

Manistee Area Color-Computer User's Newsletter

MARCH 1991

ISSUE #2

Hi again!

Here it is, our second issue already! These things seem to be getting closer together as the number of issues go by. As you can see, I'm still doing the Newsletter on the Mac. I've just about had it with Newspaper Plus. Too many hassels with errors, headers, and a few other things. I'll keep working on it though! I've thought long and hard about using Max-10 to do the Newsletter, but we will have to sacrifice a couple of things in the process. One of them being that it will be in a single column format. A couple of us tried and tried on several different occasions to get Max-10 to do multi-column's, with no success. If anyone out there knows of the way to get it to do more than one column, PLEASE let me know! I would like to do it on the Max-10, but really don't want to have the Newsletter in one column. I understand that Wordpower 3.3 has the option of multi-column format and also incorporates graphics, (Pmode 3,4, and Coco-Max, I believe). So far, this sounds to me like the way to go. It will probably be a few more issues before I get that chance.

Well, I haven't gotten any input yet from you as to articles for the Newsletter. It is getting harder to come up with articles of interest if I don't know what interests you. Let me know what you want to seen in here! Better yet, take a few moments to type up a few lines to help fill the gaps, (both in my mind, and the Newsletter). This issue, you may see a bit more devoted to OS-9, as that is what I've been working on this past month. There are some interesting things in the Archives Disks! Also, I have found a few things on my hard-drive that aren't available on any of the stuff we have in the library. (That re-

minds me, I should get around to listing all the files that we have in the library, in the Newsletter. That might even be a good topic for a page.....Art?) :-)

Well, hope you find this issue to your liking, and if you don't, well then give me a holler and we'll see if you can help us out! Until next time.....

Harlen

I am looking into the possibility of putting the Newsletter into disk format as well as keeping it "hard-copied". I have thought of several different ways of making it pretty interesting in the disk-based format. A couple of these would include:

Having CocoMax generated title screen(s) to give it a "graphic" look to it.

Having a menu, upon which to pick out he text file you would like read at any given time.

Making sure each topic is still in text format (ASCII) so as to allow one to print out any given file that they would like to have a hard-copy of.

Having it on disk would allow me to bring just one copy to the meeting, and have those interested in the Newsletter, copy it to a disk that they bring to the meeting each week. Or, have those interested, give me two disks for their copy of the Newsletter. I say two disks, because, I can make a copy of one month's issue on the first disk, give it to the person and let them look at it at their leisure, and then putting the next month's issue on the second disk, giving that to them at the next meeting, and getting back the first disk to put the third issue on, (follow me?).

Let me know what you think of the whole deal.

Harlen

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

PAGE

Welcome back to the Telecommunications page!

This month, I'd like to announce that one of our members is "this" much closer to setting up a BBS in the area. Nelson, having just set up his hard drive, (see MISC. Page), has eliminated one of the toughest parts of getting the thing going. Now, with the help of the OS-9 operating system, he should be pretty darn close to going on-line! Even if it's just a message based system, I'm sure we will appreciate it.

I would like to take up some space and talk to you about what can be found on Delphi. Delphi is a large BBS located in Mass. that is in the same lines as CompuServe, Genie, etc. There are literally thousands of people that can be gotten ahold of there, including, Marty Goodman and other Rainbow writers and contributors. One useful feature of Delphi is a News-Weather-Sports section (updated every 15 minutes), that has the current headlines of current events around the world. Since Jan. 16th, they even have a Gulf Hotline, where up-to-the-minute reports are placed for easy access. You can enter the News area, answer which area you want, (News, Weather, or Sports) and then are prompted for the general area you would like to scan from. Once you give a few details on where you want to be, a series of "Headlines" are displayed, from newest to oldest, a page at a time. You simply select, the headline number you want to read, or "more" for the next page of headlines. Once you select a headline, it is displayed, in newsprint format, a page at a time. Or, you can send it direct to your workspace for quick downloading at a latter time. It really is a simple way to get a different perspective on the news!

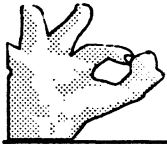
One of my favorite parts of

Delphi, is the (Rainbow sponsored) Color Computer and OS-9 Sig. (special interest group). Here is where you will find alot of helpful information about the coco, as well as being able to talk directly to some of the people that you only read about in the Rainbow. There is also a place to send your comments, questions and complaints straight to Rainbow. The Database in these two areas, is enough to make a monk drool! The database is divided into different topics, like Utilities, General Information, Games, Hardware Hacking, etc. From here, you can either type "dir" to get a directory of all items, or search, using different keywords, for a specific program. You can then download this program onto your computer for use later. There are alot of GREAT programs available. This is where I get some of the harder to find stuff. It took me almost 9 months to locate a terminal program before I joined Delphi, but once I did, I had around three of them within a week or two!

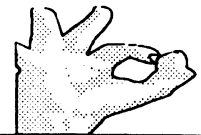
There are also text files available, from some of the more knowledgeable people in the Coco world, on different topics such as discriptions on how to wire up another disk drive or two to your system, comments on other operating systems, and one that I found the other day, how to "hack" a direct connect modem to work as a RS-232 pak!

In conclusion, I would have to say that Delphi is one of the best sources of information, programs and direct access to a great bunch of people that money can buy! I would highly recomend it to anyone that doesn't mind spending a few bucks for a whole lot of fun.

-Harlen



OPERATING SYSTEM #9



This month, we will take a look at the two methods of archiving files. This should be an important topic, as the club library has around 20 disks full of archived files that, when un-archived, will fill a great deal more than that. There are some pretty interesting files located in these disks, if you want to take the time to pull them out of the archive.

Here are the breakdowns on the two programs:

AR

Syntax: ar -(cmd) ((modifier))
filename

Options:

(cmd)

t= show table of contents of archive

u= update/add file(s) to archive

p= print file(s) from archive

x= extract file(s) from archive

(modifier)

a= all versions (for extract)

s= suppress file compression

z= read names for (cmd) from

std input

Filename can include the meta characters * and ?, or pathlist.

Notes:

The * and ? characters mentioned, are wildcard options that, when listed will produce the following results:
= all files; test.= all files with test as a filename and any extension; *.txt= all files with txt as an extension; ?.*= any file with a one letter filename and any extension. You begin to catch the drift.

Output will be the current working directory you happen to be in. For those with two drives, I would suggest putting a freshly formatted disk into drive 1 and typing: chd /d1. This will put the files being de-arc'd, onto drive one. (With the archive disk in drive 0 and the new disk in drive 1, syntax for de-arc'ing a file

would be: chd /d1

ar -x /d0/filename

For those with ramdisk capability, typing: chd /r0, will greatly speed up the process. This method is favored if you want to "test" the files first or want to read the docs that come with it. (If you decide you don't want the set, just reformat /r0 to get rid of it!)

My personal preference on the de-arc'ing process goes as follows: First make sure AR is loaded into memory and that my ramdisk is ready to go; find a arc'ed file that sounds interesting; chd /r0; ar -t /d0/filename; tmode pause; list /r0/filename.doc; read the docs for the program to decide if it's something; 1) that I think I can use, 2) the process to run it is something I think I can handle at the time, or 3) it's time to try to handle that process, (at first, opening up graphic screens was difficult for me, even now, I have a time!)

One other thing to mention. Before you un-arc a file, make sure that you have enough space on the disk to put the un-arc'd file on. Mistakes like these make a person blush even if no one is around!

I haven't played around with all the cmds and modifiers yey, so let me know if something interesting pops up!

PAK

Syntax: pak -(options) outfile
(filelist ... up to 40 filenames)

Options:

a=add files to a pak

m=move files to a pak

u=update files in a pak

e,x=EXtract files from a pak

r=remove files from a pak

p=print files from a pak to stdout

d,l=directory(list) of files in a pak

t=test integrity of files in a pak

b=build/keep backup (.BAK)

version

s=suppress all compression

Notes:

PAK works similar to AR, but has a few more details that can happen. For instances: Name of packed file, date/time stamp, orig. length, pak'ed length, and action. Orig. length will be the length of the file in it's original form, pak'ed length will be the length of the file when pak'ed, action is kind of a status report of what's happening while PAK is working. This feature also tells how the file was compressed, (ie. Crunched, Squeezed, etc..)

At the bottom of the listing is some interesting info. Under the orig. length; this is how many bytes the whole package will take up in it's un-pak'ed form. Make sure that you have enough space left on you destination disk before un-pak'ing the file(s). Also listed at the bottom, is total savings. This tells how much room has been saved by the file being pak'ed. Total saving can range from 0% to 50%, depending on the type of file pak'ed.

I haven't tried all the options listed yet on this program either, so if so inclined, let me know if you find an interesting feature.

How many programmers does it take to change a lightbulb?

None - That's a hardware problem!!

Welcome back to the OS-9 command column! Last month, we delved a little bit into some of the "basic" OS-9 commands, starting at "ATTR" and ending with "DCHECK". This month, we start with "DEINIZ". Let's get right to it!

DEINIZ

syntax: deiniz <devicename>
{<devicename>}

usage: Detach a device (like /w1 or /t2)

DEL

syntax: del (-x) filename (...)

usage: Deletes the specified file(s)

options: -x= delete relative to execution directory

DELDIR

syntax: deldir <directoryname>

usage: Deletes entire directory

notes: Directory cannot have any files in it! (use DEL to delete these files first)

DIR

syntax: dir (e) (x) <directory or path>

usage: Displays formatted list of the file names in a directory

options: e= print extended directory
x= print execution directory

DISPLAY

syntax: display <hex> (...)

usage: displays converted characters to standard output

ECHO

syntax: echo <text>

usage: display entered text to standard output

EDIT

syntax: edit {<path>}

usage: Standard, line oriented text editor

notes: great for editing startup files, lists, etc... takes some getting used to! see manual for commands.

Well, that's going to have to be it for this month. Hope these files are getting you interested in the OS-9 operating system. If you have a topic you my need help in, or would like to see some info on, let me know, I'll try to get something on paper for you. Until next time.....

Happy OS-9ing!

When I was born, the doctor looked at my face, turned me over, and said, "look, twins!!"

MISC.....

Just a quick verbalization about War in the Gulf. I would like to say to all the men and women in the region, from all the countries in the Coalition, (but especially those from the US), a "Well Done!!" They made it their job to see to it that they all come home just that much sooner, by KICKING ASS!! They spent over 6 months, in an unfamiliar region, bidding their time, for just the right moment to put a quick end to a major threat in the Middle East. They overcame things like, the heat, bugs, being away from their families, and other things that we, in the States, cannot even think of. They have made me the proudest I've ever been, to be an American, (and that's saying alot)! What's even better, is that they didn't have to put up with their fellow Americans, demonstrating or speaking against them! When they come home, join me and the millions of other Americans, in welcoming them home. Thank You for listening.

LAST REMINDER!!
Club dues are due this month! Make sure you do your part in helping to keep our club, the



best computer club in town...(shouldn't be too hard ...eh?). The money we have will go towards something that ALL the clubmembers can use and enjoy. Let your voice be heard about what you think the club should purchase with all this money. Please bring up a motion at the meeting about what you think we need.

A couple more OS-9 programs successfully pulled out of the Archives Disks this month, include:
Month- a "desk-top like" utility for marking important dates down. One interesting feature, a command to "show" what phase the moon is in at 11:00 pm on the current date set. (Beats me what it's used for...Wear-wolves probably!)
Sokoban- A "text-graphic" version of the game pak by Tandy. This version has been "ported" to the OS-9 environment from a UNIX system. Has some nice game saving features as well as a high scores file. A complete review is forthcoming. Check it out!

Check with Harlen for a copy of these programs for the 40 track Double-sided OS-9 system.

Next month, look for some game reviews and a piece about what it's like to build your own hard drive. As well as all the other on-going features, here in the Newsletter.