

CoCo~123

Fest Report Edition



July 1998 Volume XVIII Number 3

The Glenside Color Computer Club

A Glenside Publication since 1985
Your Voice in the CoCo Community

The President's /term by: Mike Knudsen

This will be my last /TERM. We have a new President (way to go, Brian!) and I will be moving to Bath, Maine at the end of the summer if all goes well.

I don't know how long I've been in the Club -- but I must have joined shortly after getting my grey case Coco I back in November '82. I still have that machine! It has more memory than it came with (64K versus 16) -- and I certainly have a lot more memories of this Club, its wonderful members, and all the great things we've done together since those glory days.

I'll maintain a remote membership from Maine, and get the Coco-123, and get back on the Coco Mailing List via some kind of ISP (have to pay for it now, shucks). And since we all are nostalgic for the days of 8-bit computing power, let me remind you that the whole state of Maine is on ONE area code (207)! Now that's nostalgia for us Chicagolandians.

I just checked my calendar and it appears I can make the June meeting. Please, someone remind me to bring Ed Hathaway's notorious Electronic Gavel for Brian to bleep at the podium to call the meeting to order (or to hand to Tony, nobody does it better).

I'll try to bring some Coco stuff to give away then. But I'm keeping my Coco 3 and MM/1 systems -- gotta keep that UltiMusE up to date on RTSI.COM.

Farewell and Godspeed. The Coco remains unsinkable as long as we all keep rowing.

Your ex-Prez but never ex-friend,

Mike Knudsen

The President's /term by: Brian Goers

The Election for Glenside Club officers has come and gone and I am the next President. As Tony Podraza led the proceedings I heard comments about a distant Train whistle and a railroad, but there was no such thing. I accepted the nomination happily but somewhat hesitantly.

I won't do the work per say, but will lead and not be in the way by trying to do everything myself. That just won't work. This is our Club not mine.

I am not sure how long I've been a member of this club but it's safe to say it has been awhile. There was one year my other club (now defunk) help in booth that Glenside had at a Rainbowfest.

More about our Fest in a minute. First a little background about myself.

I work in the electronics field called Metrology. It doesn't have anything to do with weather. This deals with repair, calibration and certification electronic test equipment. That includes but is not limited to Fluke DMM, Simpson 260, Simpson TS-111, Etc., just to give you an idea.

The next "Last" Annual CoCo Fest planning has already started. The Eighth Annual "Last" CoCoFest! is being planned. You read it twice so you can believe it.

If you have something that you want to add, change, have a comment about, etc. you can reach me by email (bgoers@ais.net), I will be sure that the planning committee knows it. I would like to know from people that could not make it, what stopped you from attending. Was it a bad weekend for you, would another weekend been better, Why? Should other small computer users be invited. I am thinking of the Apples, Commodores, Atari, etc. How about earlier in the year? Or later in the year? I would like to know so tell me. These things are included in the planning.

CoCo~123 Information

The Glenside Color Computer Club, Inc. is a non-profit organization whose members share an interest in the Tandy Color Computer ®. The CoCo~123 is the official newsletter of the Glenside Color Computer Club, Inc. (hereafter known as GCCC). GCCC has no affiliation with Radio Shack ® and / or the Tandy Corporation®. The opinions of the authors of the articles contained within this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Editor, the Executive Officers, or the actual Club Membership.

We are committed to publishing a minimum of four issues and a maximum of 12 issues per calendar year. For a fee of \$15.00, for January through December, you may become a GCCC member with full membership privileges. Send your dues to:

George Schneeweiss
13450 N 2700E RD
Forrest, IL 61741-9629

CoCo~123 Contributions

If you would like to submit an article for publication in the CoCo~123 you may upload it to one of the Club BBS's or send it directly on a disk to:

Carl Boll
6242 S. Menard Ave.
Chicago, IL 60638

.. The following formats are acceptable:

RS-DOS - 5 1/4" disk

OS-9 - 5 1/4" disk

MS-DOS - 5 1/4" or 3 1/2" disk

Email: coco123@chicoco.chi.il.us

All articles should be in straight ASCII format, not specialized word processing formats to facilitate importation into the newsletter.

Advertising is also accepted. If you are a vendor you may send an ad to the previous address. All ads should be "camera ready"* art. Please limit the size of your ad to 1/4 page. If you wish you may submit your ad on a disk in the following graphical formats:

JPEG, GIF, BMP, WPG

Reprint Policy

If you or your club / user group desire to reprint any articles in part or in whole that appear in the CoCo~123 you may do so under the following guidelines:

1. Provide credit to the Author of said article
2. Provide credit to the CoCo~123

We encourage others to copy these articles and the newsletter and distribute it at you regular meetings.

Glenside Club Meetings

The GCCC meets every second Thursday of the month from 7:30PM to 10:00PM at the Glendale Heights Library. A social get-together always occurs after the meeting at a local restaurant.

Newsletter Exchange

The GCCC is happy to exchange newsletters with other clubs / user groups at no charge. Please send your newsletters to:

Dennis Devitt
21 W 144 Canary Rd
Lombard, IL 60148

These are your BBS's. Please support them.

Glenside's Cup of CoCo
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Glenside's Officers

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or bod@chicoco.chi.il.us

Not even a prototype, it was THE board that you would receive. The discussion about the board I will leave to Carl.

I will leave you with this true story. At the last meeting the club secretary asked me for my street address (It's a long name) . I told him and he said spell that for me. So I said T-H-A-T and he wrote it down not realizing what I said. Then I said Oh! you mean my street name. He did give me a funny look. Sorry Bob. I do have a humorous side, it's my left side.

Your New President,

Brian E. Goers

The IDE Project by: Carl Boll

Well, the Fest is over (again) and we demo'ed an IDE board there. It worked flawlessly during the whole Fest. We are a lot closer to shipping now. We only have five things still holding us back:

1. We still have to implement partitioning in the drivers.
2. We still have to implement master/slave in the drivers.
3. We still need to get the docs done.
4. We need to test the assembled boards
5. We need to make a drivers/utilities disk and many copies.

We have everything else in some sort of order. We have over 50 assembled and populated boards which are almost ready to go, they only need testing.

I'll address the points by number:

1. Eddie and I will get together this coming Thursday, June fourth to work on the drivers. The partitioning is our main concern and "problem". We can't ship the boards until we have a partitioning scheme implemented so that people won't have to reformat the drives a few weeks (or months) down the road
2. According to Eddie the Master/Slave issue will be very simple once the partitioning code is in the driver. The routines are very similar. Heh, I'll believe it's simple once I see it! Of course simple for Eddie is one thing, simple for me is another!
3. Brett Heath is working on the documentation, I owe him a big debt of gratitude. Of course this will not be finished until we have the drivers finished and everything is ready to ship.
4. Testing the boards will take only a few minutes each. We have a dedicated testbed for the boards. It has worked great, it was what we used at the Fest.
5. Making the disks. Well, what can I say about this? It is a tedious job and will take as long as it takes...we will use Backup Lightning which will decrease the length of time to do a copy.

Well, that's the update for this issue. We'll keep you posted on further developments.

Carl J. Boll

This Issue by: Carl Boll

This is a special Fest (or should I say after the Fest) issue with a few Fest reports and no advertising. It is also doubling as a report on the recently held elections.

You will be receiving another issue soon which will be the July, August and September issue. Remember that we are committed to 4 issues a year minimum. This year we hope to do 6 but time will tell.

Don't forget that we need articles! Write one and send it in today!

Carl J. Boll

Fest Report '98 by: Tony Podraza

AFTER THE SHOW IS OVER.....

Tony Podraza

April 19, 1998. 5:30PM.

It's the "quiet time" after the 7th Annual "Last" Chicago CoCoFEST! has shut down and all the attendees and exhibitors have packed up and gone home. I, alone, am left to view the site since everyone else has headed off to dinner or have hit the road to home. The tables are still standing, of course, and the evidence that an event of some kind has taken place is all around. After such a GREAT weekend, it sure is a depressing feeling to see the place so empty. Over here, there is an empty box that once held a printer, over there, someone has left some magazines that they didn't want to carry home, again. Can't say that I blame them. Paper is heavy! The GLENSIDE booth area is going to leave a couple of boxes containing some old RAINBOW issues, as it is. I've transported those boogers for the last time. Seven is the perfect number. I don't think that we can do better than we did this year if we try to do it again, next year. Shucks, even Lonnie Falk pulled the plug on the RainbowFESTs after nine years. For a not-for-profit group to try to pull the same thing off for seven years, even though the first year was just lending support to Dave and Nancy Myers of CoCoPRO! is still a heck

of an accomplishment to be admired! And, so far, we haven't gone too far into hole, financially, to pull off these gatherings. I haven't a clue as to how this year has gone, so far, but the Tee-shirts were almost a mistake. It's gonna be close, I'm sure.

April 29th, 1998

I really should get started on straightening out the books from the FEST! I guess I'll start with the attendees. As close as I can figure, there were 43 exhibitors passes, 53 door passes on Saturday, 10 door passes on Sunday and 6 club officer/security passes....that's carry the....subtract thedivide by...and that leaves a quotient of...with 112 remaining as the number of people who came to have a really great time. There were a total of 33 exhibitor tables (an increase or at least 20% over last year) and a total of 25 actual exhibitors who showed up! AMAZING!

Steve Bjork came in from California to be our guest of honor and presented a real impressive seminar on programming and games using an extensive multimedia presentation. After the Saturday night "CoCo Family FEAST!", he hooked up a CoCo I to a fantastic projector, and in his own words, "used a copy of the Audio Spectrum Analyzer for the purpose for which it was originally designed," that of a colorful light show while music was being played. (More info on this can be found in the CoCoFEST's reports by others.)

We sold 69 Tee-Shirts (which cost us about 10.00 apiece) but we had 90 to pay for....oops, we overestimated the demand by \$200. We got rid of most of them, though, so there'll be no real chance to recoup the funds not realized because we collected only \$10.00 apiece for them...not-for-profit status thing, you, know?

People picked up on a couple of copies of Dennis Bathory-Kitsz' "Learning the 6809" and the CoCoPort. Similarly, Burke & Burke's CoCoXT and E-ZGen were distributed. Got to have the treasurer send the checks off to Dennis and Chris at the next meeting.

Sixteen people extended their membership through the end of 1999, 11 people renewed the membership to the end of 1998; and one person joined Glenside for the first time. Still, there were attendees that left the show without becoming GLENSIDE members, and that's disheartening. Those people are GLENSIDE's heartblood. Without them, we are weaker, not able to try to do things for the community. Oh well, C'est la Vie.

So, was it worth it? Is GLENSIDE going sponsor the Eighth Annual "Last" Chicago CoCoFEST!?! Am I willing to tackle this again? It's such a letdown to see the community dwindle. Where are the new discoverers of our addiction? I don't know how many times I've heard "I hope you do it again, I can't come this year, but I'll be at the next one." Where are they?

May 10th, 1998

I finally finished the financial books from the FEST! GLENSIDE didn't lose serious money on the show, again, this year. Our Not-for-Profit status has been upheld, though. We

didn't turn a profit. Our costs were covered, that's about it. And I seem to remember that GLENSIDE once made a commitment to the community that if we didn't lose serious money on the FEST!, that we would do it ONE MORE TIME! Besides, how else am I going to get rid of those boxes of Rainbows and other magazines that I couldn't leave behind three weeks ago as I was leaving the show area?

May 24th, 1998

P.S. Just got a call from a guy who lives 15 miles from me who talked to somebody in area code 310 (probably Andre LaVelle, in California) who told him to call me because he wants wants to get back into the CoCo world. He got out in '85 when a bunch of his high school friends made the shift to the Apple systems. He wants to know if I can help him locate some gear. Oh BOY, can I help HIM!

May 26th, 1998

Just got a call from a former club member who wants his CoCo gear to GoTo a good home... can I help him, he says. Oh BOY, can I help HIM!

Answer to question "Is it worth it?" YOU BET IT IS!

May 27th, 1998

Have to call the Holiday Inn tomorrow to start to get available dates and room rates for the Eighth Annual "Last" Chicago CoCoFEST! (I got to have my head examined for doing this, again)

July 8, 1998
Make plans for #8! May 1 & 2, 1999
Tony Podraza

The Fest! by: Mike Knudsen

Here is my own report on the 7th Last CocoFest. Being this year's Club president and an exhibitor ("vendor" is pushing it when you're giving out upgrades to shareware), this report may be a little biased, but if enough others chip in their own reports, the biases will cancel out, right? So let's hear yours...

Last-day-before Fest preparations consisted of phone calls to line up the audio-visual gear needed by Steve Bjork for his presentation, plus frantic calls on Friday to find someone to pick up Steve at the airport (with his projection TV case he really needed the help). But all was solved, and his talk was well worth it.

Setting up was pretty routine, we're all experienced by now, except that somehow our map of the booth locations got rotated 90 degrees between us and the hotel staff who had set up and neatly arranged all the tables! Since the room is not square,

and the door is at one particular point, that wouldn't fly. So we had a fun half hour early Friday evening rearranging tables. The union staff, having earned their money once, just stood by the service door and enjoyed the show.

Later some of us had supper in the hotel restaurant -- seafood buffet was pretty good, and so was the company. Still later was the bar scene, where I got to learn a lot about the non-computer side of Br. Jeremy's day job as a monk. Somewhere during the evening my watch did a jump into the Mid-Atlantic time zone, so it was time for bed!

Saturday AM found everything set up from the nite before, including our famous hanging signs, strung up by our tallest member Mr. Baer (names are not my specialty, sorry :-). The lack of a line at the door at 10 AM was not a good omen. About 5 after 10 Tony gave the word on the PA (wirED mike this time, so it worked cleanly the whole Fest), and we Music Men lit into the national anthems.

As expected, we had more vendors than for several past years, and hardly any no-show empty tables. People did dribble in throughout the day, and there always seemed to be somebody talking to most vendors most of the time.

I'll leave it to Allen Huffman to enumerate the vendors, but I'll note that David Graham (Blackhawk Enterprises) was there selling MM/1 parts and software. I bought an 8Meg backplane from him. Also Strongware and Hawksoft were dealing in OSK MM/1 items. So in addition to the usual Coco RSDOS and OS9 support, the MM/1 is still alive and kicking.

New hardware included Mark Marlette (Cloud Nine) and his 1Meg (or 2?) upgrade board that plugs neatly into your 6809 position (after you install a socket). Very neatly built. ANother project of his wasn't quite ready for the Fest -- something for Ron Bull's PA Fest to look forward to!

Allen Huffman was there with his coat weighted down with a zillion buttons and nametags from Fests past, selling really great buttons made with his girlfriend Jenna's help, CocoPS memberships (with a FREE button!) and of course his new CocoFest Chronicles book. I get the sad impression that not everybody bought a copy -- hey, you've been making history by coming to Fests, here's your chance to read about it. Including the chapter on Coco music history by, uh, someone who, like Kurt Vonnegut, can say "I was there." You can still mail-order this classic for \$25.

Al Dages and RC Smith both had a wide variety of tantalizing used hardware for Coco. Adventure Survivors continued their new tradition of selling Beanie Babies. I didn't even know what they were last year, but this year I ordered a Stinky for my best friend who collects these things and can't find the skunk around here. She was so upset I had bought one in Maine and didn't get here one too. That's the gal "Frances Rag" and UME's Fran module are named after, so she rates at least a Stinky to remember me by (I collect stuffed skunks). Are BBs considered hard or software?

THE FEAST!

Ah yes, the Feast as featured on the Club's T-shirt, probably the prettiest shirt we've ever made, designed by Nancy Meyers of Coco-PRO! who put on the first non-Rainbow Fest. (Glenside sold only half of the T-shirts, but we'll bring 'em to PA for those of you who missed your chance.)

The Feast went as planned, in a cozy setting of round tables. The food was OK, tho nothing great, and we never even found out what a Mirrored Cheese Tray was supposed to be. Fact is, by 6:30 nobody wanted to fool with hor d'oeuvres but went straight for the heavy solids. Dessert entertainment was provided by an informal gunfight using laser pistols brought by Steve Bjork or Allen Huffman. Would have to rate the Feast a resounding success.

After the laser batteries ran out we retired to the main hall again for the Sing-ALong. Really glad we ballyhooed this ahead of time, since several people brought all sorts of instruments. In addition to 4 or 5 acoustic/electric guitars plus me on keyboard, we had James Jones on his consort of recorders and Jenna on flute. Halfway thru one song we noticed a really great trumpet sound coming out of Brian Schubring's keyboard -- only it was our Mr. Baer on the genuine brass article! Br. Jeremy was in fully recovered rare form as he sang and played, but we had a few others taking their turns at the Karaoke mike, including James and Tony Pedraza. I think I even sang something, more or less. Someone was bringing in pitchers of beer, so I probably did. Watching Linda P. and the Jeske's little girl do the Twist was worth the price of admission, and many stayed just to watch and listen. Someone threatened to make a CD of the whole thing...

Sunday was pretty routine. The Georgia troops tore down a little early to get a decent head start. After closing up, some went to a Country Buffet, others tried to find the Mongolian Barbecue near the CompUSA. I skipped all that and helped haul Brian Shubring's audio gear back to his apartment near my house.

A great Fest for socializing and buying and selling.

THE SEMINARS

SATURDAY:

ALLEN HUFFMAN

Saturday AM's opening talk was by Allen Huffman, highlighting the history and meaning of CocoFests as detailed in his new book. Allen had some good insights on the meaning of the Fests, how they have evolved, and where they may be going. The modern attitude that vendors need only break even and everyone should treat the Fests more as a family re-union get-together actually dates back almost to the first non-Rainbow fests.

After buying a rather blah sandwich and bag o' chips from the hotel's pushcart outside the main hall (a real convenience, tho hardly as good as McDonald's), we set up for the Main Event -- Steve Bjork's presentation.

STEVE BJORK

Steve opened with a video that panned back from the guts of a Coco to screen shots of Audio Spectrum Analyzer ancing to "Baroque Hoedown" aka Disneyland's Main St Electrical Parade. In strides Steve and begins his talk on how to do a game right. Look and feel, degree of difficulty, and tech tips complete with 6809 code that I was relieved to see I could still read. This part of the talk was about the same as last year's PA Fest.

Despite numerous references to a certain sinking-ship movie in the official Fest guide introduction, Steve let us have a short intermission pee-break before launching into his second hour of talk, on secret history of the Coco. Did you know that more Cocos were sold than Commodore 64s or any other 8-bit machine? Tandy still keeps the sales figures secret, but based on sales of his games, Steve puts the number well over a million.

And the Coco3 had to cost LESS to make than the Coco2? But Steve was able to talk Tandy into putting the 14-bit timer into the GIME? And the 128K RAM size was chosen to match the Commodore 128? And Atari almost used 6809 instead of 6502, but Moto didn't have the chip ready quite in time? And the Coco3 was finally killed off by Tandy after the one manager who really supported it quit?

(Was there anything more on Saturday?)

SUNDAY:

JOHN STRONG

I missed this talk but it seemed to be an informal discussion on ways to revive the Coco thru new hardware and software projects.

THE MUSIC MEN

We wheeled Brian Schubring's homebuilt sound system from the main hall to the seminar room at the other end of the hotel. This was made interesting not just by carpets that simulated inchworms under the cart's wheels (remember Marble Madness?), but also by doorways that were a couple inches shorter than Brian's top shelf. So we did some hasty dismantling in the hallways. I think this tops the PVC Nightmare in Allen's Chronicles. Nobody around with a camcorder, shucks!

I showed off the new UltiMusE features, including the new KeyPad input editor. We had a slight panic delay when Brian's Coco3's Puppo adapter lost its marbles, but a reboot solved that. The "crowd" seemed to like the new features. Unforch I could not give out as many upgrades to 9.11.0 as we wanted, since my MM/1 slowly forgot how to format floppies. [Turned out to be interference from the Maggie monitor sitting atop its case.]

CARL BOLL

Carl repeated his presentation on how to choose an IDE drive and select OS9 drivers for it. I missed it *again*. Perhaps the question of RSDOS/BASIC support came up. While the hardware seems to be really solid, and three "official production" IDE boards were there (I helped solder them along with many other GCCC members), the software drivers are still awaiting

more options (like partitioning) and further testing. Soooo--no IDE boards were sold or delivered at the Fest.

Carl was also slated to open up discussion on Coco4 ideas. Someone who attended (and Carl himself) can fill us in.

OK, I'll add a little to this report. I didn't really get into much of a discussion on the CoCo4, we ran out of time. The person that was "elected" to head up the CoCo4 project never showed up at the Fest (again). Basically as far as I can tell nothing has physically been accomplished towards step one of the project which was the building of an I/O controller for the CoCo's bus. --Carl

Allen, are you getting all this down? Permission to reprint granted!

Overall, the seminars were good and the attendance was good, considering the reduced Fest attendance. Steve was hoping for 50 heads, and I don't think we quite had that -- maybe 40.

Mike Knudsen

1998 7th Annual "Last" Chicago CoCoFest (April 18-19, Chicago, Illinois) by Allen Huffman formerly of Sub-Etha Software (04/21/98)

NOTE: Although it is the intent of this author to present you with factual reporting on this event, it is the intention of Murphy to ensure that such intentions do not necessarily become reality. So, proceed at your own risk for you are about to embark on a reading which may (or may not, though certainly more likely to may) contain things that are not as accurate as might be expected. Omissions may also.

In the beginning, there was *The Rainbow* magazine. Soon after came to be the RAINBOWfests. Much time passed and soon there came not to be neither *Rainbow* nor the RAINBOWfests. Thus came Dave Myers and the first Atlanta CoCoFest. After some time, soon came also to be the first "last" Chicago CoCoFEST! And, then, soon afterwards came again not to be Dave Myers' Fests (though Dave Myers himself still comes to be just fine and managing real estate somewhere). Because of this came to be the Atlanta Computer Society and its own AtlantaFests as well as the Glenside Color Computer Club and its own ChicagoFests. And thus it was good. And thus it continued to be good. And thus I continue to write reports of the continuing to be good Fests which have continued to not be hosted by *The Rainbow* or Dave Myers.

With that said, allow me to continue on with my seventh installment of a report on a Chicago CoCoFest, which is also my

thirteenth installment of a Fest report in general (or fourteen if you count the report I did for my Fest book, *CoCoFest Chronicles* [PLUG], to document the original 1990 Atlanta CoCoFest which never had a report done for it). Or something like that... Regardless, I hope you enjoy reading this as much as I enjoy writing it.

TIMELINE

Microsoft's Windows 98 is a mere few months away from rapid deployment. Microware announces their new Hawk development environment, welcoming outside parties into the fun of supporting OS-9. Bill Clinton's "sex scandal" hearing was dismissed, and the fate of domain names on the internet is still uncertain. The *Titanic* movie claims tons of Oscars, while the movie remake of *Lost in Space* bumps it from the top money making spot. On the Friday before the Fest, we lose Linda McCartney to cancer.

THE DRIVE

The road to the Fest is always paved with interesting sights. The days of my mega-trips now seem long gone except for the record of them in my previous Fest reports (which are now compiled, revised, and typeset in my new book, *CoCoFest Chronicles* [PLUG]). Since Chicago is only 350 miles away from where I reside near Des Moines, Iowa, a five hour drive seems easy enough.

James Jones, a coworker and friend, and I were to make the trip not in my cramped Honda Civic, but in a rental vehicle that came with cargo and leg storage space. The plan was soon upgraded to require a minivan as more stuff was deemed "necessary" to bring and as my girlfriend, Jenna, was brought on board for the journey.

I first checked with Avis a week before departure (why do things early?) and their 1-800 number allowed me to reserve a van at a nice rate, including a small 10% discount I had thanks to a card I obtained from purchasing items via Jenna's self-run business. When I called the local Avis center the following day to confirm, I was told no van would be available after all. I hastily went through the phone book and dialed up every rental place in town and ended up with a unit from a big Ford dealer which, while more expensive, would have to suffice.

Early (to me) on Friday morning, I picked up the van and drove it back home to load. (My Thursday night was spent printing signs, packing equipment and clothing, and just generally wondering why I always wait until the last minute to do these things.) After loading, Jenna and I drove into town to pick up James. We did this then had to make a stop at the local Kinko's print shop to grab two boxes of my book, *CoCoFest Chronicles* [PLUG], which would hopefully be ready by the 11:00 a.m. time they had stated. They were, which is a "good thing" since without them, my main point for getting a vendor booth would be gone. We hauled the boxes out to the now-full van then headed by Microware to pick up some CD-i development systems which James had saved from certain dumpster doom a few months earlier. His intent was to let them end up in good hands at the Fest while helping out Glenside in

their no minimum bid auction.

A bit later and we made a quick stop through the Burger King drive-thru where we'd all order but not all receive our fries, then it was off to find our way with James as navigator (my laptop and GPS sensor was there just in case). Our route would not follow the direct one I took last year but would instead take us on a journey to Sterling, Illinois to see the famous location of the famously bad movie *Luther the Geek*. For details of this film, I would suggest renting it (I have not had this opportunity myself, yet) or at least finding a copy of James' Fest report he posted to Delphi sometime last year after he and Boisy Pitre made this trip. If that fails, you can always find his report in my new book, *CoCoFest Chronicles* [PLUG]. To summarize what I know about the film, let me just say the following:

1. It was a very bad movie with very bad acting.
2. It was filmed using tax money.
3. It contained a scene in a Kroger's grocery store involving sunglasses and eggs.
4. It was a very bad movie with very bad acting.
5. It had nothing to do with my new book, *CoCoFest Chronicles* [PLUG].

And so we drove, stopping at a nice park with horrible restrooms and within a short distance from a nuclear reactor which spewed forth clouds of white steam. Our remaining journey was fairly uneventful. Along the way we made our first gas stop at the same truck stop I had visited during my return trip last year which was larger than many small times, complete with its own CB shop, large arcade, and dentist. We consumed treats from Dairy Queen. We drove some more. We graciously had to donate all our loose change, and then some, to the tollways of Chicago. No diesels dared get too close to the awesome Ford minivan I commanded.

At last, our exit was in sight and soon our driving could end.

THE ARRIVAL

We made it to the Holiday Inn Elgin at around 6:00 p.m. and checked in. James was waiting for Boisy to arrive since they were sharing a room, and Jenna and myself were assigned an outside facing room around back. Ugh. We set off to explore the area and see who was there to see.

At the Fest show room, things were still being set up, though quite a few vendors were already claiming their spaces and unloading items. Most of the Fest "regulars" were here, but no one was in the bar, and folks were not milling around like previous shows. It almost seemed like last year when the attendees had to stay at another hotel. This was the right place, wasn't it?

THE PRE-SHOW

This year, the Holiday Inn seemed to have situations under their control which meant rooms were available for us to stay in. I had originally planned to pick up Steve Bjork from the airport but my revised plan had me arriving several hours after

had some old CoCo items to sell off. Now that Boisy is free from the non-competition clauses in Microware's job contract perhaps we may see some more CoCo or MM/1 OS-9 items down the line? We do know he has a version of Pac-Man that runs under the Multi-media Application User Interface (MAUI) from Microware. I believe Boisy was also the first person to buy my new *CoCoFest Chronicles* [PLUG] book.

Alan Dages -- Al and Babs visited us again with various bits and pieces of CoCo stuff. Al had his camcorder rolling throughout the show and apparently has a library of similar footage from previous shows, including six or so tapes from the original 1990 Atlanta CoCoFest. Maybe some day we'll have someone produce a CoCoFest video series.

Adventure Survivors -- L.E. and Nan Padgett made the show with a table of Beanie Babies (sigh) once more. For some reason I really thought Nan told me that the Pennsylvania show was the last one for the Beanies. Of interest was the purchase of several by my table (one tie-dyed bear named "Peace") by Jenna. Thanks, Jenna, for furthering to spread the rumors that I own Beanies.

Their gaming newsletter is not dead, by the way! I used to renew my subscription each year in Atlanta and since the shows there have ceased so did my newsletters! Well, I signed back up for TWO YEARS (so there) and picked up SIX graphical adventure games that they had just gotten permission to distribute.

Yes, that's right! The Mark Data graphical adventure games are back! Shenanigans, Trekboer, Black Sanctum, and others are less than five dollars each. Recall that most of these were originally text based games then later enhanced -- somehow -- with graphics that worked even from cassette. Now I can finally resolve the ones I figured out eons ago, and perhaps solve the ones I never could. These were really well done games and I am happy to have them. Thanks, again, goes to the Adventure Survivors for helping preserve some classic CoCo software!

Bargeman Research Labs -- Karl Sefcik didn't make the show until Sunday afternoon, I believe, but he did make it. His table is usually there to promote CD-i awareness. Even his e-mail address pays tribute to this interesting mass-produced OS-9 consumer machine of the late 80's.

Blackhawk Enterprises Inc. -- David Graham and his wife made their appearance in typical business suits this weekend after a long drive up from Texas in a small car (hey, somebody had to do it!). I didn't get to spend too much time with David, but I am aware that he had MM/1 8-meg backplanes for sale (Mike Knudsen bought one -- now he can develop UltiMusE on more than three megs). There were also some of Keith Alphonso's Alpha Software items (Presto Partner and Data Windows) being shown off.

The legacy of MM/1 development is apparently far from dead. David has some of the version 3 I/O boards which did not require paddleboard add-ons to use the serial ports. They also support a more modern SCSI implementation which I hope will allow me to boot from my EZ135 SyQuest drive once I upgrade my I/O board.

I guess I do need to thank David for correcting a rather bothersome eyesore on my Compaq laptop. He called my attention to my machine and said "I don't remember selling this to you" which puzzled me. After I had him repeat this statement a few more times I realized my "Intel Inside" sticker had now been covered with an "MM/ONE" sticker, just like the one on my real MM/1 back home. I kept it. :) *It should be noted that Allen is a very intense person and quite often will miss the obvious because he isn't looking for it...can we say tunnel vision? --ed.*

Towards the end of the show on Sunday, David's machine got to be used (since it had speakers) to demonstrate a new MM/1 game, Invaders. This is a K-Windows port of my original 6809 assembly invaders game I wrote for the CoCo a few years ago, but updated to include more challenging game play, enhanced graphics, and full digital sound effects. It was actually fun to play after I had gotten used to my old version. This item will end up being sold through John Strong of StrongWare, though it is likely David will end up with distribution rights as well.

On Sunday, Joel Ewy (pronounced "A. V.") showed up and had a large binder labeled something like "MM/1 Connectix Project." I do not know how "secret" this is supposed to be, but it won't be the first time I have exposed something in one of these reports. Basically, the idea is to use a Connectix QuickCam (black and white, available refurbished for about \$40) on an MM/1. Due to the odd wiring of MM/1 printer ports, the camera will end up plugging into BOTH MM/1 parallel ports. It is hoped this product may come out soon, with a library of support routines for others to develop camera software. Perhaps this, with Chris Hawk's new TCP/IP library, might actually allow the MM/1 to do video conferencing or act as a webcam. Oh yes, it will be mine!

Cloud-9 -- Mark Marlette has turned his hobby of developing CoCo hardware into a mission. He has now invested several THOUSAND dollars in development tools for creating circuit boards. The first item he released was a SIMM upgrade (512K) but he also has prototypes for a 2-meg memory expander (on ONE board that is easy to install if you have a socketed CPU) and a modified SCSI interface that supports hardware parity. At the show we saw his monster repacked CoCo hooked to both an Iomega ZIP drive AND an Iomega JAZ drive. Very impressive, and probably more storage and all the other CoCos at the Fest combined. *Actually the CoCo Mark Farrell had at the Fest probably had more storage since he had the 1+ Gig IDE drive >AND< his Disto SCSI drives on the same system. --Ed.*

Mark also spoke about making an all-in-one upgrade which would contain both SCSI and the 2-meg memory expansion. I really would like to see this. That would make my CoCo very portable (no more multi-pak).

His daughter was an absolute doll, by the way, as she hung out with Jenna at the Sub-Etha booth and helped sell books. I don't know what this little girl was doing, but it seems she was responsible for about eight book sales! Let's just hope Mark hasn't taught her about "commission" yet!

CoCo Hut -- Jim Davis (both senior and junior) took a spot to represent Rick Cooper and also Nickolas Marentes new Pac-Man

tribute game. There were some fantastic signs for this game as it ran on a CoCo throughout the show. Along the front table was the Pac-Man logo and a large yellow Pac-Man chasing dots and ghosts. Very well done! Since we were right next to each other, I felt like I was hanging out at the Putt-Putt arcade back when I lived in Mesquite, Texas in the early 1980s when Pac-Man first came out. The game sounds were THAT GOOD. The game seemed to play a bit more aggressive than I recall, but then I'm not as young as I used to be. All the copies Nick sent over sold out, which is a pity. I and a few others still wanted to buy a copy before the show closed on Sunday afternoon.

Other items of interest included copies of the CoCo Registry, an attempt to database as many CoCo owners as possible (many hundreds), Rick's CoCo Friends disk magazine (subscriptions were available to this group), and tons of classic Sundog software including that baffling Photon, and even the legendary Contras game that almost never was. There was a great opportunity to complete your software collection at this corner of the show area.

It was a great pleasure meeting both Jims at this Fest, and I hope our paths cross again. (Mirrored cheese display, anyone?)

Chicago Area OS-9 User Group -- Still going (strong?), this group always has a table to show support at these Fests. Carl Boll and Howard Luckey (Luckey's Corner) are apparently still in charge of coordinating meetings. It is a pity that the national OS-9 group could not survive like this local one has.

Color Computer Preservation Society (CoCoPS) -- This group was the result of a seminar hosted by Steve Bjork at the 1997 Pennsylvania Fest. There, Rick Cooper and others tossed around ideas (I claim the name, as twisted from the original suggestion of Color Computer Preservation Association, which sounded better but made a sillier abbreviation). The result is a five dollar membership for a yearly newsletter dealing with a filtered list of what is going on in our Community. Before Chicago membership had reached over fifty, and after this show is climbed near one hundred, but it is hoped that eventually everyone will sign up. CoCoPS may end up being a very important player in preserving what is left of our Community.

At the table, newsletters and free buttons (while supplies lasted) were given out to those who signed up. James Jones offered to pay for his membership and five others' in a way of apologizing for not signing up sooner. After this, an announcement was made about the free sign ups, which caused a line to form. Surprisingly, virtually everyone in the line paid for their own membership. As of this writing there is still one free slot, compliments of James. Earlier similar offers have been made by Steve Bjork and Chet Simpson. Perhaps the Community has more life left than I think?

If you wish to join, send five dollars to P.O. Box 276, Liberty, KY 42539 or visit them on the web at <http://stg.net/cocops> or via e-mail at cocops@stg.net. Thanks to Scott Griepentrog for providing internet services. (Scott is willing to host other similar pages and e-mail lists for related clubs and organizations, so drop him a line at stg@stg.net for details.) If you don't sign up (which you really should), you can still get the entire text of the printed newsletter for free on the

web site. Keep in mind, support is what it is all about so please consider sending in membership fees even if you can get the web version free. This group was almost cancelled due to lack of response during its first few months of existence.

One of the ideas I envision is for CoCoPS to eventually play an active roll in hosting CoCo "reunions" down the line long after Fests cease (if this ever happens!). Imagine us all meeting one day not to roam tables and buy goods, but just to hang out with old friends like a CoCo Class Reunion or something. "Hi, My Name is AL" reads the nametags. Hey, it could happen!

FARNA Systems -- Frank and Tiffany were unable to attend for reasons detailed in the latest issue of *the world of 68' micros* but FARNA was there in spirit as Carl Boll helped man the table and present items such as the revised *Mastering OS-9* book and other goodies. Frank did much research for his first major CoCo book, *Tandy's Little Wonder*, just as I have attempted to do for my *CoCoFest Chronicles* [PLUG]. Please support our efforts (have you renewed your subscription to *68' micros* yet?) to take the CoCo to the year 2000.

Please note that while Frank is hoping to find someone to take over as editor for the magazine he still fully plans to publish until 2000. Subscriptions are about half what they used to be so maybe you can take a moment to sign up a friend you know who might still be interested in following the CoCo happenings. If not that, at least send them to the CoCoPS.

FWD Computing -- This table had an assortment of items that never quite caught my eye as recognizable and now, after looking at my Fest book, I understand why. Frank Davis was showing off items for the Sinclair Spectrum, Timex ZX80, and Amigas, among others. I suppose they took the place of Q-Box from last year. I would really like to see more classic computer users start attending our Fests. After all, we are in the same life raft, yes?

Glenside Color Computer Club -- The Fest host club has been involved with Chicago Fests for over a decade. Memberships to CoCo~123 were available (the club newsletter) as well as wonderful Fest T-shirts designed by Nancy Myers (wife of Dave, founder of the post-*Rainbow* CoCoFests). These were wonderful full-color silkscreened shirts with a polar bear (picture) on front with a one button CoCo mouse dangling from its mouth. The caption read "The best CoCoFEST! I've ever been to!" with the "FEST!" clawed out and "FEAST!" written above it. Flags from current known CoCo countries were to the left and right of the bear. They included the U.S.A. (for the CoCo and MC-10), Canada (for NitROS-9), United Kingdom (for the Dragon), Spain (for the MicroSEP CoCo clone), and Brazil (for the CP-400).

These shirts went for ten dollars each, but Glenside still had far too many of them left over by the end of the show. They ended up selling them off three for twenty dollars and lost money. I guess they take "non-profit" a bit too seriously there! It also looks like their recent hardware ventures (the MIDI pak and the new IDE interface) cost them thousands of dollars all on the hope of breaking even.

Thanks, Glenside, for doing this all again.

Hawksoft -- Chris and Nancy Hawks created a splash the year by introducing "SOX" for OS-9/68K. This is a socket (tcp/ip) internet C library which can be used to write client side applications such as telnet, finger, or ftp. This is all based on the work he did for OSKnet (based on earlier KA9Q software) which was an application that does internet protocol. According to Chris, these libraries talk to a user-state application and allow you to have, currently, up to 16 socket connections at the same time! This does mean that it is now possible for someone to write a small web browser or port Lynx or other popular net utilities to OSK. Could a CoCo port be done? It seems too large as-is to be an easy task, but several people are looking in to bringing something similar to the CoCo. (After all, if a 640K 8mhz IBM-XT can do it, why can't a CoCo?)

The regular standby of CoCo and MM/1 items was available, as well, and Chris did appear in his doctor robe (which, by the way, you can learn about *why* he has one in my new book, *CoCoFest Chronicles* [PLUG]). In fact, he even added a few new buttons to it! Rumor has it that his CD file manager for OSK may soon be licensed by a rather large company for a new project -- way to go, Chris!

Lee Veal -- Fellow Texan Lee made the trek to Chicago for a rather sad reason. He is selling ALL of his CoCo stuff off. This did mean he had a rather high-quality assortment of items, including a Sardis disk control (the one with the 32K cache). Unfortunately, Lee knows the value of items such as this and therefore priced them accordingly. I had hoped to pick up an upgraded small-size multi-pak but by the time I chased him down in the parking lot on Sunday it was too late. He did say, for a price, he will ship items.

While it is sad to see Lee leave our Community, I feel he will always share some connection with it. Don't despair -- he still plans to hang on to CoCo #1, which he says he has been offered \$400 for. R.C. Smith apparently showed some interest in obtaining this very important piece of computer history, but the price was too steep. Lee wanted at least \$500, but upon thinking it over, he realizes this item deserves not to be sold just to the highest bidder, but to someone who will properly preserve it. I personally plan to enter the race with those wanting to obtain this item.

I did find out that when Lee picked this unit up from a Radio Shack warehouse sale, it was with many of its early model brothers, including low two digit serial numbers. The inside of the unit had been labeled with items that seem to indicate it might have been a test unit in a repair center. This seems plausible, but whatever the reason I am very glad someone did save this machine from the scrap heap. Perhaps CoCoPS should take up a collection to obtain this machine and have a nice display case and plaque made? Thoughts, anyone?

Luckey Corner -- Howard Luckey, Brian Goers, Carl Boll, Scott Griepentrog and Paul Jerkatis were grouped up with various bits of hardware and software as well as the completed IDE interface boards (but none fully ready with software to deliver). This is one long term major project!

Manistee Color Computer Club -- Arthur and Cheryl Krause

and Eleanor Buck hosted a booth for this Michigan based group. I am happy to say they will be returning to Manistee with my new *CoCoFest Chronicles* [PLUG] book.

Merchware -- Roger M. acted as equipment swap shop in the tradition that continues to generate a healthy percentage of Fest booths.

Monk-O-Ware -- As the first booth you see when entering the Fest area, Brother Jeremy's little niche was a magnet of activity as he tried to produce a working copy of the legendary OS-9 Level II Version 3 upgrade which, after many years, he finally got permission from Kevin Darling to distribute. Hardware problems and disk failures prevented him from doing anything other than taking a list of names from those interested.

Also on display were Microware's former CoCo 3 prototypes (including some odd form of GIME chip) and a working (?) CoCo ethernet adapter. Someone on the internet CoCo mailing list recently mused at how foolish ethernet would be on a CoCo yet here it was. No one really seems to know who this interface was made for or for what purpose, but since ethernet originated about thirty years ago at Xerox the standard certainly does not push cutting edge. It was hoped to hook a CoCo to an IBM laptop and see what would happen, but as far as I know this was never done. The ethernet pak did have ROM and some startup code that ran when you turned on the machine.

We may never know... *It is quite possible that this is designed for use with a CoCo2 and will not work on a CoCo3.*
--Ed.

If you would like to receive the OS-9 Version 3 upgrade for a small distribution fee, you will be required to prove ownership of the original OS-9 due to the update being so different that it cannot be sent out in patch form. Brother Jeremy can be reached at P.O. Box 1903, Racine, WI 53401. Tell him Allen sent you!

R.C. Smith -- From Atlanta, land of Coca Cola and Waffle House, R.C. makes another show with yet more gently used hardware and software items. Now, the big question many have been asking for years is this:
What does R.C. stand for?

Roger Hallman -- Someone got in touch with Roger this past year to see what he was up to. Roger, you see, was involved with Coeless Computer and their excellent Disk BASIC desktop publishing package CIII Pages. This program was the DTP equivalent of Max-10 or CoCoMax for the Color Computer 3. It allowed several pages to be worked on in memory, and even allowed importing Windows BMP files (monochrome only). The package was fast, and worked in black and white only but produced some rather stunning results.

The product was offered for \$25 at the show, and ran on a large television set with a backdrop of printouts and samples. Roger was using much clipart and imported graphics taken from the PC world. It was very nice to see him there. I do wish that he would have also sold out of the copies he brought but it doesn't look like he did. I do have a copy and I fully plan to do

~~some~~ experimenting on it and perhaps redo all the old Sub-Etha Software manuals at some point in the near future. The manual is ~~pretty~~ thick for C3P so it may take me a while to figure it all out.

Roger was also talking about working on IDE support for Disk BASIC, but he has yet to have an interface to work with. Hopefully this project will happen.

Ron Bull - Ron and various family members were here to raffle off a CoCo emulator PC system as well as other items in attempts to raise both funds and awareness for the 1998 Pennsylvania CoCoFest scheduled for August 15-16th later this year. Ron had a supply of "I'll Be There!" buttons he was giving to those who were willing to donate a few bucks for the cause (but, sadly, ~~still~~ returned home with some of them). He did seem confident that he could have a larger attendance this year than at his original show. It is RUMORED that Marty Goodman or even possibly Lonnie Falk might be brought out as guest speaker. I am even told that if the situation is right, Steve Bjork might ~~return~~. Well, regardless of who makes it, I am sure the sequel ~~show~~ will surpass the original. Ron learned a lot about what TO do and what NOT to do last year.

I do not recall who won the raffle, but I did notice that Ron's son (one of them?) apparently won the grand prize from Glenside's drawing: a complete CoCo 3 system including monitor! Maybe this is a sign of good luck for Ron.

S&T of Los Angeles - Andre LaVelle and Dick Albers made the trek from sunny California to sell of miscellaneous printer buffers, modems, and disk drives. Andre always has something and wants to stress that there is business after the Fest. If you need practically ANYTHING, CoCo or otherwise, drop Andre a line at 1251 W. Septulveda Blvd Suite 400, Torrance, CA 90502-2677. He is in the heart of technology out there and ~~seems~~ to know how to find great deals.

E-Tech News and Review / Steve Bjork - Steve Bjork returned to a Chicago Fest after six years and brought along sample articles from the new magazine he serves as editor of. He also had various samples of interesting items such as digital photograph printouts showing the quality of many modern printers.

His web site, www.e-technews.com, contains more information. As far as we were concerned, we just knew the guy who brought us Zaxxon (and many, many, many other CoCo programs) was back at the Fest.

StrongWare - John and Charley Strong, along with JERRY COOK (see, I mentioned your name!) and Don Adams ensured that Team OS-9 was alive and well. During the show, the classic StrongWare items such as Soviet Bloc and Gems ran until John's original CoCo 3 passed away. Sigh. Services were held Sunday morning.

It is hoped that something new will appear soon from StrongWare, but real life always seems to get in the way. Within the past year, though, some work has been done towards an advanced game engine as well as an attempt to display digital

camera pictures in 3D on the MM/1. Eventually (?) some very cool stuff will come of this, I can feel it.

Sub-Etha SoftWear - The name spelling was intentional since for work related reasons Sub-Etha is pretty much out of the OS-9 software market. Instead, softWEAR like buttons and T-shirts was offered. Jenna and I spent much time making buttons as our supply sold out. Some of the more successful ones included "CoCo Inside" (ala Intel Inside logo), "CoCo 2000: Proudly Taking Obsolescence Into the Next Century", "I <Heart> My CoCo/MM1/AT306/etc.", and many others. I don't know the final count but I am quite sure we distributed over one hundred buttons, including a custom photo button of "Bongo," a Beanie Baby which was touring the world and currently visiting Nan Padgett.

I also has a very small supply of "CoCo 2000" T-shirts for sale, and promptly sold out and took orders for about a half dozen more. If you would like to order one, drop me a note and I will see how many more I need to have made up. Basically, they had a pocket patch full color print on the front, and a large back print (full color as well) of the "CoCo 2000" button design with a CoCo 3 image under it. I think they turned out quite nicely!

The big product was my new book, *CoCoFest Chronicles*, which featured nearly 200 pages of my Fest reports as well as some material created just for the book. Special introductions were written by Tony Podraza (about the Chicago Fests), Ken Fish (about the Atlanta Fests), and Terry Simons (about the Iowa Fest). James Jones, Brother Jeremy, Mike Knudsen, and others provided further insight into these post-*Rainbow* CoCoFests. The book is full size and wire spiral bound with a heavy card stock cover, and all the Fests I have attended from the original 1990 Atlanta show up until last year's 1997 Pennsylvania show are documented. These are not entirely the same reports I have uploaded over the years - they have been spellchecked and proofread and include new "behind the scenes" items to explain many of the inside jokes my writings seem to be littered with.

Unfortunately, I did not even sell half of the sixty-eight copies I brought to the show. I am still glad to see the book sell as well as it did, but I really expected more interest. Perhaps once word gets out I'll sell more through mail order and can print a second run of them for Ron's show later this year. I hope so, anyway. I would hate to think that no one cares about my reports anymore!

By the way, two very special T-shirts were made (designed by Jenna) for she and I to wear on Saturday. On the back they promoted "I'll Be There!" and Ron's Pennsylvania Fest. I hope someone noticed.

Music Men - Mike Knudsen (president of Glenside, in his final term before moving away) and Brian Schubring had a rack of MIDI sound modules, mixers, and speakers as the CoCo played standard MIDI files and UltiMusE tunes from the show opening (the anthems of the U.S.A. and Canada) to show closing (the theme from *The Simpsons*, oddly). Mike had brought along some bits of CoCo history including a Symphony-12 pak (four of

the sound chips used by the Atari 8-bit computers) and the full sized keyboard for it which could be used to turn the CoCo into a music synthesizer or MIDI controller.

It was great fun hearing the CoCo crank out everything from Garth Brooks to The Eagles, but did we really need to hear Macarena?

THE SEMINARS

The seminars, though few, were very intense in spite of overall small attendance.

SATURDAY:

10:30 – "And the Fest Player On" – Allen Huffman

This was an attempt to plug my new book, *CoCoFest Chronicles* [PLUG], by discussing the post-*Rainbow* Fests and mentioning some of the trivia and inside jokes associated with them. The only constant theme to my seminar was attempting to point out how vendor attendance has risen and dropped over the years. Frankly, vendor wise this show was one of the best in years.

12:30 – "Game Programming and CoCo History" – Steve Bjork

Steve did a reissue of his multi-media seminar originally given at Ron Bull's PennFest. This time, the handouts were in booklet form and carried the E-Tech News and Review logo (and looked surprisingly like the old Game Point Steve Bjork game manuals). Also, instead of a TV set to play the opening video montage of games, a large wall projector was used. Some of the slides seem to have been updated as well. He made his appearance to the Disneyland Main Street Electrical Parade music complete with fiber optic baseball cap and lab coat. During the show, he handed out small chalk boards for anyone needing to take notes, as well as tossing around a few (soft) balls to those who asked or answered questions.

Topics included: sprite control data blocks, doing simulated floating point math with registers, interrupts, generating random numbers, elements that make up a good game (from storyboard to final product), and general topics of CoCo interest.

One item I found interesting, if not a bit difficult to believe, was that the CoCo supposedly was one of the best selling small computers of its time, even outselling the Commodore 64. To this day Tandy still has not released official sales numbers, but Steve has made some estimates from the number of games he sold through Radio Shack. I do know that even late in 1989, at my tiny Radio Shack in Lufkin, it was not uncommon to sell over 100 CoCo 3s at Christmastime. So, who knows?

Other trivia was given about what they wanted to put in the CoCo 3 and why what made it made it. Steve has one of only a few original GIME chips in his collection since he was one of a few original Tandy CoCo 3 developers. I suppose I trust his CoCo knowledge over just about anyone else.

If it can happen, this year may be the one where we see some of Steve's classic CoCo games released into shareware, and maybe even the release of Horizons (made but cancelled just as the CoCo 3 came out) and the CoCo 3 version of his Audio Spectrum Analyzer.

The seminar went for quite some time, took a break, and went on again. We got to see the disks that the "We Gotcha" disk "verifier" joke program was made on as well as the original CoCo 1 bouncing ball. Amusing stories for all of this, and some rather interesting talk of a potential lawsuit from someone wanting to update Bjork Blocks (graphics program) for the CoCo 3.

What else? Probably much more, but VED keeps complaining that it is running out of memory on me...

04:00 – "No Minimum Bid Auction, Day 1" – Mike Knudsen and Glenside

Some of the more interesting items auctioned off included TWO types of CD-i development systems, both donated by James Jones (with Microware's permission, of course). Some of the least interesting items included old Tandy software. The running gag this year was a line made famous by Steve Bjork at Ron's show when Carl England did a one dollar bid after a speech of "it's worth more than a buck" was given by Steve. At various points in the auction, Mike would roll out "you sir, are an..." Those who got the joke enjoyed it. Those who don't might have just thought Mike was being one himself :)

SUNDAY:

07:00 – Radio Swap in the Parking Lot (not Fest related, but what the heck)

Apparently, these guys had antique radios and such. Hmmm, equipment older than the CoCo!

08:30 – Holy Communion Service with Brother Jeremy

This non-denominational tradition always lifts spirits and features the hymns sung to Brother Jeremy's guitar playing.

10:30 – "TBA" – John Strong

John's CoCo passed away at this show, and this "seminar" turned into last rites for his machine, complete with an open-case procession past the deceased, and final sendoff by Brother Jeremy. Hopefully some of the excellent (and humorous) digital photos taken of this event will soon circulate.

12:30 – "UltiMusE and MIDI" – The Midi Men (Mike Knudsen, Brian Schubring)

UltiMusE gets an update and now offers a high speed keyboard entry feature for folks like me who hate mice.

02:00 – "IDE Project Discussion and Status Report" – Carl Boll

Talk of where the project stands now (done, except for final software and documentation) and also a look at more "CoCo 4" plans.

03:30 - "No Minimum Bid Auction, Day 2"
- Mike Knudsen and Glenside

You, sir, are an... Another CD-i player, and two bottles of Coca Cola (the Coke went for four dollars). I bid against Brother Jeremy and acquired a full set of 1992 *Rainbow* magazines and their disk companions. *You know that can be dangerous, Brother Jeremy has friends in high (and I mean HIGH) places* - ed.

COCO FAMILY DINNER

On Saturday evening at around 6:00 p.m. we all gathered in the two seminar rooms which had been opened up and set up with large round tables. The room was fairly full (over 60 folks) as we dined on drinks, meats, potatoes, salads, and breads. During dinner, Steve Bjork was presented with a Fest t-shirt, and various folks gave small speeches. Towards the end of dinner, Steve and I brought out our LazerTag guns and soon laserfire took over as a small group of us battled it out. It was fun watching Steve duck and roll, firing away, while Sam Podraza showed that his small size served as an advantage.

Overall, I think this dinner was a "good thing" though we never saw our "mirrored cheese display" which was supposed to be part of the deal. Perhaps the table arrangement could have been better, but overall I enjoyed not having to split up into dozens of different groups all trying to decide (for an hour or more often :) where to go eat. And let's face it -- this sure beat eating directly in the hotel restaurant! Thanks, Glenside, for a great idea well executed!

THE EVENINGS

A bit less happened at this show, possibly just because there were fewer people. The usual bar gatherings were had, and on Saturday evening after dinner laser guns were brought out once more as six of us turned the entire Holidome into our own two-level laser tag arena. It was great exercise and we must have played for an hour or more. The group of kids at the pool were mixed with their opinions of our kind of fun, but I personally had a blast. Pun intended.

Later in the Fest room, the "Sing and Play Along" began with Brother Jeremy leading on vocals and guitar. Mike Knudsen and Brian Schubring brought along keyboards and electronic drums, and I had my guitars as well. James Jones joined in on recorded, with Jenna hopping in on flute. Curtis Boyle had his amplifier and electric guitar (he is a very accomplished player!) and we sang the now-famous "50s death medley" including Last Kiss and Teen Angel, and Brother Jeremy brought out the OS-9 Level 2 upgrade song, dedicated to Kevin Darling. During one song, we couldn't help but notice how great the keyboard trumpet sounded -- until we realized it was Richard Bair! He played along on many songs beautifully, including on our extended version of The Lion Sleeps Tonight. This was fun, and eventually we bought some pitchers of beer for the musicians. If I had it to do all over again, I would bring my P.A. system and microphone and digital multi-track recorder. If I had, we could have made our own audio CDs at the show. Actually, maybe that isn't such a good idea after all, but it was a very FUN time!

During the "performance" Steve Bjork brought in his LCD color projector (from his seminar), hooked it to a CoCo 1 and acquired a ROMpak of Audio Spectrum Analyzer and a cassette cable. This was hooked into the sound system allowing a high-tech CoCo light show to be projected on the ceiling during the songs! That ROMpak never made a more impressive appearance anywhere...

A few drinks in the bar, a few stories told around the show area, and overall early endings (around midnight) to the busy days.

Sunday evening was typical shut down as folks packed up and split off into two main groups for the final goodbye dinner.

SUMMARY

This was a good show, but not excellent. Glenside did a wonderful job with badges, signs, the dinner, and jam session. There were many fun things done here to further our "family" and quite a few new items available for sale at the show, including my new book, *CoCoFest Chronicles* [PLUG]. The only thing really missing was people! I don't know the final numbers, but I suspect the door count was less than one hundred. I hope this doesn't convince Glenside to not host another show in 1999. I would really like to see the Fests go until 2000.

RUMORS

Did you know someone is working towards a CoCo web browser that features graphics, and not just text? Did you know someone is trying to license PowerPC systems for the hobbyist OS-9 market (running OS-9000)? Did you know that Nickolas Marentes has a new game in the works since his Pac-Man tribute is proving to be a minor success? (Ensure this happens -- buy a copy of the Pac-Man tribute today!) Did you know Ron Bull is hosting a 2nd Pennsylvania Fest in August of 1998?

THE RETURN

After packing things up on Sunday and saying final good-byes, a large group planned to reunite at the traditional Ghengis Kahn. Fortunately, before heading out Scott Griepentrog was told to call and see if it was still open -- it wasn't, so an alternate location was chosen (which I heard was about an hour away). Once again we split into two groups and headed to Old Country Buffet to dine with Brother Jeremy, Tony, Linda and Chris Podraza, Charles Strong, Don Adams, myself, James Jones, Jenna Brackmann, and likely a few others I can't recall (we were split into two tables). Dinner was good, and again Don Adams paid for our group! Thanks again Don. What a guy!

There was still daylight as my group wandered back to the minivan and began its five hour drive back to Iowa, this time taking an uneventful direct route which did not lead us through Sterling, Illinois, home of *Luther the Geek*.

DISCLAIMER

My camcorder ran out of tape, and although Jenna did bring her cassette recorder for me to use for notes, I didn't. Therefore, memory being what it is for me (barely static, certainly not battery backed), I have likely left out highly crucial details which were originally intended to fill space in this report (which is already near the limits of VED's bufferspace, surprisingly).

If I forgot you (possibly again), I apologize. So there. I said it.

THANKS

Thanks, Glenside, for doing it all again, six years after the last one. Thanks to the musicians for the entertainment, and specifically Richard Bair for the amazing trumpet tunes and Curtis Boyle for allowing me to plug in my new (used) electric guitar into his amp. James Jones gets my thanks for splitting rental cost on the minivan as well as phenomenal assistance in getting my new book, *CoCoFest Chronicles* [PLUG], put together. Thanks to Mike for the deal on the drum machine, and L.E. and Nan for selling us THREE silly Beanie Babies and buying the drinks. Thanks to Jim and Jim Davis for keeping an eye on things, and to StrongWare for the Team OS-9 mouse pad. Thanks to Tony for the use of a power strip, and thanks to Scott Griepentrog for once again showing something totally new and interesting (a tiny palm PC computer that ran the CoCo emulator). Thanks to Don for Dinner, and Steve for dinner, helping me get a better room, plugging my book, obtaining change, and all those favors you did for us. Special thanks to Lee Veal for hanging on to CoCo #1 (or at least making sure someone who will do the same ends up with it), and to Chris and Craig Podraza for making an appearance. Sam Podraza, of course, is probably going to be bugging his folks for a set of LazerTag guns, which of course will make them want to thank me.

More thanks to Rob Gibons and Justin for helping things run so smoothly, and Nancy Myers for the fantastic T-shirt design. Of course, you can't not thank the Holiday Inn Elgin for letting us actually STAY at the hotel this year. Well, maybe you can, but I won't. Thanks to those who, once again, paid for gas money by buying my buttons, shirts and, of course, new book, *CoCoFest Chronicles* [PLUG]. Thanks to all those who signed up for CoCoPS, and especially those who paid even when James was sponsoring people.

Who have I forgotten to thank? Yep, I thank them too! And you, of course, for reading all of this. Thanks.

And I really mean that.

Allen C. Huffman, formerly of Sub-Etha Software
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FUTURE FESTS

Pennsylvania
August 18-19, 1998 - PennFest 2

SPECIAL OFFER

This past year we saw the return of a few former CoCo folks. Maybe we can see more! I would like to help with a collection to fund travel expenses for folks like Marty Goodman, Kevin Darling, Steve Bjork, or other "classic" Fest speakers for the upcoming show(s). Even though many of us would like to see the Fests go until 2000, reality says we may soon see the REAL final Fests. Time may really be running out. If you are interested, drop me a note and let's see what we can work out.

THE END

For now, anyway. Since it took me eight years to write enough for my first book, there may never be a second edition, but there will always be reports as long as I continue to attend shows. Take that, Murphy.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Allen Huffman has been a loyal CoCoist since about 1982. He started with a grey-case CoCo 1 (E board, upgraded to 64K and lowercase) and has progressed through the years from there. In 1990 he co-founded Sub-Etha Software with Terry Todd and has brought several programs to the market including Rulaford Research's K1 Midi Librarian, and Sub-Etha's own MiniBanners and Towel. He has attended ever CoCoFest since 1990 and written reports on all but the initial 1990 Atlanta show, and even that has been done in retrospective format for his new *CoCoFest Chronicles* [PLUG] book.

Allen has contributed to *UpTime*, *OS-9 Underground*, *the world of '68 micros*, and various newsletters around the country and has had several letters published in *The Rainbow* (including one which prompted them to reprint their first 2-page issue). He also serves as Color Computer SysOp in the Tandy RoundTable on Genie and has been mentioned in *The Computer Shopper* for this position.

Allen works for Microware as part-time customer support and technical training engineer teaching OS-9 classes. He lives just outside of Des Moines, Iowa with his CoCos (1, 2 and 3), MM/1 (now new and improved with eight megs of RAM), and a virtual CoCo disguised as a Compaq laptop.

MINUTES BY THE MINUTE by Bob Swoger

May 14, 1998

In the absence of President Mike Knudsen, Vice President Tony Podraza called the meeting to order at 7:50 PM. Also in attendance were Brian Goers, Richard Bair, Vice President Justin Wagner, Howard Luckey, Treasurer George Schneeweiss, Newsletter Editor Carl Boll, Dr. Eddie Kuns, and Secretary Robert Swoger.

Treasurer George read the Treasurer's Report. See Treas\$ury Note\$ for details.

Old Business

Vice President Tony Podraza gave the CoCoFEST report. We acquired one new membership and eleven renewals to the year 2000. This year instead of being in the red as we were last year we were \$347 in the black. 112 people attended the 7th "Last" Chicago CoCoFEST and 72 people attended the dinner afterward. 10 people not present on Saturday were in attendance Sunday.

Tony reported that all of the Second City Software on Disk is now in our library. Also added to our library this year is the Burke & Burke Software Library collection, which was released as shareware in 1997.

Matt Thompson was contacted and now SCSI SYS II created by Matt has been added to the Library. Matt is presently working on SCSI SYS III, or is at least considering the possibility.

Carl Boll and Brian Goers gave the IDE project report. Carl has 100 units and Brian has 100 units. Jim Hathaway has Beta Drive and is experiencing difficulty with it. It is thought that the problem might be that he has an obsolete version of either his CoCo or a CoCo peripheral. Also, he is trying to partition his drive.

New Business

Because of the imminent move of our President Mike Knudsen to greener pastures out east, we decided to keep out officers from the 1997 election until after the 1998 CoCoFEST. Tonight we had our 1998 election. Brian Goers of Steger, Illinois is now our President. Congratulations, Brian! Tony Podraza, Justin Wagner and Richard Bair have become or Vice Presidents for 1998. George Schneeweiss remains our Treasurer.

Gee, guess who gets to be Secretary again for '98? Yep, our very own Bob Swoger. He's so shy that he wouldn't mention that. You are also stuck with me, Carl Boll, as the editor for at least the rest of this year. -Ed.

Under OS9 User Group news, Colin McKay has not yet responded with the names and addresses of that group's members. Until that list can be acquired, Glenside can not proceed to annex that group into ours and the treasury of that group will be lost.

Letters of Bob Turner and Curtis Boyle were read. Bob Turner writes: "Do you still support the TRS-80 Color Computer? If so, may I have some info regarding your club?"

Robert Allen Turner
PO BOX 62
RIVERSIDE AL 35135-0062

[The newsletter should hold all the information that you need, Bob. One is now on its way to you. Ed.]

Curtis Boyle writes: " While at the Chicago CoCoFEST, I decided to buy some of the Sundog games (why

not, they were \$5.00 each). Contreras crashes on my 512K 6309 machine (during the hardware scrolling of the main title screen) consistently in the same spot. On my 512K 6809 backup machine, it works fine. Anybody else noticed this problem? I do have a 1986 GIME (the older one), but it is in both machines, so I don't think that is the problem. Also, I tried StockMaster's BASIC dual horizontal scrolling demo, thinking it may be the supposedly buggy horizontal scroll in older CoCos. It works fine. (I should also mention that a friend's 1986 GIME 128K CoCo3 that crashed during horizontal scrolling was COMPLETELY FIXED by simply replacing the stock 150 ns RAM chips with faster rated 120 ns ones... so the RAM speed seems to have a lot to do with horizontal scroll crashes).

And on a (sorta) related note: How does one get through the building at the end of the 1st level? It has been years since I had played the original arcade game (and the background music sounds familiar to what I remember), and can't remember how to do it (I assume shooting the entrance, but I did that literally for a fill minute and nothing happened). cboyle@sk.sympatico.ca "

The meeting adjourned 9:10 PM to the Springdale Restaurant for the meeting after.

Robert Swoger,

Secretary Glenside Color Computer Club

The Elections by: Carl Boll

Well, they are over. We held the Glenside elections and we have the officers for 1998. Mike Knudsen will be moving to Maine so we can't railroad...I mean elect him again.

That being the case we took nominations for the office of President. Brian Goers and Tony Podraza were nominated and Brian won the election due to Tony's support for him (can we say choo choo!).

Next nominations were taken for Vice President. I believe that Richard Bair, Tony Podraza and Justin Wagner were the nominees and they all won.

We took nominations for secretary, Howard Luckey and Bob Swoger were nominated but Howard declined the nomination. Needless to say, Bob is our Secretary for this year.

Last but not least, George Schneeweiss was unopposed as the Treasurer once again. George does such a good job that nobody wants to replace him!

Editor's Corner

By: Carl J. Boll

I made the announcement that if my services were still required as Editor of the newsletter I would continue on in that capacity. I also declined any nominations this year until I am employed again and we decide if the Chicago Area OS-9 Users Group will continue to exist and in what form.

Attendance has dropped dramatically at the OS-9 meetings so we must decide if we want to continue to meet. It just isn't worth it to only have two or three people show up at a meeting.

Carl J. Boll

Editor's Note:

Remember that this issue is a special edition...look for the advertising to reappear in the next issue which will be the August/September Issue.

Now for the NAG! There are people who will receive this newsletter that haven't paid their dues for this year (or possibly even for several years)! In order for us to maintain a healthy balance in our treasury we need you to pay your dues.

It is only with your continued support that we can continue to support the community by doing projects like the IDE interface and the CoCoFest. It would be a shame if we had to stop doing these projects because we didn't have enough paid members.

If you don't have a 98 or higher after your name, take a minute and write out a check to renew your membership right now, don't put it off, that's how it gets forgotten.

The information on where to send the check and how to make it out is on the second page of this newsletter. If there are any questions feel free to write to us or send E-mail to: root@chicoco.chi.il.us

Well, I am putting this special report newsletter to bed and it has grown many pages from its initial intended size. The first draft was 6 pages, it rapidly became 10 pages and now it is up to 18 pages now that we have Allen's report.

I decided to completely start over thanks to Al and his report. It was easier in the long run and looks better this way.

I also had my own report to put in but somehow when I posted it to the cocolist I deleted it from my own system (my mailer is supposed to keep a copy of everything I send out, it figures that it would screw up on this one).

We have had another meeting since I started this newsletter, the minutes will be in the next newsletter. I am also going to go to a new format in the next newsletter to try to conserve space. I'd like feedback on it.

Last but not least. Late breaking news. I am finally employed again. I finally applied for graduation and it was granted on May 15th from Daley College. I now have my Associate of Applied Sciences Degree in Computer Science. I will also mention that graduated with honors.

After graduating it became necessary to get a job again. This I did but it is not computer related. I have a job helping start up a manufacturing operation. Specifically I will be helping get a printing press that prints on plastic up and running. This will be the first press for this division and I am the lead person of a 1 man crew <grin>, sure hope I can get along with him (me).

A humorous aside is the fact that I have been sending out resumes for several weeks with no response and then within an hour of each other I got 2 phone calls to come in for interviews at companies that are not related and about 45 minutes from my house but only 5 blocks apart in the same township!

I decided to take the job of starting up the new press because it is a chance to get in on the ground floor of a new manufacturing operation with the chance of rapid promotions >IF< the operations is successful.

The moral of this is never give up. don't get discouraged or quit looking or trying. There is always something coming up that will be what you want.

Carl J. Boll

Did we mention it? The Glenside Color Computer Club High Tech! At some point in the near future we will have a very extensive web page (actually pages) thanks to Scott Griepentrog who is donating the disk space on his web server for the club's use. Thanks Scott!

Meeting Location:

**Glenside Public Library
25 West Fullerton Avenue
Glendale Heights, Illinois 60172**

Directions:

The Library is located on Fullerton, about one-half mile west of Bloomingdale Road. Fullerton is about one mile South of Army Trail Road and about one mile North of North Avenue (Route 64). Bloomingdale Road is about two miles West of 53 / I-355 / the North-South Tollway.

NEXT MEETING DATES:

JULY 9, 1998

AUGUST 13, 1998

JULY 9, 1998 AUGUST 13, 1998 SEPTEMBER 10, 1998
OCTOBER 8, 1998 NOVEMBER 12, 1998 DECEMBER 10, 1998

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