

July, 1988

Dear Fellow ADAMite,

Last month's meeting was an important one. It was the first meeting to be held in our new "home", and it appears to have been a successful meeting (I had to miss it.) We had our "new" ADAM set up, and were able to have some demonstrations. We also elected officers. The following people were elected:

President..... John Terry	Vice President..... Ray Dougherty
Treasurer..... Francis Terry	Secretary..... Frances Bell

This month's meeting promises to be a special one, too. We are expecting a guest: "adopted" MOAUG member Gregg Noblett, whom some of you will remember from his visit last July, and his wife Michele expect to drop in on us. Gregg has been working on some extremely interesting projects. I don't know how much of this is priveleged information, so we will just have to wait for Gregg. One thing's for sure... it's a good thing we have an ADAM set up now!

This month's meeting is:

Sunday, July 10th 1:30 P.M.

...Same address as last time; the map has been reprinted on the back of this newsletter. While you're checking out the back, make sure to check your mailing label and find out when your membership expires. For the "original" group, dues are already overdue, and the grace period expires with this newsletter. We hope you will decide to stay with us another year!

*See you
Sunday!
-Pat*

ADAM LIVES!!

Behind the Scenes:

*** New link in the chain: MOAUG is now exchanging newsletters with Keith Marner, editor of the bimonthly UK ADAM SUBSCRIBERS JOURNAL in Great Britain.

*** Solomon Swift has sent us some new volumes of pictures to be used with Showoff I or Power Paint. I was very flattered to find some of my own "artwork" used therein.

*** Computer Shopper has had an ADAM column by George Smith in the last two issues. Other ADAMites are submitting articles, too; it looks as though we definitely have a new national forum. Computer Shopper also lists users' groups. ADAM groups are not well represented in the lists, but I think that will be changing in the very near future (it costs nothing to list the group.) As always, it will help the cause if each person who buys Computer Shopper writes the magazine to tell them how much we enjoy their ADAM coverage. Go thou and do likewise.

*** Information received from several sources indicates that Coleco is on the brink of bankruptcy. Scuttlebutt is that they may be selling their software rights. Nibbles & Bits points out that our orphaned computer could actually survive the company that abandoned it.

*** Virtually every newsletter published in the past two months has had something to say about the issue of software piracy, and how it can affect the longevity of ADAM. MOAUG has always taken the position that ADAM cannot survive unless illegal copying is curbed... developers will just stop developing, if they see no return on their hard work. There are people studying ways of thwarting piracy, but you know how that goes. In the long run, it is up to each individual to take an ethical stand. We want the ADAM boom to go on and on... and on... and on...

*** MOAUG welcomes its newest members, George Drank of Haines City, Dan Donaldson of Sanford, and Lori Michael of Orlando (near the airport.)

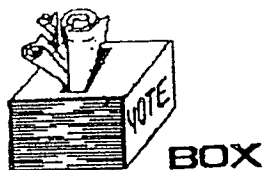
*** For many of you, this is your LAST ISSUE unless you renew your membership. We are keeping it to \$12 as long as we can, but with postal rate increases, we may have to raise it next year. Meanwhile, bring your dues to the July meeting, or mail them to the address on the back of the "envelope." Checks should be made out to MOAUG.

There is a new BBS up in Deltona Lakes (close to Sanford.) If you live in this area and have a modem, give it a ring. The sysop, Tom Hertreiter, is a fellow I work with; he's friendly & easy-going. A brand-new board is like a blank book; it can turn into ANYTHING. If you leave messages, you will be instrumental in developing it. Your messages need not have anything to do with computers. You can tell jokes, discuss your favorite books, music, movies, or talk about your hobbies. It takes awhile for the message base to develop, but when it does, electronic friendships bloom. It can be MOST interesting. Since I work in Sanford, I have been calling the board for a few minutes each day, so I will see any messages you leave (unless you leave them private.)

To call using ADAMLINK, change your character format to "8 bits". Leave everything else as is. The board will ask if you want color graphics; enter "n" for "no", because ADAM doesn't support ANSI graphics. The menu screen is configured for 80 columns, so it will look confusing on your screen; but you'll get used to it. Look for more info next month; meanwhile, give Tom a call, and leave me a message while you're at it.

DELTONA LAKES BBS: (407) 574-9246

THE BALLOT



A Review of Chess Champ
by Rick Covell

Due to some unusual circumstances, I will not utilize my usual system of rating a piece of software from 1 (bad) to 10 (excellent).

Although I am not a good chess player (probably not even an average chess player), it was with great anticipation that I ordered Chess Champ. At last I would have someone to play against (no one I know seems to have the time or the interest). I might even learn some techniques playing against a computer. I ordered Chess Champ from Sol Swift at Digital Express. Over 2 months later it arrived. This delay admittedly had left a bad taste in my mouth. To be fair I received a letter from Sol on May 8 apologizing for the delay with a coupon for a free PD pack (with my next order). The letter indicated that by the time I received it (the letter), Chess Champ should be on its way to me. Okay, I'm a fair guy...I could wait a bit longer. How about four weeks longer? C'mon Sol (if you're out there listening), give me a break! Please don't sell me something that isn't ready yet. I (and maybe other average customers) tend to lose faith. Enough preaching (Sol probably isn't out there anyway).

Chess Champ arrives. Now doubtful, I put the tape in drive 1 and boot it. Wow...impressive...it's self-booting...relatively fast loading...neat opening with music...good graphics on the chess board with pieces. Maybe I've been too harsh on good 'ol Sol. Look at these features: an onscreen hand to move pieces, ability to view onscreen "help" notes before or even during a game, 10 skill levels, excellent graphics, ability to force ADAM to move if you feel he is taking too much time, ability to "custom" setup the board, ability to take back the last move, ability to input info either by keyboard or by game controller, ability to use the "castle maneuver", ability to store up to 52 games. Folks this is an impressive list of features. I realize what a monumental task it must have been to program this nifty piece of software. I am impressed by Dr. Swift's skills. However I must point out two basic flaws in Chess Champ. Let me illustrate the first flaw. Directly in front of my king is one of my pawns, and straight across the board is my opponent's rook or queen. Lucky for me that pawn is there or I would be in check. If I try to move that pawn straight ahead one square (which still shields my king from attack) ADAM informs me that I cannot do that as it leaves my king in check. Even though the king is not in check the only way to continue the game is to move the king to the side. I can overlook this flaw, although I'm not so sure many more serious players can.

Okay, what about the second, and in my opinion, more serious flaw? My first game with ADAM was at the preset skill level 1. I won! Well since skill levels 4 or 5 were for average players, I shouldn't be surprised. After all I'm not the worst player in the world (surely someone out there is worse than me). So I tried skill level 2. Shock...I still won. Well maybe I'm not as bad as I thought. Perhaps I am average...let's try skill level 4. I won again (hmmm?). Next I jumped it to skill level 6 (a little above average). Shock...I still beat ADAM! Okay, let's go for it: the highest skill level. How long will it take ADAM to beat me? 10 minutes...20 minutes...a half hour. Could I possibly hold out longer? I WON!!! Wait a second, I may be a legend in my own mind, but I really am a lousy chess player! Yet I still beat ADAM. Impossible? Every dog has his day...right? Well not wanting to believe the worst, I set up the ultimate test. I custom set up the board. I gave myself a king and 3 pawns. I gave ADAM a king, several pawns, a queen and a rook. Then I set the skill level on the highest level. I also noticed that the point values of our pieces had ADAM ahead two-fold! ADAM should have torn me apart. Instead I again won.

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Chess Champ, by Rick Covell
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Don't get me wrong, I like to win...Okay I love to win. Ever since I was a kid I would get mad if I didn't win. I hate to complain now but I shouldn't have won. Probably not from skill level 4 on up. I really am a poor chess player. The premise of any game (computer or otherwise) is that it should be neither too hard nor too easy. Simply put, there is no challenge in Chess Champ. I was really hoping to learn to be a better player by studying ADAM as he "whipped" me. Instead I guess I'll remain a below average player. As a result I would not recommend you purchase Chess Champ (if you do you MUST have at least a 64K card). If I had it to do over again, I would, however, buy it. You see I really do appreciate the monumental programming task this must have been. Well, at least I can truthfully say I can beat a computer at chess.

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DOCTOR SWIFT'S REPLY:

Pat graciously afforded me, Sol Swift, the opportunity to comment on Mr. Covell's review of Chess Champ. Reviews, by nature, are an opinion of a product. Although I was not entirely pleased with his evaluation, I respect his right of expression. I feel that his review is fair; he explains good and bad points of the software. There are three aspects upon which I'd like to expatiate, however.

We, Digital Express, ship virtually all product orders within 24 hours of receipt; many go out the same day. Mr. Covell was immediately shipped an invoice stating this particular package was on backorder. If a backorder is held for more than 30 days, we notify the consumer of same. He (she) may also request a refund for the backordered item. When any item on an order is placed on backordered status, the remainder of the order is still shipped within 24 hours (we absorb the backorder shipping charge.)

Second, if anyone discovers a real bug in a program, such as Mr. Covell seems to have with the pawn/check move mentioned, we will correct same and offer a FREE replacement. In this case, the consumer would need to take back the last move and store the game (and send the stored game to me for testing.)

Third, we state in the documentation that we are working on an update which will be faster and play a stronger game at the higher levels. This will be provided FREE to registered consumers. Version 1.1 should be available this fall.

Again, I'd like to thank Pat for this opportunity to respond. We have received numerous favorable comments on Chess Champ from ADAM owners. In conclusion, our goal is to provide high quality software for ADAM at reasonable prices. I do recognize the weakness of Chess Champ at the end game on the higher levels and updates will be notably more challenging in this area.

Solomon Swift 6/17/88

## ADVANTAGES OF CP/M

by Thomas J. Keene  
Inland Empire ADAM Users' Group  
(Reprinted from IEAUG newsletter, May, 1988)

CP/M CORNER

CP/M continues to expand at a phenomenal rate. New software is virtually exploding. New and improved utility programs have vastly increased the performance of ADAM. We are reaping the benefit of programmers using other computers and these benefits are very real. At one time I used to wonder why some people seemed to give SMARTWRITER such a hard time. I thought it was a pretty good word processor. It is. But as your horizons expand and you experience the flexibility and facility of the CP/M word processors, you soon realize how primitive SMARTWRITER is. And how painfully slow it is! If you are at the bottom of a fairly large document and want to return to the top of the file, it takes a huge number of keyboard strokes and an extremely long time to get there. Actually it is easier and faster to store the file and then reload it. This will bring you back to the top of the file, but that's nothing to crow about. With one of the best public domain word processors (VDE265) in CP/M, it takes a fraction of a second to move from one end of a file to the other. It is equally easy to go from the start of a file to the end or from the end of a file back to the start.

Does anyone know of any EOS procedures to compress files? I know of at least four procedures in CP/M that will condense files to a fraction of their normal size. There are many people doing fabulous things for the ADAM with SMARTBASIC. Digital Express has published many amazing programs that are written in BASIC. Just for the fun of it, I have converted a number of their programs to CP/M Microsoft's BASIC. Not that there is any advantage in that, but very often there IS an advantage to converting a SMARTBASIC file to a CP/M BASIC. One is that there are BASIC compilers available in CP/M (as contrasted with the interpreter of SMARTBASIC) and they greatly expedite the execution of a BASIC program. Another advantage is in the ability to invoke a compression technique to store and transmit a BASIC program. Regular BASIC files are simply ASCII files which will compress to less than half their normal size. Even compiled programs can benefit from compression, though not nearly as much as ASCII files.

One of the most needed EOS programs that has (as far as I know) not been made available is a cataloging program. I have several hundred discs containing thousands of CP/M files. Without a cataloging system, I would never be able to locate some program that I need. Cataloging alone is not enough. The retrieval of this information has to be done in a fast and simple manner. Strategic Software sold a program called TurboLOAD which made a feeble stab at indexing EOS files. It wasn't too bad as far as it went. It was very "buggy" and often, after spending a lot of time entering data, it would crash. And there was just no way to recover from these crashes other than to start over and leave out the disk that caused the crash. I spent a lot of time trying to find out what it was about certain disks that brought about a crash, but I never was able to spot the reason. But even if you managed to get all of your files into the index, all you could do with the information was to print it out. You couldn't save that information as a file in itself. And even if you had a hardcopy of the index, it was a chore to run your fingers up and down the list looking for a filename so that you could then learn what disc it was stored on. It wasn't all that easy to use. And it was SLOW SLOW SLOW!!!

Later on, after you had acquired more files and needed to update the index, you had to go through the whole procedure of this is no boon to anyone. It is just a somewhat cute trick of entering data and then performing an alphabetical sort of the file titles. Anyone can create an ASCII file and then file through an ALPHA sort routine. I do that all the time with my huge catalog of video tapes. I have hundreds of actors' names that I want sorted alphabetically, and it can be done somewhat straight-forwardly with BASIC routines. But a word of admonition is in order here! ADAM SMARTBASIC often goes berserk when trying to sort huge data bases. It can and OFTEN does make mistakes. You have to be very adroit to circumvent these blunders by programming error traps.

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CPM CORNER

But sorting data is not particularly a part of the searching problem in looking for some particular file. Maybe you aren't even sure about the file name. Or you aren't sure of the filename spelling you used when you stored the file. You still need to find it and you don't want to spend all day at it. Well in CP/M, this is one of the greatest advantages I can think of. I have used about six programs in the public domain which all perform the task of cataloging programs and of then finding that which has been cataloged. Naturally, I have found a favorite system and I have concentrated on that system. Some time back, I admonished you not to dissipate your energies pursuing every new programming system that comes down the pike. I believe in trying out new ideas, but when you have found a program that does just about what you want it to do, stick with it. There must be a dozen or more directory programs around. Some, like SD.COM, are very short and provide all of the file information needed. There are many others which present the directory in a different format, or provide more file information. Many are easier to use than others. And still they keep coming. I found a new directory program this week. It takes up an awful lot of disc space. But the point is, find a good cataloging program and then make good use of it. I strongly recommend Irv Hoff's MCAT program or any of the updates (I use MCAT504.) There are two ancillary programs that fill out the cataloging needs. Irv Hoff's FIND40 (or any of the updates) and XCAT. These utilities are so terrific, I honestly don't see how anyone can live without them.

If you have noticed, I have used the expression "public domain" a few times in this article. That is another one of the selling points of CP/M. You will remember that I spoke about TurboLOAD a few minutes ago. Well TurboLOAD is not free. It is not public domain and not very many of the good utilities for ADAM are public domain. The all time best utility program ever written for the ADAM was Joel Lagerquist's JKL Utilities (as so magnificently upgraded by George Havach.) This is not a new program, but even Tony Morehen's splendid new "FILE MANAGER" is still no match for JKL Utilities. However, at \$19.95 (from Orphanware) it is a best buy. Again, I point out that this is not a free program. Most of the free programs in EOS are inane or hackneyed rehashes of old stuff. (How many checkbook programs have you seen?) I encourage the use of ADAM and SMARTBASIC and LOGO as powerful entries into the real world of computing. I repeat my admiration of Digital Express. But even Digital Express is not developing much public domain material.

How many of you reading this article are "old timers"? Remember a few years ago when Eve was struggling to get a printer interface out. We seemed to think that we were suffocating if we couldn't hook up a dot matrix printer to the ADAM. Sure Coleco had a prototype parallel interface that performed flawlessly, but you couldn't buy one. Eve jumped the gun on their SP-1. The software was horrible. They had to constantly revise it, until at long last they got it to work correctly. Well almost. They never did get it to underline. But what was all that fuss about a dot matrix anyway? As I see it, it was mostly for speed. Nobody ever claimed that the results looked any better than the good old daisy wheel printer that came with the ADAM. In fact, the results never looked anything near as good as the ADAM printer. So speed was the main factor. But look at what CP/M has done for the dot matrix user! If ever there was a boon to dot matrix printers for the ADAM it was the BRADFORD fonts. Now my cheap old EPSON MX-80 can produce truly near letter quality text. And it comes with a great many fonts to make very interesting reading. But not, I hasten to add, without CP/M. There's even a new BRADFORD with a whole new slew of fonts.

Are they still writing programs for CP/M? In the CP/M libraries on GENIE there have been well over 100 new CP/M files added in the first three weeks of April alone. Not all of these files are of interest to all of the ADAM users. And not all of them are good. But there are a lot of absolutely terrific programs in that group, not the least of which is VDE265 which is the latest word processor (or at least I think it's the latest) which I use to write my articles. As good as the previous versions of VDE have been, this is significantly better. The fantastic new BRADFORD update was in that list, however I regret to add that so far it won't run on the standard ADAM because it doesn't have a sufficiently large TPA (Transient Program Area.) With Orphanware's 80 column and TDOS the TPA has been enlarged sufficiently to run these new BRADFORD files.

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ADVANTAGES, by Thomas Keene (cont'd)

There are a number of new MBASIC games ("Stop the Killer Bees" sounds interesting) but I'm not much into games so I didn't get that program. Maybe somebody would like to play it and give us a review. I am also not into astronomy, but there is a new sky map program on that updated list. There are several lists of BBS including one specialized list of Federally sponsored bulletin boards. There's a bunch of new DBASEII programs, for those of you who use DBASEII (which, of course, is available for the ADAM, --if you have CP/M.) I think that is impressive for just three weeks. And that is only GENIE. The CP/M users group on Compuserve is also very active.

Is there any commercial stuff still around. You bet your life. Just ask anyone who has tried PRINTMASTER. Now THERE is a truly outstanding program to run on your dot matrix printer. And WORDSTAR 4.0 has recently been released for ADAM. This program was released for all computers only a few months ago. It is quite "pricey" for most ADAM users, but the IBM yuppies don't mind the cost. Although the current CP/M version of WORDSTAR 4.0 is \$295, Orphanware is advertising it for the ADAM for about \$140. I have noticed that most big swapmeets carry a huge assortment of CP/M software. Much of this CP/M software will have to be converted to ADAM format. However there are quite a few firms now providing that service, --WORKMAN Associates, ELLIAM Associates, NIAD, ORPHANWARE, to name a few. The charges are most reasonable at all these places, though I believe that ORPHANWARE is the cheapest.

---Thomas J. Keene IEAUG

\*\*\*\*\* EDITOR'S NOTES \*\*\*\*\*

I always enjoy reading Mr. Keene's CP/M columns. I have reprinted this column to encourage those of you who are beginners to CP/M. There is a wealth of programs and information out there. (A great place to start is the ADAM CP/M forum on Compuserve.) And there are user groups who concentrate solely on CP/M... not just for ADAM, but for all computers. Local ADAMites can find help via the Central Florida Computer Society, which has a CP/M group. Nationally, there is FOG International Computer Users' Group. They have PD libraries and a newsletter, FOGHORN. There are books on CP/M in the library and bookstores, too.

While encouraging CP/Mers, though, I don't want to discourage the new users and those who aren't yet ready for CP/M. Don't feel that you are wasting your time exploring EOS (the operating system built into your ADAM.) There is plenty to learn and experiment with (and I think there is quite a LOT of good PD material being developed.) Mr. Keene makes a good point about not dissipating your energy pursuing every new program that comes along; yet, when you are new to computing, it's not a bad strategy to go off in all directions at once, to get a taste of the different things you can do, and an overall general feel for the computer. If you have a specific goal in mind, sure, you will probably want to concentrate on achieving that goal. But if you're still feeling your way, bear in mind that learning something is NEVER a waste of time. The bits and pieces you pick up in your explorations will stand you in good stead later. Personally, I am a hobbyist. As long as I keep on growing, and having fun with it, I will be happy. This is one hobby I just can't outgrow.

For Further CP/M Support:

Central Florida Computer Society  
c/o Marilyn W. Simpson  
8142 Steeplechase Blvd.  
Orlando, FL 32818

Greater Orlando Computer SIG  
PO Box 8019  
Maitland, FL 32751

FOG

International Computer Users Group  
PO Box 3474 Daly City, CA 94015

(send a LARGE self-addressed stamped envelope)

BASIC MANAGER 3.0 REVIEW  
by Jim Guenzel of, the St. Louis ADAM Users Group

BASIC MANAGER 3.0 is a very complete "housekeeping" program for all your BASIC tapes or disks. The only function not in the program is the ability to remove deleted filenames from the directory and thus allow you to have up to 36 active files in the directory. (As you may know, SmartBASIC 1.0 does not remove deleted file names -- though the actual file blocks will be overwritten -- so that you can save and delete the same 1k file 36 times and get a "no more room" message and a 157 or 254 "blocks left" message!) But there are a number of SQUEEZE or CRUNCH programs out there that remove deleted file names.

But back to BASIC MANAGER: This is 22k of very "user friendly", "bulletproof" and "idiot proof" program! Try as I might I could not get it to lock up: The error trapping stops the program, prints the error number and restarts when you press any key to continue. (You are directed to look up the error message in the SmartBASIC manual.) When you make a selection that will alter your media or run or load a program the program forces you to answer the question, "are you sure? (y/n)", or to press your selection key twice.

Now what this means is that the program works and any person can use the program, you do not have to know how to do anything except turn ADAM on and put tapes or disks in the drives. But you do have to read the manual!

The manual is only 13 pages long. The manual covers all the commands, features and functions in a very concise, tight way. I think the manual assumes that the reader/user has a very high ADAM IQ. Because I think this program would be very useful to casual ADAM users, I think the manual could be expanded to include examples and explanations of terms and ideas that many ADAMITES take for granted.

One of the very nice touches is the ability to call up help screens from any of the three levels of the program by pressing the "?" key. The help screen that is called up relates to the level of the program you are in.

The screen layout is very nice and all functions are called by "SMARTKEYS": The "ESCAPE/ WP" key gets you back to the entry screen.

The first or entry level of BASIC MANAGER gives you the ability to look at the catalog in several different ways: normal, size of each file, starting block of each file, blocks allocated/used and status (locked/unlocked/read only, etc.) You can also print the catalog out in a couple of formats. One format that will fit on your disk or DDP, or a format with all the above information listed.

From this entry or first level you can also LOAD or RUN a file, change drives, and go to either UTILITY I or UTILITY II level.

UTILITY I level offers functions to rename the disk/DDP volume, lock/unlock a file, read protect or read enable a data file, rename a file, set the file or system date and delete files.

UTILITY II level offers functions to change all the colors on the display, undelete files, initialize or uninitialize a disk or floppy pack or DDP as well as quitting the program and going to BASIC or SmartWriter.

When you choose the initialize feature you can "partition" the media and thus "reserve" or set aside a preselected amount of space for a file.

BASIC MANAGER is saved as an "H" file so you can "BRUN" it. This allows for very fast loading and running even from tape. Now you might think that you will not be able to make any backup copies. Not so! Page 4 of the manual tells you how to make backups. You simply "bload" the file and then "bsave" it at the address given in the manual.

There is a lot here and on top of all this you get the revision 7 of the EOS (elementary operating system) and PRACTICAL PROGRAMS' "c" modification of SmartBASIC for free!

Enjoy!

---Jim Guenzel

\$14.95  
FROM

PRACTICAL PROGRAMS  
PO Box 244  
Kalamazoo, MI 49005-0244

Check out the offer we mentioned last month: Buy the program, and get both the regular version and the BASIC 2.0 version for the same price!



# Welcome to New Users!

by Jim Clements

*The following article is excerpted from the documentation file on a disk donated to MOAUG by Jim Clements of Canada. The disk was originally designed for those who bought an ADAM second-hand and had not received the manuals; but Jim has included files on vendors and clubs that will be of use to everyone. Although this article is reprinted here specifically for the new members of MOAUG who have had no contact with the ADAM community, I am certain you will all enjoy Jim's bright and lucid style, as well as his point of view. GOOD JOB, Jim! (Note: MOAUG will supply a copy of Jim's Beginner's Documentation Disk to any bona fide ADAM Users' Group, free of charge. Send postage.)*

## WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF ADAM!

Congratulations, you are using one of the finest computers of its type and price ever put on the home market.

This information is designed for people who are new to the ADAM Family Computing System. You will find that the ADAM computer is amazingly simple to operate and yet, because of its design, is versatile enough to run a wide range of programs from games to home and complicated business budgeting and a bit of everything in between.

It is a colorful computer, and yet it works almost as well with a black-and-white TV. If you only want it for games, it's one of the best. For word processing? You'll soon learn that ADAM's built-in word processor and the printer that is part of the ADAM "bundle" are more than enough for most people and that even better programs and different printers are available. And ADAMCalc, a "spreadsheet" program for budgets was an award-winner!

ADAM lets you do your own programming in BASIC -- a very simple computer language that is an industry standard. The "dialect" ADAM uses is called SmartBASIC, which is remarkable in that it will usually tell you when you've made a mistake and give a hint how to fix it.

And ADAM is equally at home with CP/M, an operating system (a program that tells a computer how to run, as opposed to application software which are programs which tell it what to do) that until the mid-80s was the world's most popular. There are thousands of excellent CP/M programs available, most can be adapted for ADAM for use in business or the home.

Finally you may be surprised to learn that ADAM is still a very lively computer, considering that it was "killed off" by Coleco, its manufacturer, barely a year after it was introduced. While it's not dead, it is an orphan -- but one with lots of support. Because you have this package, you've probably already found the most important source of support for ADAM, one of the many user group's or clubs in Canada, the U.S.A. and many other countries such as France and England.

In fact this package was put together as a result of several long-distance discussions (all via ADAM computers) between a CompuServe systems operator (sort of a super-computer club leader) in California, the editor of an ADAM newsletter in Florida, a leading manufacturer of new ADAM hardware in Ohio and an ordinary ADAM user in Ontario, Canada.

(Incidentally, the compilers of this package are in no way connected with Coleco or any other company making or selling ADAM products. It was done solely by ADAM users for the benefit of other potential ADAM users and is intended to be distributed freely to anyone who can use it.)

Now, on to something most computer articles and courses neglect -- one thing you CAN'T do with an ADAM. Or any other computer, for that matter!

You CAN'T hurt, wreck or just-plain-ruin ADAM or any other computer by pressing the wrong button or even a bunch of wrong buttons at the wrong time. You won't start World War Three with a slip of your finger or find yourself talking to a CIA master computer in Foggy Bottom, VA. Your ADAM won't disappear in a burst of electric energy and explosions like computers used to in science fiction films.

That fear, like the films, is just fiction.

In fact, if you do make a mistake ADAM will usually tell you somehow, often pointing out how to correct it. About the worst that can happen is that you will lose valuable information -- your 20-page letter of love to your Great (and very rich) Aunt Agness -- if you make a serious error. Even that can be avoided if you regularly follow one of the first rules of self-defence in dealing with computers -- make back-ups and make them often.

That is, make copies of what you are working with. ADAM has ways of doing that built in, you can also obtain good public domain copy

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programs or purchase commercial copiers. Then if you press the wrong key -- or worse yet, if you have a power failure when you are using your computer -- you won't feel like wrecking your ADAM for real with a fire axe.

Having said that, feel free to let your fingers fly -- the best way to learn about ADAM or any other computer is through doing, and now you can do it without worrying about destroying the world as we know it -- or your computer.

Coleco, the people who also gave us Cabbage Patch dolls and countless other toys, manufactured ADAM. It grew out of their ColecoVision game, the best on the market at the time. But don't be fooled, you don't have a Cabbage Patch computer. Unless very sophisticated things grow in cabbage patches these days.

ADAM was one of the first, and still is one of the finest, "bundled" computers. Bundled means that it was complete and ready to operate right out of the box. It had a keyboard, a printer, a CPU (central processing unit or "brain" of the computer) and a built in memory drive, the digital data drive. ADAM comes with everything you need to compute. You don't really have to buy anything else other than paper for the printer.

But like the Biblical Adam, while your ADAM has all the essentials, they are the bare essentials.

There are some extras you should consider. The first is an adequate supply of digital data packs, those devices that look like -- but aren't -- audio cassette tapes. Digital data packs, or ddps, are what you store information on with the ADAM. They are much like the big spools of tape you saw in those old science fiction films. They are also much like audio cassettes, but there are important differences and you should not try to use ordinary audio cassettes in your ADAM, you will be wasting your time and your money. Only proper ddps will fit into the ADAM data drive and they have special electronic coding on them that tells ADAM what to do and where to start. You should have a good number. Exactly how many depends on what you intend to do with your computer, but remember all programs and your own work such as letters and lists are stored on ddps. It's far better to have one or two too many than it is to have just one too few. We'll cover where to get new ddps later.

Then there are add-ons or upgrades. The first is really a second -- a second digital data drive which is easily installed in the right hand "window" of your Memory Console. While not absolutely essential, you'll find having two data drives a definite advantage in terms of time and peace of mind. A second drive saves a lot of tedious tape switching in some of the more complicated programs and acts as a back-up should something disabling happen to your original data drive. If you have only one data drive and it dies (and they do!) due to wear or malfunction, you're left with a computer that is little more than an electronic-age paperweight. With two you can keep right on computing with hardly more than a pause for the

proper curses. Remember too that only Coleco manufactured data drives, there is no other source. No one else makes them. So if you should see one it may be wise to get it quickly, you may not have the luxury of "second" thoughts!

Coleco also manufactured a number of accessories for the ADAM, most of them in the games area such as: a roller controller similar to those used in game arcades, a Super Controller for use with certain games, a steering device for driving games and an expansion module which allows you to play Atari 2600 and other game cartridges on your ADAM. Like the data drives, they were only manufactured by Coleco and are not being made by anyone else. Depending upon your needs you might consider any or all of them should they become available. Because they are no longer manufactured they can sometimes be found at very reasonable prices through friends, neighborhood bulletin boards such as those at grocery or corner stores or flea markets and yard sales.

Coleco also manufactured a number of computer devices such as an excellent 300 Baud modem called ADAMLink and an automatic dialer for use with your phone. Since the advent of regular phones with number memories, the auto dialer is little more than an interesting toy but the address book program that goes with it is superior. ADAMLink, the modem, can open the world of computing to your ADAM, from information on ADAM itself to personal banking, from "talking" to a friend's computer down the street to accessing massive information companies such as CompuServe Information Services or perhaps the computer at your school or office. Like the data drives, they are no longer being made and should be on your ADAM shopping list if you don't already have one. Can't find one? Never fear, there is a way around that.

When Coleco left ADAM abandoned in the Cabbage Patch, other manufacturers moved in to play mother to the orphan. Many are in the VENDORS list. Some, such as Orphanware in Ohio, have been particularly supportive of ADAM users in every way from new and innovative hardware and software to answering elementary questions about ADAM. Over and over and over.

These companies and ADAM user groups are the best source of new ADAM products. Through them you can get such items as:

-- Disk drives. Originally manufactured by Coleco but now made and upgraded by others. Disk drives offer two major advantages for anyone with an ADAM and should seriously be considered. First, a disk drive is much faster and more convenient than digital data pack (the tape) drives, so much so that it is difficult to comprehend without seeing one in action. Second, because disk drives use inexpensive and commonly-available computer diskettes they can ultimately save you money as the much more expensive digital data packs become more difficult to obtain. The original ADAM disk drives held 160K of information. A K or kilobyte is a unit of computer measurement, usually more is better. Drive upgrades are also available offering 320K and 720K of information

## Welcome!

(continued from previous page)

storage. By the time most read this a hard disk system should also be available, greatly increasing the information storage available to your computer. (For comparison, the standard ADAM digital data pack holds 256K of information.) CAUTION: You can only use disk drives designed for ADAM with your ADAM, that is you cannot use an Apple, Commodore or other disk drive. It must be configured for ADAM. They are available from several sources in the VENDORS list, however they are likely to cost you as much -- or more -- than your entire ADAM Family Computer System.

-- Memory expanders. Expanders usually fit in inside your Memory Console and "expand" the computer's memory, that is they allow it to use longer programs and do certain other functions such as offering quicker access to stored programs. They are available in 64K, 256K and 512K, again more is usually better. Not an essential, but nice to have if you intend to do serious computing with your ADAM. Available from several sources in the VENDORS list.

-- 1200 Baud modems. Usually hooked externally, usually far more complicated than the internal ADAMLink modem -- but also far faster. Worth keeping in mind in case you cannot find an ADAMLink to start with or find you are interested in CP/M programming -- or simply have to have a modem at any cost or inconvenience. Usually more expensive, but also more versatile, than ADAMLink. Available from several companies on the VENDORS list.

-- Dot matrix printers. Can replace or augment your ADAM printer. The ADAM printer is a letter-quality daisy wheel printer, that is it produces print identical to a good electric typewriter. However it is noisy and it is slow. It is also severely limited in terms of producing graphics. Dot matrix printers use tiny pins to create letters and graphics. The best offer only near-letter-quality (NLQ) printing but they are much faster and quieter than the ADAM printer and can be used with graphics -- everything from detailed pictures to different type sizes and fonts. They can also handle fan-fold or "computer paper" better. Some, but not all, dot matrix printers can be used with ADAM. All need a special electronic board which fits inside the computer before they can work. Such boards and the software needed to operate them and the printers are available from several of the sources in VENDORS. However, the power supply for the ADAM computer is located inside the printer housing which means you must still have the ADAM printer or some other power source such as a surplus power supply to operate ADAM with a dot matrix printer. For most novices, the ADAM printer is a perfect place to start. In fact some professional writers still prefer their standard ADAM word processor and printer to much more expensive and enhanced machines.

There are other devices, gadgets and goodies available for the ADAM and more becoming available every day. There is MegaCopy, which allows you to make your own digital data packs, 80 Column Video Unit boards which let you use more professional word-processing programs among others, speech synthesizers and more. Much more.

ADAM may be an orphan, but he's a well-endowed one.

And he's well cared for. In addition to the companies and clubs listed in VENDORS, there are a number of ADAM user groups in the United States and Canada. If you haven't found one in your area you can start your hunting in local computer stores, they may know of one. So might your library, also a good source for books on BASIC, CP/M and out-of-print books and manuals written specifically for ADAM. Again, neighborhood bulletin boards are good sources of information. If you don't see a note about an ADAM club, put one up asking if there is one. You might even consider forming a club of your own if you find there is none but there are other ADAM owners in your area.

If all else fails there are established regional clubs which you can join by mail and which will keep you informed of the latest in ADAM advances. Once again the VENDORS list offers some information.

Another excellent source of ADAM information is CompuServe Information Services, for which you need a modem -- or a friend with one who subscribes to CompuServe. It is a massive information service in Ohio which has a special section devoted to ADAM users. As you might expect, it is one of the most active of the forums for orphaned computers. It is used regularly and you can get almost any information and personalized help there quickly as well as the latest gossip about "our" ADAM.

Compuserve also has two "data libraries" brimming with programs for ADAM, one in BASIC and the second in CP/M. It is a valuable source of free programs, all are public domain.

Two final thoughts. Perhaps because ADAM is an orphaned computer, you will find many ADAM users happy to help you with your problems or who may be able to give you programs or advice.

And two companies, Orphanware and Digital Express (both in the VENDORS list) have been extremely generous in their support of ADAM. Digital Express offers a superior newsletter and has donated some exceptional software free to all ADAM users. Orphanware devotes a great deal of time and effort in assisting ADAM users as well as developing new ADAM products.

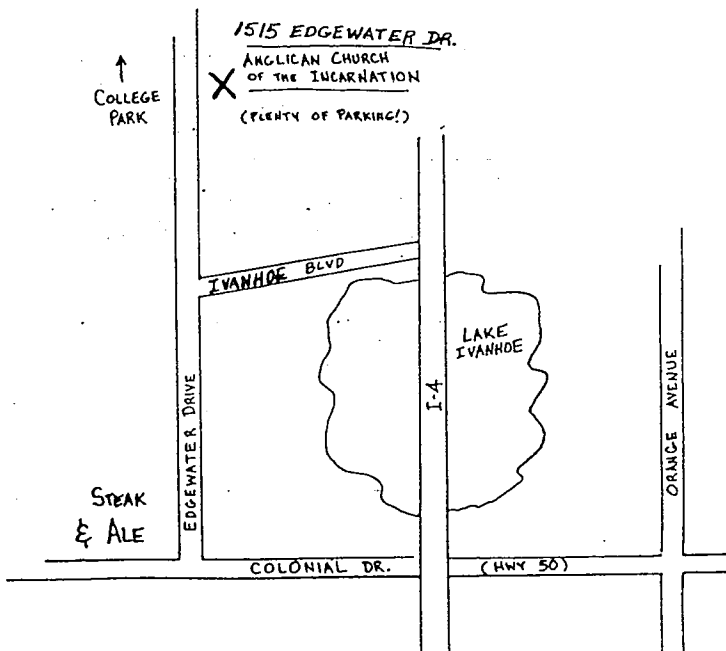
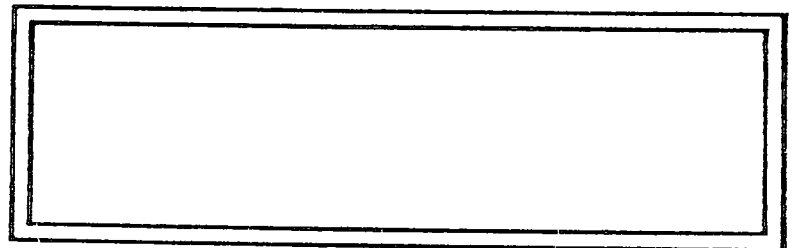
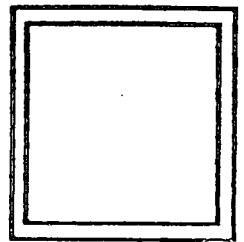
Again, the compilers of this package have no connection with either company -- or any other mentioned here -- other than as customers. But their contribution to the ADAM community is such that they deserve special mention.

We hope that this package will be of some help to new ADAM owners, and that others will offer it and perhaps update, correct or augment it in the future. Please feel free to pass it along to a friend or make it available to others. But please also remember, the work that went into this was donated to the ADAM community. It was not intended that anyone should profit from it -- other than new ADAM owners.

Cheers from Canada!



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ADAM LIVES!