel
Club equipment .....	Roger Van Pelt
Meeting place reservation .....	Dick Estel

### -The Small Print-

The Fresno Commodore User Group is a club whose members share an interest in Commodore 8-bit and Amiga computers. Our mailing address is 185 W. Pilgrim Lane, Clovis, CA 93612. We

meet monthly in the meeting room of Bobby Salazar's Restaurant, 2839 North Blackstone Ave., Fresno, CA. The meetings generally include demonstrations, discussion, and individual help.

Dues are \$12 for 12 months. New members receive a "New Member Disk" containing a number of useful Commodore 8-bit utilities. Members receive a subscription to The Interface newsletter, access to the public domain disk library, technical assistance, and reduced prices on selected software/hardware.

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