

Glenside

Computer

Illinois

Association

CoCo~123



NEXT MEETING OF THE GLENSIDE COLOR COMPUTER CLUB

Thursday October 13, 1988 - 7:30pm
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25W. Fullerton Avenue
Glendale Heights, IL

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	967-8791
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OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

A few short weeks ago, David Barnes and I were invited to the Northern Illinois Computer Owners League (NICOL for short) to 'show-off' the power of Tandy's Color Computer. This all was arranged by club member Len Zielinski and Bob Bemis (President of NICOL). Now I bring this to your attention for a couple of reasons. First off, NICOL is a computer group of general interest. They sport a membership comprising mostly of business type application users. With the majority using an MS-DOS type system. There were a few TRS-DOS & L-DOS members (TRS-DOS & L-DOS are the different operating systems for Tandy's Model 3 & 4 computers) and one RS-DOS member. That being Len. With Len being the only member of NICOL with a CoCo, he has had the one-man-task of defending our machine among a sea of MS-DOS people. As most of us know from our own experiences, trying to verbally defend the CoCo is quite a task at best. With a perceived value of nothing more than a game computer, the CoCo has never been taken serious as a business machine by our fellow MS-DOS users.

During one of Len's CoCo-bragging modes, Bob Bemis called Len's bluff. "IF THAT COLOR COMPUTER IS SO GOOD, SHOW US!" Len had no other choice but to except Bob's challenge and a date was set. A few days after the challenge was excepted, Len called me. I could tell by the sound of his voice that he needed Glenside's help. Here was a man who has been defending the honor of the CoCo and it was 'put-up or shut-up' time... I told Len that it would be our pleasure to help him out and quickly called upon David Barnes for assistance.

Now I know the Color Computer workings having owned one for over 6 years, but to this date, I still do not have a true handle on the OS-9 Operating System. Thus the reason for calling upon David. With the date set and our demonstration team in place, we were ready to do battle and defend Len's honor.

The presentation was broken-down into two sections. The first being the introduction and

Continued on next page

CoCo-123

Publication of the Glenside Color Computer Club of Illinois Est. 1981



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- > OPEN DOOR
- > GO DOOR
- > GET BOTTLE
- > GO DOOR
- > DOWN
- > GO WINDOW
- > GO HOLE
- > NORTH 2 TIMES
- > GO FALLS
- > EAST 5 TIMES
- > GO STAIRS
- > SOUTH
- > GET CARD
- > SOUTH
- > WEST
- > FILL TANKS
- > EAST
- > NORTH 3 TIMES
- > WEST 2 TIMES
- > DROP KEY
- > GO DOOR
- > GO BOAT
- > NORTH
- > WEST
- > GET BALLOON
- > GET BOTTLE
- > GO WATER
- > DOWN 2 TIMES
- > OPEN BOTTLE
- > DOWN 2 TIMES
- > TIE BALLOON
- > ANCHOR
- > PULL CORD
- > UP 4 TIMES
- > GO BOAT
- > GET ANCHOR
- > DROP ANCHOR
- > EAST 2 TIMES
- > NORTH
- > DROP BOTTLE
- > GET SHOVEL

Part 5 in next months
CoCo-123

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GLENSIDE COLOR COMPUTER CLUB of ILLINOIS

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November
Newsletter Deadline
October 28th

October Newsletter. Continued...

history of the Color Computer. I took on this assignment and detailed the 'features, benefits, and advantages' that a CoCo has to offer. This alone was not enough to convince the audience that the CoCo was something more than a game machine. Despite the fact that we had two double sided disk drives, a 30 Meg Hard Drive, and a RGB monitor plugged into this little white box called 'CoCo!' Mind you I have not seen too many so called 'game machines' with this type of equipment, however, we were not dealing with 'gamesters'.

Having less than marginal success in impressing our audience with RS-DOS, I yielded the floor to Mr. OS-9, Dave. In a wink of an eye, Dave had the CoCo doing things that an MS-DOS owner could only dream about. Using only the OS-9 operating system, Dave had one window as a host to another CoCo, spell checking a letter in another window, sorting a DynaCalc file in another window, and having Wiz Term

Continued on next page...

October Newsletter. Continued...

up in yet another window waiting to make a connection with an outside network. All the while, Dave had full control of his original start-up (term) window for disk maintenance and system support. Thus making this humble little box of electronic components a true multi-tasking, multi-user power machine. Now we had their attention! You see with an MS-DOS system and a software package called, MicroSoft Windows, you could do 'some' multi-tasking process providing you keep all of your windows on one screen. With the CoCo, each process we were using had its own independent window all doing different assigned tasks. The multi-tasking that the other CoCo was doing was the icing on the cake. Here we were with a little 512k Tandy Color Computer running business software applications, simultaneous, with nothing more than the Operating System and stand-alone OS-9 software programs. This one little 'game' machine was doing what would take four MS-DOS systems to do. The irony of this performance was with a little more time, we could have in fact opened up six more windows and run six more applications! NOW THAT IS GETTING YOUR MONEYS WORTH OUT OF A COMPUTER SYSTEM.

In closing out our evening it was not uncommon to hear MS-DOS owners saying; "Why can't my 'AT' do that?", or the familiar cry was, "Where has Tandy been hiding this computer?" All these positive comments (and there were more) just reinforced in our minds the raw power that the CoCo holds. It also strengthened our beliefs that the CoCo can be a powerful business machine if given

Ed Hathaway

News from the Illinois Color Computer Club of Elgin by Tony Podraza

It is interesting to sit back and read the 'rooster crows' that the owners claim of their equipment. In the May issue of ONLINE TODAY, the following letter can be read: "In a recent ONLINE TODAY DAILY EDITION story about Macintosh and IBM-PCs coming together (OLT-323), Cathryn Conroy stated that the Macintosh has been able to do multi-tasking for years. That's not true. The only personal computer that has been able to do multi-tasking for years is the Amiga. Using Multi-Finder, the Macintosh has very limited multi-tasking abilities.-Don Curtis, Denver, Colo."

Now, that should put a fire under you; it did to countless other CoCo owners. In the July issue of ONLINE TODAY, there were four letters published (out of how many actually received, I don't know,) telling Mr. Curtis and the world at large that he is grossly mistaken in his statement. Each of the published letters cite the fact that Tandy machines have had multi-tasking capabilities since 1984. Indeed, three respondents were CoCo users (assumed by the sound of their replies) who state that OS-9 has been available for the CoCos since 1983, and other 6809 computers since 1980, years BEFORE the Amiga was even ON the drawing board. When Tandy's line of thinking regarding the Color Computer is reviewed, (that the CoCo is their answer to the Atari 2600, 5200, 7600, Nintendo, Colecovision, and the like) it is easy to see how the CoCo has been passed by as a serious computing device, thus yielding such erroneous statements as Mr. Curtis'. It is also gratifying to see that there was such a mountainous response to that error that ONLINE TODAY was forced to publish four letters in response to one letter. Those four letters took up four-fifths of a column. That, my friends, lends just a little weight to the rebuttal of Tandy's "game machine" concept. Don't ever sell the Color Computer short. It was, and with the development of the CoCo 3, still is, years ahead of its time.

SECRETARY / TREASURE *Report for October, 1988*

Well here it is, my FIRST Glenside article. Now that I've come out of the woodwork, you will see I do live and breathe beyond asking for Club money. I do sit at the CoCo and pound out some words now and then.

From the time I was elected to this post, I have made a lot of new friends here with Glenside, we have seen another Rainbowfest come and go, we have lived through the hottest summer in history, we have 25 new members in our Club, GDMC has been a great success, SECOND CITY SOFTWARE has taken off, the Cubs STILL have not won the pennant (so what else is new), but do have lights. (Not the beer!) Yes it sure has been a note-worthy six months.

I am sure that like me, you have enjoyed the interesting meetings, and demos that Glenside and its members have brought us!

Now for getting down to some business, the end of the year is coming, and we are all looking forward to the Holidays. With all the up and coming excitement you just may forget "Good Old Glenside". This is just a little reminder if your dues is due, from now till the end of the year. The list of members that are due from Oct. to Dec. are Bob Bruhl, Glenda Bukdis, Emil Butwell, Mike Corbin, George Henry, Cliff Patterson, Greg Pietrucha, Doug Pokorny, Al Santini, John Schroder, Steve Shaner, Ron Steinberg, Robert Sturmfeld, Bill Tropp, Don Van, Ron Voigts, Gil Winograd, Ron Winograd and Len Ziellinski.

The dues till the end of the year is still \$10.00, please make the check payable to "Glenside Color Computer Club". You can send it to me at 1349 Whirlaway Lane Hanover Park, IL 60103.

If you have any questions, about you dues. Please call me at (312)830-1855, or leave me E-MAIL on either the Chicago or Roselle BBS's. Leave mail via "GREG PIETRUCHA" and I will get back to you, A.S.A.P. Till next month C U. GREG

Warrior King by: Sundog Systems

One of the advantages of being associated with a software distribution company is the ability of hearing about new products for the CoCo before they are available for retail sales. Such was the case with Warrior King from Sundog Systems. Months ago I was in conversation with this company discussing their products for possible distribution through Second City Software. At that time Warrior King was not available for sale, however,



Sundog Systems had assured me that it would be the best arcade game that money could buy for the CoCo III (have'ent we heard that statement before?).

A week or so ago, I received a call from Sundog Systems telling me that Warrior King was now available and did I want to place an order.

Being the big spender that I am, I quickly ordered one copy as a 'test run'. I was not able to 'test run' this program until a few days after I had received it. But I'm here to tell you all, when I did fire-it-up, it was like stepping behind the keyboard of the Super CoCo IV we have been talking about. "WARRIOR KING IS WITHOUT A DOUBT THE BEST GRAPHICS ARCADE GAME I HAVE EVER SEEN FOR THE COLOR COMPUTER! IT IS TRULY OUTSTANDING IN ALL ASPECTS." The graphics are second to none. The game action is fast, exciting and best of all, TOUGH! The sound effects are as 'true to life' as you can get. In general, Warrior King is as close to a professional Arcade Game there is.

The rules of Warrior King are quite simple, STAY ALIVE! This alone might take you your own lifetime to accomplish. As I mentioned, one of the best features of this program is that it is REAL TOUGH... Getting from one level to the other requires great skill, timing and cat like reflexes. The one hardware requirement that I would strongly recommend is a 'great' joystick. Trying to use anything else will be suicidal. Aside from that, "Go forth ye mighty Warrior King. Your efforts will be that of your Kingdom and Gloury for all."

Warrior King requires a CoCo III with 128k or 512k of memory, one 'great' joystick and time, lots of time... It is currently available at a most reasonable price of \$29.95.

P.S. If you find another program that is an equal to Warrior King for the CoCo III, let me know and I'll buy it for you... Warrior King from Sundog Systems is THAT GOOD!

Ed Hathaway

CoCo Character Set by Jim Dean

It is amazing how one thing leads to another. Sitting at a table in the cafeteria a few days ago having morning break with Bob Swoger (ole Gator), we got to talking about the type of tokens used for numbers above decimal 127 in the CoCo.

There was no problem with characters between 0 and 127 decimal (00-7F hex), but what characters were used for numbers 128-255 decimal (80-FFhex). That was the question. Well we bantered over the possibilities till break was almost over. Then, ole Gator, in a wistful gesture asked "what does a CoCo print out for CHR\$"? My answer to that was "darned if I know, but I'll give it a go and see".

All this played on my mind as I chewed my way through supper that night which helped to whet my appetite to chew on the answer. As soon as I could break away from the cleanup of the remains of the meal, not eating the leftovers of course, but washing all the dirty dishes and getting the leftovers either stored in the refrig or pitching them if they were beyond salvage for another day, I went to the ole CoCo.

Here is where the fun began. Having never before asked the CoCo to display the CHR\$ equivalent for a decimal number, I thought it wise to consult the book supplied with the CoCo from Radio Shack. After all, there might be a clue to the syntax required. Well - therein was the beginning of something big; a big problem indeed!

Unfortunately, Radio Shack never thought it was necessary to fully document the CoCo instruction set, or for that matter anything else. There was no reference to CHR\$ in the book index. Now I was sure I had seen something in the book using CHR\$ but where! After about an hour of speed reading, page after page (now mind you this is not one of my forte's so I passed over it about 10 times) I caught a glimpse of a CHR\$ on page 61. Lo and behold I had my clue to the proper syntax.

Now fully equipped to start writing something that might give me the sought after display of the tokens used for decimal numbers 128 through 255, I proceeded to write my little program. My first attempt was a total disaster. I had every kind of error possible show up on the screen as I tried to run the program. Syntax error, TM error, even a couple of error messages not even described in the CoCo book, and after much modification I had a full lockup of the machine. That lockup was the best thing that happened but it was not obvious at that time. It turned out to be a blessing in disguise.

Since I had not saved any part of the program thus far, and the only way out of the lockup was to RESET, there

Continued on next page...

CoCo Character Set. Continued...

went my fabulous program. The blessing was that with this fabulous program gone I had to start on a new tack. Instead of trying to overcome errors, I was now on my way to try something else. Isn't it amazing how one can get so enwrapped in folly, choosing to wallow in ever deepening frustration by following a course meant for destruction instead of trying a new approach.

The new approach was to try a one liner to show what would show up for decimal 65 instead of trying to make a full blown program to show all the characters from decimal 0 through 255 with screen formatting and printing routines. I figured I would have a better chance to get a useful output with fewer error messages with the one liner. Besides, using only a single number like decimal 65 should put only the capital letter "A" on the screen. Success at last! No errors, and the letter "A" showed up right next to decimal 65 every time I ran the one liner.

It's time to get bold now and see if some weird thing would show up for decimal 193. I was hoping that something other than an italic capital "A" would appear. Sure enough, here comes the output, first 193 then following that a wierd looking black rectangle with a corner bitten out of it. I don't know why but I didn't expect a thing like that! I wondered if all the numbers above 127 would produce wierd shapes like that. So, spurred on by seeming success I boldly couched this one liner into a for next loop to see what would happen for all decimal numbers from 0 through 255. The only problem was forgetting the semicolon so everything printed to the screen in a long vertical line and it all went by so fast I couldn't figure out what was there until decimal 255 appeared and the screen froze with the last 16 lines on it.

Now I could see that these funny looking rectangles with bites taken out were different in shape for each decimal number and they were colored different than the first one I saw for decimal 193. So it was program modification time again. By alternately stroking the keyboard with nimble fingers and a mind that is now thinking like a computer (bragging, of course) I came up with the masterpiece.

When you run this program, you will see that it hesitates after each line of 4 characters to give you time to see what is there. If you need more time to view the lines, change the 300 in line 110 to 500 or higher, depending upon your speed reading ability. If you are a real fast reader, set 300 to 0. That will give you one heck of a test. If you have a mind to see where these funny looking blocks are used, load VIP disk ZAP and start reading the files on the disk, sector by sector, for a machine language program. I guarantee you'll see lots of 'em.

My suggestion to you is to copy these funny looking blocks to a piece of paper and color them as they

appear on your color monitor, of course referencing them to the corresponding decimal number. To enhance the program to provide the hex equivalent for each decimal number or to get the program to print out the funny little blocks on your printer is your responsibility and a challenge to your programming ability. You could even modify the program to put in some program stops with lines to facilitate copying the blocks to a piece of paper. (Clue, use a subroutine with Input\$. . . If A\$ = " " goto... etc. kind of routine.) Have fun!

THE MAGNIFICENT PROGRAM

```
10 I=1
20 PRINT;CHR$(I) " ";
30 I=I+1
40 PRINT;CHR$(I) " ";
50 I=I+1
60 PRINT;CHR$(I) " ";
70 I=I+1:IF I<255 GOTO 80 ELSE
   END
80 PRINT;CHR$(I)
90 I=I+1
100 PRINT
110 FOR AA=1 TO 300
120 NEXT AA
130 IF I<255 GOTO 20 ELSE END
```



Notes From All Over by Tony Podraza

Reliable sources from the land of Motorola have reported that the 68766 EPROM has been phased out of production. An internal house order for a final production run of 25,000 was in process during June or July. This is the 24-pin IC chip that directly replaces the Disk ROM in the CoCo. In anticipation of this phase-out, Tandy has begun using 28-pin ROMs both in the CoCo 3 and the new 502 Disk Controller. If you have an older controller that has only a 24-pin socket and you plan on acquiring a custom DOS, better start looking for your 68766 chips now, or plan to have surgery on your controller to modify it for a 28-pin socket.

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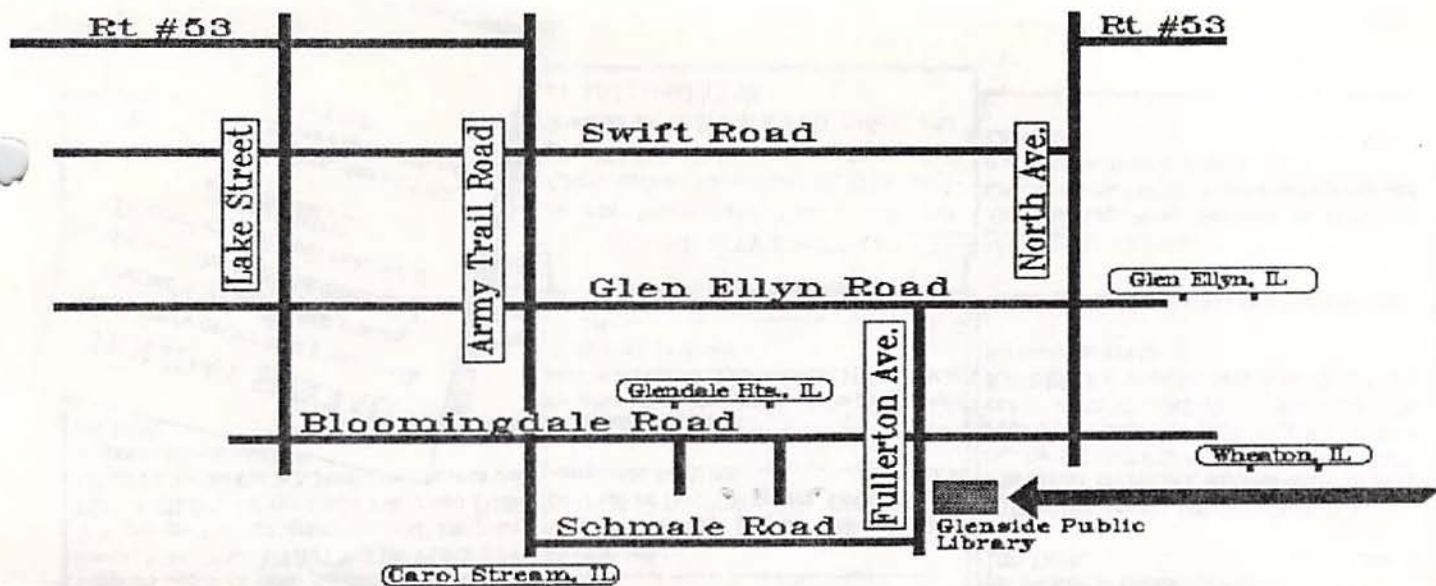
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