

CLASSIC COMPUTERS CLASSIC COMPU

SOLOMON SW

by Faye Deere

April 22, 1989, at a meeting of the Gulf Coast Adam Users group, Mobile, Alabama, I met Solomon Swift. Joe Quinn, president of the group, had arranged to have Sol at the meeting, and had kindly invited several of the groups in the area to send representatives. In all, we numbered four different Adam Users groups, and Sol gave us a special demonstration of GO-BASIC.

GO-DOS is a Graphic Oriented-Disk Operating System. It incorporates elements of SmartBASIC, SmartLOGO, and PowerPAINT. Sol demonstrated some of the over 330 commands he has set up for us to use in the BASIC mode. Considering that SmartBASIC has 103 or 104 commands, this seems like a lot of commands to remember and use effectively. It may be, but the way Sol has them set up, it's not hard at all. The commands are almost English and make it much easier, as well as much faster, to program in BASIC.

To use GO-DOS, you must have a minimum 64K memory expander. With the 64K memory expander, all but 34K is used by GO-DOS and GO-BASIC. More than what is available for programming in SmartBASIC.

There are three BASIC modes: Text, which uses a 32 column screen; Text 40, using a 40 column screen; and Graphics. Like LOGO, your text is on a graphics screen, and there are 7 built-in character sets. You must have a dot matrix printer to completely utilize the printing capabilities.

The GO-DOS environment uses a "point and click" menu system. It

utilizes command menus much like PowerPAINT, except that they are at the top of the screen, instead of at the bottom. You have pull-down menus, BASIC commands to access menus, windows; and a built-in clock feature that allows you to stamp the date and time on the files you SAVE.

With GO-DOS, you can access up to 6 disk drives using the special EPROMs previously available from Orphanware. This is in addition to the RAM drive that is set up by GO-DOS, and your two data drives. You can also access the 20MB hard drive built by "Big" John Lingrel, late of Orphanware.

If you have them all, this gives you 10 drives. The drives are named from A to H, plus M for the RAM drive, and H for the hard drive. Whatever drive you BOOT from gives you a prompt when you BOOT GO-BASIC. If you BOOT from the first disk drive, your prompt will read "C:" and the cursor will follow the prompt waiting for your command. This will let you know at a glance which drive you currently are accessing. The RAM drive allows instant interchange between programs such as SmartLOGO, SmartCALC, SmartBASIC, etc.

Most GO-DOS functions can be executed faster than they could be accomplished in SmartBASIC. Also, many commands take the place of POKEs. They are faster, and are accomplished immediately after pressing the RETURN, if typed in immediate mode. For instance, the command cursor = 32, turns off the cursor. Txtcolor = 23, changes the textwindow color. Invcolor = 244, changes the inverse color.

WIFT IS BACK!

The `txtfont` command allows you to choose the font you want. The `graphics` command sends you to the Graphics mode. You can choose a command that gives you either a standard one column catalog, or a double column catalog. You can use a command to recover deleted files. The command `shapeptr`, plus the parameters, takes care of the shape table, and even does the math for you.

You can do everything in GO-BASIC that you can do in SmartBASIC, PowerPAINT, or SmartLOGO, and more! However, GO-BASIC uses less memory than SmartLOGO by using a line interpreter. GO-BASIC also utilizes built-in macros. There are 12 built-in macros that you can access through the SmartKEYS; 6 in regular mode, and 6 in the shift position. These allow you to press a SmartKEY for such commands as: catalog, run, load, brun, etc. Press UNDO and you move ahead 40 spaces in your text. Press SHIFT UNDO and you move back 40 spaces!

In GO-BASIC, you can use as many windows as you want, as long as they fit on the screen. You can also use sprites with GO-BASIC. You can move the sprites all over the screen without erasing the text underneath, since the sprites are in the foreground and the text is in the background. You can rotate the sprites, spin them, and animate them. Notice I said them. You can have as many as you want. You can turn them on and off at will. The windows can be opened up at any time, allowing you to change or look at text or program lines from a different area of the file. When you are finished with them, put them back where they belong. GO-

DOS opens up a new world for the Adam user.

I asked Sol if we would be able to use a mouse with GO-DOS, and he said "not at this time." There is only one mouse available for the Adam right now, and that one is produced and marketed by Thomas Electronics. However, they seem to be having some trouble with its performance. When all the bugs have been ironed out, or another mouse becomes available, Sol will provide a patch to allow its use.

Tony Patterson of "Temple of the Snow Dragon" fame, was also at the meeting. Tony has worked with Sol on this awesome program, creating a lot of the graphics for GO-DOS. Because of this, he is behind schedule on the projected date for release of the follow-up program to "Snow Dragon," to be called "The Pit of Reshus." However, Tony said at the meeting that it will be released soon. He and Sol are in the process of setting up The Softworks Factory. This will be the parent company for Digital Express. Sol also indicated that Nibbles and Bits will resume publication with the July issue.

GO-DOS will be released first, along with GO-BASIC, at a price of \$34.95 for the package. Those who had previously ordered GO-DOS will get GO-DOS AND GO-BASIC at the originally announced price of \$24.95. GO-BASIC is to be added at no extra cost. It will be followed shortly by a volume of GO-BASIC Utilities, and GO-WRITER will follow that along with a Technical Manual for the experienced programmer.

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