MOTD

President's Column
By Dale L. Puckett

Welcome to our second MOTD!

Peter Dibble, your Vice President; George Dorner, your treasurer; Dave Gibson, your acting Secretary; and I are glad you joined the OS-9 Users Group. We hope you'll get active and help us make OS-9 one of the most popular operating systems today.

USER GROUP DISK #0 SHIPPED

First, the good news. Frank Hogg's disk supplier finally shipped some disks to FHL and all members should have received by now. For those that are tracking the numbers, Frank mailed about 125 disks in the standard OS-9 format and approximately 180 more in the Radio Shack Color Computer OS-9 format.

Frank is doing a tremendous job for the group and this first project took two members of his staff more than a week. Frank donated their time and gave us the disks at cost.

You can find a hierarchical listing of the directories for Disk #0 elsewhere in this MOTD.

Our members will get an extra with their membership this year since Frank is giving all members a free subscription to "SoftNews" the new FHL magazine that covers 6809 software. Frank has hired some of the top authors in the field to provide SoftNews with interesting and often controversial editorial content. In addition to regular columns from six or eight regulars and editorial comments from Frank, you'll love the catalog enclosed in each issue. To a computer owner, it's like a Sears catalog at Christmas.

USER GROUP DISK #1 and #2 READY

Dave Kaleita, chairman of our software exchange committee has shipped the master of disks #1 and #2 to FHL. Members may order a copy of these disks by sending three dollars per disk to our Des Moines post office box.

You're reminded that if you donate a piece of software to our Users Group library, you will receive a free disk from the Users Group Library.

Disk #1 contains a complete spelling checker and a dictionary lookup program. The spelling checker was written by Eric Williams. It returns a list of words from your text that it can not find in its dictionary. The lookup program returns a list of words spelled like the word you're looking for.

You'll also find two utilities on this disk. Words, de compresses the dictionary and feeds a list of standard English language words to the standard output path. UnWords takes a list of words in alphabetical order and compresses it into the format used by the lookup program and the spelling checker.

Disk #2 contains an 80,000 word compressed dictionary designed to be used by the spelling checker and lookup program on Disk #1. You MUST have a double-sided, double-density drives to use this disk because of the length of the dictionary file.

Dave has done a fantastic job this year organizing our software holdings. Disks #3, #4 and #5 are nearing completion at this time also and Dave reports that he hopes to have them shipped to FHL by the end of May.

Disk #3 will contain a group of Word Processing Utilities. A number of games including a good Adventure and an excellent version of Othello is planned for Disk #4. And finally, Dave is packing Disk #5 full of useful system utilities. That's about all the packages Dave will be able to assemble this year. He's been running a one man band.

All the officers of your Users Group hope you enjoy this software and encourage you to donate your own favorite creation to the group. In addition to preparing software, Dave Kaleita also makes sure that all programs in our group library are uploaded into the XA-4 data base on Compuserve's OS-9 SIG.

If you do contribute software, please use the "DOCGEN" program that Dave supplied on Disk #0. This will make the Software Exchange Committee's job much easier.

SOFTWARE EXCHANGE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN NEEDED

Dave Kaleita hopes to attend graduate school in the fall in pursuit of an MBA. This means that he will not have time to manage the software library. If you would like to try to fill some big shoes please drop us a line. Even if you can only fill one shoe, let us know. We need more people on this committee. With a one man committee it's almost impossible to get anything done.

JIM BELLOMO DIES

The OS-9 community suffered a tremendous loss when Jim Bellemo died of a heart attack at the age of 34. Jim was one of OS-9's strongest proponents and established the OS-9 SIG on Compuserve. Everyone who read the message that weekend in March was shocked.

One of Jim's closest friends, Phil Mongelluzzo, most accurately expresses our feelings. "I cannot begin to express the admiration that I held for Jim. Perhaps the OS-9 SIG can become a living memorial of Jim's efforts. With the help of all of you, I am confident that we can continue the effort Jim began and create the knowledge base of OS-9 experts that Jim dreamed of."

"VAN" NAMED AS NEW SYSOP

Compuserve has named William A. Van Nest -- Van -- as the new Sysop of the OS-9 SIG. Van has a big job ahead of him but he's already done a tremendous job. His plans for the future include regular impromptu conferences on the SIG where we'll all be able to discuss problems, ask questions and find solutions. Van has also edited a shortened version of an instruction manual for the SIG and George Dorner hopes to squeeze as much of it as possible into this issue of MOTD. Van, we thank you for your support of the OS-9 Users Group and your hard work in helping Dave Kaleita upload our Software Exchange Library into the XA-4 base and the extra effort you have given us to get our members access as soon as we could provide their names.

YOU'LL HAVE A CHANCE IN THE UG RAFFLE

Jeanne Kaplan at Microware has donated a booth to the Users Group at the Third Annual OS-9 Users Seminar scheduled for Des Moines for August 17-20. We'll try to man the booth most of the time that the Exhibit Hall is open and give you a chance to sign up for a drawing of several packages of OS-9 software. Users Group members who are now present will also have a chance to win since we will put all their names into the hat before we start registering visitors to the booth. Of course, if you attend the show and register you'll have better odds at winning.

Jeanne said that Microware will be presenting technical sessions at two levels -- beginner and advanced -- for many of the subjects covered. Scheduled for the Marriott Hotel in Des Moines, it looks like a seminar to remember. Registration must be received by Microware, Box 4865, Des Moines, Iowa 50312 no later than August 4. The registration fee is $150.

As an added attraction, Microware has set aside two to three hours Saturday night and reserved a room for a meeting of the OS-9 Users Group. We hope to see you there.

NEW OFFICERS NEEDED

That brings me to another subject. The annual Microware Seminar has traditionally been the site of the annual meeting of the Users Group. It has also marked the election of officers for the group.

This year, because of the increasing membership and the fact that many of you will probably not be able to make it to Des Moines we are going to change the procedure. Here's how it will work.

We will take nominations for officers from the floor at the Users Group meeting and from the U. S. Mail. Persons nominated at Des Moines and those nominated by mail will be placed on a ballot and mailed to all members in September.

All members will then have a chance to vote for a new slate of officers to take office on January 1, 1985. Ballots must be returned to our Des Moines post office box no later than October 15, 1984. The ballots will be counted and the names of the new officers announced in a newsletter and on the Compuserve SIG in early November.

The DEADLINE for submitting your nomination or volunteering for an office will be August 4, 1984. Submit your name -- or the name of the person you are nominating -- and the office you wish to nominate the person for -- or volunteer for -- with a short bio to:

ELECTION
OS-9 USERS GROUP
P. O. Box 8027
Des Moines, IA 50301

ABOUT MOTD

Kudo's to Tom Murphy of SunTel in St. Louis for all the work he did as Secretary after our election in Des Moines last August. Fortunately for Tom and unfortunately for the Users Group, SunTel earned a tremendous new contract late last year and Tom was forced to resign his position in order to manage the new contract. Good Luck Tom! We miss you.

With Tom's resignation, I appointed Dave Gibson who works with the Federal Highway Administration to fill the remainder of Tom's term. Dave, we thank you and really appreciate your efforts at making this MOTD #2 possible. Welcome Aboard!

Russell Gorr who is active in the Northern New Jersey Computer Club has expressed an interest in publishing our newsletter and we hope to work out the details soon. Russell helped Sol Libes publish a newsletter that turned into a successful magazine for the CP/M crowd. This could be the start of something for MOTD.

Speaking of volunteers. Welcome Aboard Dick Dundon. Dick publishes a newsletter for 68XX users in the Pacific Northwest and has signed on with MOTD to do a regular column. We hope you enjoy, "The Age of Discovery, OS-9 in the Evergreen State." Thank you Dick.

MORE ABOUT MOTD

To be successful, MOTD must be your newsletter. Here's how it will work.

You send your article. It can be a short tip or a short piece of code to:

MOTD
OS-9 Users Group
P. O. Box 8027,
Des Moines, IA 50301

We'll run that tip or -- a major article in the very next issue. If we get a lot of contributions we'll be able to publish frequently. If one or two people have to write the whole MOTD, it will be published infrequently.

So, mail your tips, subroutines, tricks, gossip, dream sheets to MOTD. Russel, Dick, Dave or one of the officers will get it in print soon there after. Thank You.

GEORGE NEEDS HELP

One of George Dorner's major priorities this year is to get the Users Group's own bulletin board on the air. GIMIX has donated the time on one of their Levell III systems and we have already installed the telephone line and purchased a modem. It's getting close. If you know how to run a Bulletin Board under OS-9 and how to defeat the technical problems of this interface, please drop George a line.

OTHER COMMITTEES NEEDED

We hope to find someone who would like to help local Color Computer Clubs coordinate OS-9 activity. This will help everyone by increasing the exchange of information and provide a place for new CoCo OS-9 hackers to meet the oldtimers. You'll have a lot of freedom to design your own job if you volunteer for this one. You could also make a big name for yourself and become a VIP in the OS-9 community. Any takers? Same P. O. Box applies. Mark your envelope: Volunteer!

We could also use someone with library skills to prepare citations of OS-9 information. If we find someone we'll publish the information in MOTD and get it on to one of the XA data bases on Compuserve's OS-9 SIG. We may even put out a special pamphlet containing the citations. Here's your chance to become a respected author! Mark your envelope: Citations!

How about an education committee. If we had one we could send tutorials to OS-9 reps at the local club level. Why reinvent the wheel? We could also publish them in MOTD and get them on the OS-9 SIG. Who wants to go for it? Let's here from you. Mark the envelope: Education Committee.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Again, thank you for joining us. We hope you'll pitch in and make this a Users Group to be reckoned with. We're growing fast enough to make it work. Just thing with another five or six hundred members we could afford to hire a part -- or maybe even fulltime executive secretary to maintain services to our members.

Let's get together and make it work. Remember if you do nothing, you will gain nothing. If everyone sits and waits for 'Joe" to do it, the group will not live long and you will never get anything from it. It's up to you!

Have a nice summer!

Dale

THE COCO ADVOCATE
by Jim Schmidt

WHAT AND WHY?

The officers of the OS-9 USERS GROUP realize that COCO OS-9 users have special problems and considerations that differ from those of the long term OS-9 user. The disk format restrictions are a good example of this. TANDY has 'decided' that we COCO users need only 35 track single-sided disk drives in our systems and these drives should format non-standard disks. (A solution later in this column.)

Many of us have purchased OS-9 with little general understanding of operating systems and are confused when confronted with one as powerful and sophisticated as OS-9. Because OS-9 does so much, much must be learned. Frustration is not unknown to us as we try to get familiar with OS-9 from the supplied manuals.

Dale Puckett was good enough to call me one evening with some answers to my questions and frustrations. In the letter I had sent him, I broke a life long vow and volunteered to help our new USERS GROUP in any way that I could. He asked me to write this column in MOTD.

The title of the column states its purpose. An 'advocate' can be defined as 'one who speaks for' someone or something. I hope to 'speak for' the COCO OS-9 user to the OS-9 community and listen as well.

COCO ADVOCATE should be a focal point for the COCO user to turn to when a problem arises. It should also be a place to share ideas, inform each other and in a manner that reduces frustration while increasing understanding. Not a small task.

If it is to perform these stated functions, COCO ADVOCATE must have help. Those of you who have the experience and skills must help those of us who are trying to acquire them. If you are an experienced OS-9 user, and have an interest in the COCO, then please allow us to share your knowledge.

I am asking that a 'task force' of skilled people be formed to aid the COCO community. A few minutes of your time may make the difference between a productive

user and no user at all. It is from the COCO users that the GIMIX, Smoke, Helix or other SS50 users of the future will, for the most part, come. Too much frustration, too little help and we lose a potential user and create an adversary.

A task force member does not have to devote inordinate amounts of time to be useful. Just the willingness to take an occasional phone call or answer a letter will go a long way towards building a viable, stable COCO user base. No member of the task force will be deluged with calls and letters. All communication between a task force member and a COCO user requiring help will be filtered thru this column and its writer.

Please drop me a line in care of the OS-9 USERS GROUP (address elsewhere in MOTD) if you are willing to help. Let me know when I may contact you by phone to work out an arrangement to deal with user problems etc. that would be satisfactory to you. Indicate your experience and something about your general knowledge of OS-9. If you have a COCO please indicate that also.

If the COCO user is integrated into the OS-9 community in a manner comfortable to all, then we can expect a more attractive user base in terms of those who write software for OS-9. That means more and better software for us all.

WHAT ELSE?

Reviews of software for COCO OS-9 will be a regular part of this column. Also, product announcements, when I can be assured of a review to follow, will be printed. Books that can be of help to the COCO user will be reviewed. Hints, and tips from you will be passed along.

While it is probably accurate to state that I will take an occasional swipe at TANDY when they deserve it, and will probably make vendors of software I review a tad upset if their product is not up to its advertising, this column is not going to be a forum for the negative. Only constructive criticism, as I am able to so judge, will appear here.

THE FIRST REVIEW

I mentioned earlier in the column the problem that is probably most upsetting to COCO users; the disk situation. Off the shelf, COCO OS-9 allows only single-sided, 35 track, slow stepping, non-standard format disks.

In my experience with computer companies over the 30 plus years I have been involved in data processing, it has not been that unusual for one or another to try and force its users under an 'umbrella'. I guess TANDY hopes we will learn to love those little 35 track 30ms drives even though they so greatly inhibit the use of OS-9 as to be almost silly.

Years ago, users were more timid than they are today. Even IBM which, I think, invented the 'umbrella' marketing concept has learned that you can't do that stuff any more. Users will get what they need somewhere. IBM, by its policy, CREATED the 'plug compatible' industry and the 'second source' software industry in the world of mainframes.

Now here comes TANDY trying to limit us to their drives. We don't have to accept this either. There are dozens of 40 and 80 track drives, single-sided or double-sided available at prices that make the TANDY drive a waste of your money.

Instead of offering us what we need, they corrupted the drivers to try to force us to live with the situation. Did they think we would really do so? Oh well...

I recently purchased SDISK, which is the answer to ALL these disk problems. It allows you to run any combination of 35, 40 or 80 track drives, single or double sided. SDISK will also allow you to choose between the COCO OS-9 format and the STANDARD OS-9 format when formatting disks. Yes, you can run BOTH formats on the COCO.

SDISK comes with a device descriptor generator program. That means that you can create descriptors for disk drives at any time should you change or add new drives. And, you can create bootable disks that are double-sided with an optional program called BOOTFIX.

Also included with SDISK (which replaces that CCDISK thing) is SFORMAT which replaces the stock format program. One little limitation exists. Only 3 drives

can operate under SDISK instead of the 4 CCDISK allows. This is because the fourth select line is needed to select side.

At the max, you have the following disk devices under SDISK:

D0 - COCO FORMAT
SD0 - STANDARD FORMAT
D1 - COCO FORMAT
SD1 - STANDARD FORMAT
D2 - COCO FORMAT
SD2 - STANDARD FORMAT

Are you wondering why you should keep the COCO format? Why not just use the STANDARD format? Well, most converted software for the COCO will probably be sold on COCO format disks. Also, you get a few more sectors on the COCO format disks over STANDARD.

These goodies are offered by:

D. P. JOHNSON
7655 S.W. Cedarcrest St.
Portland, OR 97223

SDISK alone costs $29.95, with BOOTDISK $35.95. This includes the device descriptor generator and SFORMAT programs.

SDISK can also be purchased from FRANK HOGG LABS at the same price. Johnson charges only $1.00 for shipping.

The instructions that come with the software are easily readable. He steps you thru the process. It will be necessary to understand the basics of OS-9 to install the package. Help is available from Johnson by phone. I called him to test this out, and he was most helpful.

It does seem a shame that TANDY didn't provide all of the above. It seems to me that they have this uncanny ability to offer about 80% of what the consumer wants and needs.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: AT THE OS-9 SEMINAR, AUG. 84, KEN KAPLAN EXPLAINED THAT TANDY CHOSE THE 35 TRACK FORMAT TO BE COMPATIBLE WITH THEIR DISK COPYING EQUIPMENT FOR THEIR OTHER MACHINES WHICH AT THAT TIME WERE ALL IN THAT FORMAT. PERHAPS NOW THAT THE SYSTEM 2000 IS OUT TANDY WILL CONSIDER OFFERING THAT SYSTEMS HIGH CAPACITY FORMAT FOR THEIR OTHER COMPUTERS ? LET THEM KNOW YOU WANT IT !)

NEXT TIME

We'll get into some of the software that has been converted for the COCO. I'll report how the mail is going and what I hear you saying. And, I'll review a book that will be of great help in using BASIC09 in a structured fashion.

Until Then, Have Fun .... Jim

Bulletin Board Activities

Efforts at establishing a true OS-9 Bulletin Board System are progressing at a snail's pace. A huge and very professional program was contributed by one of our members over a year ago and Gimix has contributed facilities on which to place the system. What's the hold up?

The problem is primarily a shortcoming within OS-9 itself. This betrays itself in the inability to handle situations in which someone hangs up on the system without "exiting gracefully". A number of people have looked at the problem, most of them very expert in the internal workings of OS-9, but so far we don't have a solution. We really don't want to put up a system which is not "bullet proof", so we lumber along with the crude OSNINE BBS which has existed since May of 1982.

A commercial program is available for the COCO under OS-9, but I have heard that it has the same problem. Do you Qzve an answer to this problem. If so, contact us at once so we can go forward with the plans, formulated on OSNINE long ago, to establish our "Dream BBS".

In the interim, dial up OSNINE to see what is going on there. The recent thrust has been toward problems of new COCO OS-9 users, and there is a lot of activity there.

To access OSNINE:

Set XON and XOFF to 00 using Tmode or Xmode

Dial 312-397-8308 or 312-397-8380

When the connection is established, send a <CR><LF> or <CTRL M><CTRL J>. Repeat until you see PLEASE LOG IN.

Type HELLO-G500,,3 followed by a <CR> and you should be in the system.

Some tips:

Some COCO users have had trouble with backspaces. Try using HELLO-G500,,2 or experiment with other numbers which may work better with your program or terminal.

Read Message #10 the first time you are on. It gives some indication of the organization of old messages.

REMEMBER that you can't break a message as on most systems and there is no type-ahead.

Organize Local OS-9 Groups!!

There have been a number of reports of efforts to get local OS-9 interest groups off the ground. From communications received by the officers, it is clear that there are "critical masses" of members in the San Francisco area, in other parts of California, in Oregon, in Washington state, and in Oklahoma City. By the time you read this a meeting will have been held in the Chicago area, and there may have been a get-together at the Rainbow-Fest in Chicago.

It only takes one enthusiastic person to get such a group started. For example, John Chasteen of Wood Dale, IL organized the meeting in Chicago by reserving a room at his local library and publicizing it on local bulletin boards and to the officers of local computer clubs. The UG pitched in by providing labels to all Illinois members. (We will be glad to do this for any local group, too, but commercial requests for the mailing list should be addressed to the President of the UG. There will be a modest charge for commercial users. Recall that members have the option of indicating that their name not be included in any distribution of the member list.)

We recommend that the first meeting be casual and designed chiefly to let people get to know one another. Discussions about by-laws, officers, newsletters, dues, and other mundane matters should be deferred until it is clear that a local group is viable. Commercial presentations should be minimized at the outset, but ways should be explored to involve patrons without compromising the goals of the group and the opinions of the members.

Someone should pass the torch for organizing the next meeting, if any, and a local information source should be established. We will be glad to list such contact points here in the MOTD, on the OSNINE BBS, and on The OS-9 Forum on CompuServe. Above all, seek the best local methods to get the information, expertise, and enthusiasm of OS-9 flowing.

A number of other users groups have organized nationally as a "group of groups". The International Apple Corps is such an organization, with elected regional representatives, a slick magazine, and a number of commercial software ventures independent of Apple, Inc. A ham group I am a member of was organized not-for-profit in Tucson, and passed certain duties and tasks on to local groups when the load became too heavy. Their newsletter is now produced by the local group in Minneapolis.

Shortly after the foundation of this group on a provisional basis (in the summer of 1982), one of the collaborators on BASIC09 opined that such a group would probably not be successful unless it could establish a permanent office, hire a secretary, and support a budget of $30,000 annually. I disagreed strenuously at the time, but I now have experienced the reality that four or five well-intentioned users can't really keep a group of this magnitude going in their spare time. Perhaps the "group of groups" concept will be a way in which our growing pains may be eased.

George Dorner
Treasurer

To Members of the Users Group Who Reside Outside the U. S.

The officers of the OS-9 Users Group recognize that each member confronts problems of time, distance and possibly language. Their response was to establish an office of Foreign Liaison. I have volun-

teered my services in this capacity to help balance the workload and to help the UG be more responsive to your needs.

As you may perceive, I dislike the word "foreign" because it has a negative connotation even though is seems to be the most apt word. Because we are united through the sharing of common interest in computer science and particularly in the OS-9 operating system, I shall regard the word "foreign' only in the geographical sense. I also regard the responsibilities of the post more in the sense of an ombudsman in that the incumbent should help to ease the frustrations imposed by the obstacles of time, distance, and the necessity of having to communicate by means of written correspondence. Therefore, I shall invite anyone who experiences any of the above problems to take advantage of my services.

Please advise me of your needs and/or problems. If I cannot resolve the matter then I will act as your agent with the other officers or with others here in the States.

I also request that all members put forward any ideas or suggestions that would improve service to our members outside the United States or which would help others actively participate in the OS-9 Users Group.

My mailing address is:

J. Frank Fields
Post Office Box 1268
Bethany, OK 73008

(EDITOR'S NOTE: There are about 31 Canadian members. There are about 15 other foreign members mostly in Europe, Australia and South Africa. Perhaps a Canadian special interest section is in order ? How about it ? Also, what about remaming the Office of Foreign Liaison the Office of International Liaison ? You the members determine questions like this.)

THE OS-9 FORUM ON COMPUSERVE

Following is a sample log-on and a session on The OS-9 Forum. All user responses are underlined and bold-faced in the following. Normally such an entry is also followed by a carriage return. This is taken from the guide to the Forum which may be obtained by sending a large self-addressed envelope with two first class stamps to the Des Moines address. Many thanks to VAN, who stepped in as SYSOP when Jim Bellomo unfortunately passed away. VAN is doing a fine job in advancing OS-9 interests on this Forum.

***** After dialing the local CIS phone number ...

```
     ^C
     (A CTRL-C gets you started.)

User ID:  12345,678

Password:  PASS.WORD

CompuServe Information Service

13:23 CST Saturday 14-Apr-84

What's New This Week:

 * OS-9 Available on MC-10
 * Lotus 1-2-3 Available on OS-9
 * COCO Adds 132 Character Screen
 * None of the above are true

Key S or <ENTER> to continue!
 GO PCS18

 CompuServe Page PCS-18
 Request Recorded,
 One Moment, Please
 Thank you for Waiting
 Welcome to "The OS9 Forum",V.  2C(10)

 Name:  Fred Farb 12345,678
 Last on:  12-Apr-84 01:59:52
 High msg#:  2303

 You are user number 7472
 System contains messages
 2013 to 2350
 Brief bulletin:
  (Updated 4 April, 1984)
```

Several "help" files pertaining to the use of the OS9 Forum commands now reside in XA0 and may be easily identified by the extension of ".HLP". Also in XA0 is the file "UGMEM.TXT" which describes the procedure to join the National OS9 User's Group (not affiliated with CIS).

Please read the Forum Bulletin by entering the command "B" at the "Function:" prompt.

Also, please review the new Section categories by entering the "SN" command at the same prompt.

Wm. A. Van Nest ("Van")
OS9 Forum SysOp
76703,467

Function: I

SIG Instructions NOTE: These have been edited for this guide.

Retrieve Commands:

RF # - Retrieves messages in ascending serial order from number #

RI # - Retrieves an individual message number #

RM - Retrieves marked messages (marked in SM, see below)

RN - Retrieves messages left since last on

RR # - Retrieves messages in reverse serial order from number #

RS - Retrieves messages by searching.

RT - Retrieves messages in "thread" sequence, displaying messages in topical order as determined by those who left them

RTN - Read Thread New, a combination of RN and RT

Retrieval Options (Replying to the Option prompt):

<CR> - Continues with next message

D - Deletes a message sent by you or to you

NS - No stop between messages unless one is sent to you or by you

RE - Reply to this message. Prompts are automatic. Retrieval continues after reply message is left.

RP - Read Previous; if the current message is a REply, this option will display the message that was REplied to, if it still exists.

RR - Read Replies; if the current message has been REplied to, the R option will search for the reply. Successive RRs will search for subsequent REplies to the same message.

T - Interrupts retrieval and returns you to command level. Note that if NS is in effect, then Control-P does the same thing.

Sections:

The Sysop has activated "Sections" for this SIG. Sections are a means of partitioning the messages into specific areas of interest. Each Section has a name which indicates the nature of the information to be contained there. The Sysop also controls access to the various Sections. The SN command gives a list of the available Sections. Section 4 is accessible only to current members of the OS-9 Users Group. However, if a message is addressed to you from ANY Section, then you will receive it, and may REply to it. REplies will always go to the same Section as the message being REplied to. These commands are available:

SN - Section Names; displays the names of Sections which you may access

SS # - Set Section to # . After using this command, any message retrievals will be from the given Section only.

SSALL- retrievals will be from all accessible Sections.

Scan Commands:

S # - Scans message headers from number #. Asks if you want a Forward or Reverse scan.

SD # - Scan/Display; does a Forward scan of message headers, and gives the option to Read the message or continue to the next header. If the message was sent to you, or by you, you may also Delete it.

SF # - Scans message headers in ascending serial order from number #

SR # - Scans message headers in descending serial order from number #

SM # - Scans message headers and allows you to mark them for RM retrieval. (Asks Forward or Reverse).

SMF # - Forward marked scan.

SMR # - Reverse marked scan.

Leave Command:

L - Leave a message. The initial prompts are self-explanatory. A message is terminated by inputting a blank line or entering a cntl-Z. At that point, you will be asked for a Subcommand:

sA - abort this message

C - continue entering

D# - delete line #

E# - edit line #; will prompt for search and replacement strings. The edit Subcommand may also be entered as: E#;search;replacement It will display the new line and you will be asked to confirm the change.

I# - insert before #

L - list entire text as entered

L# - list line # only

L#,# - list the given range of lines

P# - preview message in # columns (if # omitted, uses current width-set for your terminal)

R# - replace line #

S - save message

S# - will save the message in Section #

Use Address Command:

UA - Used to start a new thread by sending a message to the name and PPN from whom you have received a message. A new subject will be asked for.

Setting User Changeable Options (OP):

Terminal Options:

LL - Sets terminal line length at number of characters

NL - Sets number of lines displayable on your terminal

PG - Sets up output as paged. Pauses between pages set by NL. Note that paged output is normally meaningful only if the STop option is in effect also.

NPG - No paging. No pauses between output pages. (PG or NPG status marked with *).

PC - Prompt Character; asks you for a character which will be used everytime SIG prompts you for input. For example, you could define the PC to be ^E (control-E, or 05 hex), and just before any input is obtained, SIG will transmit a control-E. Note also that the PC is in addition to any other prompt strings that might be used by the SIG program.

Message Retrieval Options:

ST - Stops output between retrieved messages

NS - No stop between retrieved messages (ST or NS status marked with *)

BR - (Brief) Suppress typing of possible Commands, Subcomands, or Options. This may also be set by the Brief option in DEFALT.

NB - Not brief.

TWM - upon entry to SIG, if there are any messages addressed to you by name and/or User ID, they will be typed (member only).

MWM - instead of typing waiting messages, simply mark them for retrieval with the RM command (member only).

RNS - RN command skips messages which you left (members only)

RNT - RN command types messages which you left (members only)

Multiple Commands:

Multiple commands can be separated by semicolons.

Example: OP;LL 32;T;RR 9900

This means "do OP command, set line length at 32 characters, return to top of main menu, and reverse retrieve from #9900."

Output Formatting:

At the beginning of an input line:

. (period) - Forces output to begin a new line

.># - Moves left margin # of spaces to right

.< - Moves beginning of line to column 1, regardless of the .># value.

.>0 - Clears margin set.

A leading space will often be useful to maintain column spacing.

Control Keys:

Ctrl-P -Aborts output and returns user to command level

Ctrl-S - Freezes output

Ctrl-Q - Restarts output after Ctrl-S

Ctrl-O - Allows user to skip message text while retrieving

Ctrl-C - Aborts output and allows instant exit.

Other Features:

B - Allows member to read bulletins from Sysop

CO - Enters the Conference system. Here the user may converse with Other users and participate in scheduled conferences, and do so in real time.

E - Exit from the SIG.

M - If the user entered from DISPLA, returns there

MI - Allows user to read membership information

NEW- Types a list of new features. You may use this whenever the displayed Version number changes to find out what new features or changes have occurred since the previous version. Information will be entered in the inverse order of changes.

OFF- Ends the current job and disconnects your terminal from the system

BYE- Same as OFF

R x-Exit from this SIG and transfer to the SIG named x

T - Exit to the top DISPLA menu

UST- Displays users currently in the Forum

U - Lists log-in record from most recent back. Abort with CTRL-P

V - Allows member to read or search database of user interests

VER - Displays SIG name and version

X - Lists section descriptor file

XA - Allows member to enter the program database.

Function: BYE (OFF may also be used.)

```
Exiting at 14-Apr-84 14:03:06
Last message on system:  2354
High message retrieved:  2352
Thank you for visiting "The OS9
Forum"
Off at 14:14 CST 14-Apr-84
Connect time = 0:21
```

WHY DOES IT TAKE SO LONG?

Several members have asked - let's face it, they have complained - just why it has taken so long for some of the membership processing. Well, there are a number of answers, and the chief one is the lack of cheap or willing labor. Here is what is supposed to happen.

When your letter arrives at Des Moines, it waits until a volunteer from Microware picks it up. The letters are saved until there are enough to justify sending them in a package to the treasurer in the

Chicago area. This has been happening about once a week. From there, the checks are gathered and banked (foreign currency takes special handling), and the data is entered into our membership data base. Finally, we are using the DynaMail program donated to the Group at the last OS-9 Seminar. Until recently, we were using another approach which was not very convenient. The conversion of the data to DynaMail caused another mammoth delay. Lists of new members are sent to the Vice-President, who deals with diskette distribution, and to the President, who welcomes each new member with a letter. Special letters are sent by the Treasurer to those who fail to include diskette information. (Sometimes this step has slipped, and sometimes it hasn't worked. At least ten people returned the letters with the diskette info written on them, but WITHOUT their names for identification. Peter has "guessed" at what diskette to send in some cases, but at the moment about 55 out of our approximately 450 members do not have accurate diskette data in our data base.) A list of new members will be sent to Van, the SYSOP of The OS-9 Forum on CompuServe (this is new), and info on new foreign members will be sent to J. Fields, the Foreign Liaison officer. You may see that there is plenty of room here for delays. Also, we are human, make errors, have to delay handling OS-9 business until there is food on the table, and take vacations. So far, about 98.2% of all the work which has been done for, to, and by the OS-9 Users Group since August has been done by the four (now three) officers and Dave Kaleita, the software chairman. Let's not forget the Frank Hogg organization who distributed diskette #0 - but who also had a considerable delay in getting the right diskettes to do the job.

We think we have the data base under control now. (I observed to a friend last week that I would rather clean up after our two kittens than try to clean up another dirty data base.) Our procedures are almost at a point that we could have them done by a student helper or a Kelly girl. What we desperately need is a way to parlay all of the offers to help into some real, useful work. We have not beat that one yet.

The officers have talked to many of the folks who got "lost" or who complained about how things are going. Everyone I talked to was understanding, especially when they found out how large our "staff" is. To the rest of you, thanks for your patience and understanding. Don't hold back if you have not heard from us in a month or so after sending your check. In that case, there is probably a foul-up, and we need to know.

ADDRESS CHANGE FOR UG

After the Microware seminar in August, MW will change their own P.O. Box to one which is closer to their new location. Thus, since their folks (thanks Carmen) pick up our mail and forward it to us, we will be changing our mailing address, too. We don't know what it will be, and your letters will be forwarded to the new address for three months, but make a mental note that this change is coming. We'll fill you in on the new address as soon as we get it.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FROM OSNINE

Here are a few interesting exchanges edited from the OSNINE bulletin board.

Q. Why can't I use more than 40K with BASIC09?

A. The BASIC09 module itself uses 24K (it started out to be an 8K BASIC!) and the same address space as its variable memory. The sum of the two can't exceed 64K on a Level I system.

Q. Why was a different disk format used on the RS COCO OS-9?

A. Tandy made the choice because of their many high speed diskette duplication machines.

Q. Is the scope of TYPE declarations, ONERROR/GOTO statements, and the like local or global?

A. The scope is local. This means that the statements only operate on the current BASIC09 process. The main reason that it is designed this way is may be because of the decoupling of procedures that work together to perform tasks. There is not an easy way to implement globality of data referencing within the compilation format that BASIC09 uses. A complete discussion of this format may be found in the book

"Writing Interactive Compilers and Interpreters" by P. J. Brown, John Wiley and Sons, 1979. This has been discussed at the Microware seminars. Some problems which come up because of this limitation may be addressed by the use of "global data modules", also discussed at the seminars and in Peter Dibble's columns in '68 Micro Journal.

Q. Why does the LOAD command look at the disk first? If it looked at memory first to check the module directory, the size of the execution directory could be reduced and disk I/O could be reduced?

A. The LOAD command looks at the disk first because one of its primary uses is to get a higher revision level than any which may already be in memory. If you are issuing LOAD commands from OS-9 calls within a program, you may wish to issue a LINK call first. Then, if the LINK fails, you may issue a LOAD call.

Q. Where may I learn how to program in BASIC09?

A. Well, there's Dale Puckett's book which is put out by Microware and should really be out by the time you read this. That is the best place to start. Otherwise, almost any Pascal text will aim you toward use of the structures in BASIC09 which are not in most BASICs. A favorite text at a higher level than Dale's book and which differs from BASIC09 only in two major ways is "Structured BASIC and Beyond", Wayne Amsbury, Computer Science Press, 11 Taft Court, Rockville, MD 20850.

Q. What do the string selecting functions LEFT$, RIGHT$, and MID$ do when the length of the substring selected is greater than the length of the string it is being selected from?

A. They hand back what the can get if the string isn't long enough for what they were told to retrieve.

Q. How can I look inside a file or a diskette to see what is really on it?

A. Open a path name which ends with @. For example, DUMP /D0@ will dump the whole diskette starting at sector 0 and continuing to the end of the diskette. Be careful if you write to a disk this way. It is easy to hopelessly screw up a diskette with OS-9's linked list type of directory structure.

Q. If I set CHD /D0, are DIR and DIR /D0 equivalent.

A. No. They are only equivalent if you have not swapped diskettes prior to issuing the DIR or DIR /D0 commands. If you have changed diskettes, the second command will always work while the former may give an error of #215 or #216.

Q. What happens if I do a PROG1 ! PROG2 and PROG1 doesn't exist?

A. The shell gets very confused. Try to set up your program so that PROG1 gets an end-of-file or is killed by the shell or is other terminated in this case.

Q. Can you use ... the same way you use ..?

A. Yes., ... is the parent directory of .. which is the parent of the directory . . (Hard sentence to punctuate!) Similarly, ... is the parent of ... and so on. We know this has been verified to directories ten levels deep (it is even useful on the User Group's diskette #0!). This is not mentioned in the OS-9 manual, but it is standard with UNIX.

Comment: I dictated these on my pocket recorder and asked my secretary to copy them off while I was on vacation. When I read the transcript of the last one, I saw: "..., but it is standard with eunuchs". I showed Eva the correct spelling of UNIX next to her "typo", and she responded, "Well, you never know what sitting in front of those computers all day will do to you!"

THIRD ANNUAL OS-9 USERS SEMINAR

Microware Systems Corporation will hold the Third Annual OS-9 Users Seminar on August 17 through 20 at the Marriott Hotel in Des Moines.

This is a meeting of commercial representatives, users, OEMs, and various technical types who will congregate to see what new developments will be coming from Microware and from the OS-9 community. Last year, the big news was that OS-9 would be available for the Radio Shack

Color Computer. This year it may well be the expansion of the 68000 version of OS-9 which was also discussed last year but which now actually exists on available machines. Attendees have come from Japan, Europe, and South America the last two years. Almost thirty commercial exhibits were at last year's affair. Also, the "after hours" sessions are very interesting and lots of fun.

The tab is pretty high, $125 for the fee plus housing, food, and travel. A banquet on Friday evening and a brunch on Sunday have been included in the past. More details will be available from Microware at 515-224-1929 or write them at their new digs at 1866 N.W. 114th Street, Des Moines, IA 50322. You won't regret coming.

A session for the Users Group will be included and there will be some merchandise awards given by drawing to UG members. The official part of our elections will probably held there, but we are working on ways to get the whole membership involved in that without requiring attendance (as has been the case the last two years).

By the way, this is NOT the User Group's meeting; it is Microware's! The OS-9 Users Group was conceived at this Seminar in May of 1982 and the current officers were put in place at the second one last August. It only makes sense that we meet there again this year, and that the UG be represented at any of these seminars. The software swap of the UG also got off the ground there last year. However, as we grow we shall look at the possibility of additional or alternate national or regional meetings which will be more accessible to members of the Group. Your suggestions will be welcome.

Hope to see you at Des Moines.

```
Directory:/d 84/04/27 21:46:47

   SRC
      SYSTEM_UTILITIES
         ASM
            ddir
            help
            install
         BASIC09
            attr_chg
            ileav
            bootsplit
            listn
            dlist
            qdir
            MODLIST
            HDIR
      FILE_MAINTENANCE
         BASIC09
            REHOOK
            HDEL
            HCOPY
            DocGen
      COMMUNICATION
         ASM
            Remote
         BASIC09
            Lload
   CMD
      Modem
      Help
      Print_MW
      List
      Mfree
   HELP
      Lload
      DocGen
      Help
      Commands
      List
      Print_MW
      DDir
      Install
      Attr_Chg
      Ileav
      BootSplit
      ListN
      DList
      QDir
      ModList
      HDir
      ReHook
      HDel
      HCopy
      Remote
    ReadMe
```

J O I N O S-9 U S E R S G R O U P

The OS-9 Users Group has been formed to foster communications between users of OS-9. Our plans and expectations include the establishment of several means for members to communicate their interests, concerns, questions, and software. At the moment, the concrete activities of the Group include an occasional newsletter, a bulletin board system, a software exchange mechanism, and a national members meeting.

Current officers of the OS-9 Users Group who were elected at the meeting in Des-Moines in August are:

President: Dale Puckett
Vice-President: Peter Dibble
Treasurer: George Dorner

The group is independent of Microware and may not be reached through their offices or phones.

To join the OS-9 Users Group, send a check or money order for $25 to the address listed. Include the following information:

Name_____

Address_____

City_____

State/Country_____ Zone_____

Phone Number _____

CompuServe Number_____

Type of OS-9: Color Computer ____

Level One____ Level Two____

Hardware manufacturer_____

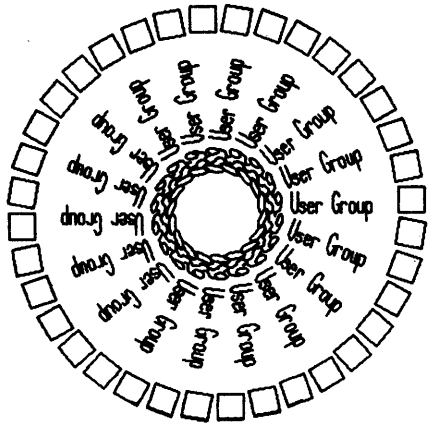
Floppy Disk size 5"___ 8"___

If you do not wish your name to be distributed with a list of members, please indicate here:_____

Include suggestions and volunteer information with your application.

Send to:

OS-9 Users Group
P.O. Box 8027
Des Moines, IA 50301



OS-9 USERS GROUP
P.O. BOX 8027
DES MOINES, IA 50301

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 45796
WASHINGTON, DC