



## **Users Group**

REMEMBER ADAMCON 03 IS AUGUST 1-4 !

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### **PRESIDENTS REPORT by Jim Duffy**

Would you believe that this will be the last newsletter issue you can read before Adamcon 03 takes place? That is right the next issue comes out in August (every other month remember) and since the membership meetings are the 2nd Saturday in each month I will have been to Adamcon 03 and back by the next newsletter. So since we put together this newsletter a little ahead of time I should be able to give all the details of what went on at Adamcon 03 in our October issue. Also if you would like a registration form I included one on the back page of the last issue.

I have heard that some new software & hardware projects will be unveiled at the convention and our own Al Fitzgerald has given me a couple of clues to what project he has planned on the software side. Also I could not miss the first and last seminar on CP/M by our very own Barry Wilson. So if you have not turned in your registration form yet it is not too late and I am sure Dean Roades would still be very happy to hear from you. Well hope to see all you Adam owners at the convention!

---

PRESIDENT-Jim Duffy VICE-PRESIDENT-Karl Hill

B.B.S Phone Number 1-314-383-3617 SYSOP-Al Fitzgerald

BBS Hours-Thursdays 9:00pm-7:00am & Friday 9:00pm-Monday 7:00am

ADAM NEWS NETWORK REPRESENTATIVE-Barry Wilson

NEWSLETTER LIBRARIAN & CONTRIBUTING EDITOR-Dennis DeSmet

SECRETARY-Elmyra Tidwell TREASURER-Jeff Wilson

EDITORS-Jim Duffy-Barry Wilson-Don Bueltmann



Meeting:

1. Demonstrations:
    - a) SpeedyWrite2 and File Manager
    - b) Adam Chess by Digital Express
  2. New News:
    - a) Ricky Gerlack our member and Adam programer is with the 101 Airborne Division, Saudi Arabia.
    - b) Al Fitzgerald is working on an IBM power supply unit for the Adam which will replace the printer and provide better regulated power for the tape drives.
    - c) We previewed our next newsletter issue.
  3. Treasurers report:  
Given and accepted
  4. Old News:  
No report given.
  5. Meeting adjourned by Jim Duffy and second by Carl Hill
- submitted by: Elmyra Tidwell 3-11-91



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PRINTING A DIRECTORY  
BY Don Bueltmann SLAUG

I imagine there have been many times when you wanted the ability to print a Directory. You may have wanted to do it while frantically searching for a particular file that you saved one day long in the past. Or, you may be the well organized type that keeps a copy of the Directory with the storage device so that you always know what each volume contains. It is rumored that these people even update their Directory printouts each time they add a file. What a novel idea! Who could ever be that organized? Whatever your reason there are several methods for obtaining a printout of a Directory.

SMARTBASIC

The first of these methods is to use SmartBasic.

1. Load SmartBasic

2. Enter pr#1, this will cause everything that appears on the screen to also appear on the printer device.

3. Enter the catalog command followed by the device name of the storage unit.

Tape Drive 1 = d1  
Tape Drive 2 = d2  
Disc Drive 1 = d5  
Disc Drive 2 = d6

```
pr#1
catalog d1
```

This will print a single column listing of all of the files in the Directory of the volume mounted on disc drive # 1 showing:

a. The status of the file, i.e. Locked, Unlocked, shown by an asterisk.

b. The type of file and if it is current or backup.

c. The number of blocks it requires.

d. The name of the file.

4. If you are going to continue to use Basic make certain you turn the printer off by entering pr#0 or you will use a lot of paper.

FILE MANAGER

The second method I will discuss is to use File Manager. File Manager is my favorite utility. If I had to choose and keep just four software programs for the ADAM, my selections would be File Manager, SpeedyWrite, AdamCalc, and SmartFiler.

To obtain a Directory print using File Manager:

1. Load File Manager

2. Press Smartkey I for File Functions (Make certain you are selecting the proper storage device) this will provide a listing of the Directory on the screen.

3. Press the Shift key and the Print key simultaneously. You will be provided with a new screen that reads PRINT DIRECTORY  
Smartkey I - To Screen

4. Press Smartkey I to change option to  
- To ADAM Printer, or once more  
- To Other Printer if you have a Dot Matrix Printer.

This will provide the best format of the Directory Prints covered in this article. The result is a 12 column print of the Directory in the following format.

a. Filename

b. Type of file and whether it is back-up or original.

c. Number of blocks in file

This information is repeated 4 times to provide 4 columns of filenames and their pertinent information.

SPEEDYWRITE

The final method I will cover is to use SpeedyWrite to obtain a Directory list.

1. Load SpeedyWrite

2. Press Store/Get key

3. Move cursor to Catalog

4. Obtain Directory List on screen

5. Press Shift key and Smartkey IV simultaneously. As you do this you will see a heavy line flutter through the screen image. I guess this signifies that the image is being trapped.

6. Press the Escape/WP Key. At this point in time you now have the Directory trapped within your document.

7. There are Printer Codes within the first part of this data that must be eliminated. If you don't do this your printer will go crazy if you attempt to print this Directory.

8. Press the Control and D keys simultaneously and move the cursor down to the first Filename and back up one position. Then press Control + D again. This will remove the Header part of the screen and leave you with a pure Directory List.

The best feature about this list, compared to the other methods is that since you have it trapped on your screen you can store it, edit it, format it any way you desire.

I keep a running list of all the file names that go into each months issues of the SLAUG Newsletter. This file is a historical list of each months selections. When I have completed the current months selections, I call up my file, go to the end of the document, and call up a catalog of the current month's articles. I then trap the catalog within my document and voila I have added another months worth of articles to my historical file. I'm sure you can think of your own uses for this tool.

I don't intend to leave you with the thought that these are the only ways to get a Directory Print. I know there are CPM Programs that will put these to shame. Some programs will even sort the files into alphabetical order. This article is intended to cover only those methods that I am familiar with and use. If any of you have any questions contact me and I will be glad to help you.

**\*\*Editor's Note:** Thanks to our own Don Bueltmann we have another fine article for our newsletter\*\* <Jim Duffy>

\*\*\*\*\*  
THE FRUGAL HACKER

by Dean Roades

Convention Chairman - AC03  
\*\*\*\*\*

The other day, as I was re-inking a ribbon for my Panasonic printer, I was trying to think of some of the other things I had done in the past in order to save a few bucks. I re-wound an ADAM printer ribbon once. (It worked, but was it worth it?) I know David Cobley of VISA makes his own floppy disks from standard DS/DD disks. I use empty toilet paper and paper towel tubes to keep the tangle of wires behind my computer desk up off the floor. (Fold the excess over and slide it inside a tube.)

Since ADAMites are, by nature, frugal, there must be many more such ideas that we can share with each other. I am proposing a workshop at ADAMCON 03 devoted to all of these ideas.

We need two things if you like the idea of a Frugal Hacker workshop. 1. IDEAS. We won't get very far if we have to rely on the few I outlined above. and 2. Someone willing to conduct the workshop.

Send your ideas and comments to me and we will see if there is enough to fill an hour. Even if you cannot attend AC03, send in your ideas. ADAMites from all over the continent will benefit. Send as much detail as you can, pictures, drawings, samples, etc., because it is sometimes difficult for someone else to understand what you are doing. It could be as simple as using the other side of the paper from draft copies. What you have been doing for years could help others who have not thought of it yet.

Send your ideas to: Dean Roades  
8522 Hohman Ave.  
Munster, IN 46321

Note: In no way am I inferring that ADAM owners are cheap, just frugal.

**\*\*Editor's Note:** Dean if ADAM owners where not frugal they would probably of spent 5 times as much money on an IBM or Apple!\*\*  
<Jim Duffy>

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ADAMCON 03 UPDATE - March 91

Dean Roades - Convention Chairman

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In addition to the many verbal commitments we have for AC03, we have started to receive confirmed reservations. Norman Castro was the first and now it's a race to see who can be the first on their block to register.

We have also been getting many letters with questions, suggestions and comments. It seems that a few things are not clear from the initial registration form and information. We will try to clarify some of these questions.

First and foremost, the agenda. The agenda outlined in the registration form is PROPOSED. Absolutely nothing is cast in stone. In order to provide the most wanted information, we suggested an agenda and asked that the registrants check the sessions they wanted to see. We will adjust the agenda based on these responses and attempt to secure qualified speakers. Several changes are already in the works. A Frugal Hacker session has been proposed which was not in the original agenda. Some sessions, such as Advanced Hardware, may be narrowed down to include only a couple of hardware items. There is a lot we can do to help everyone get the most out of the convention.

What will happen when we set the final agenda is that the sessions will be geared to the majority. It also means that some subjects will not be covered if there are only a few responses. Rather than just set an agenda, we are asking you to help us plan it.

Another topic of discussion is the format for the sessions. At AC01 and AC02 all delegate were invited to all sessions. Several commented that if a they were not interested in that topic, there was no alternative. Our goal is to schedule sessions with a minimum overlap of interest. For instance: We think that the people who will want to attend BASIC Programming for the Novice will not be interested in Advanced CP/M + TDOS. The more popular sessions will be repeated so you have a better chance of attending them. There WILL be conflicts, but we hope to minimize them so you will be able to see everything

you want.

We have scheduled the afternoon off on Saturday by popular demand. The majority of those who responded to MTAG's survey after AC02 want to keep this free time. It is not necessarily intended for sightseeing, even though there are many things to see in Indiana. At the past two conventions, this time was spent with other ADAMites checking out the latest programs or hardware, trading PD software, or talking to ADAM suppliers about their products. We expect to have the meeting rooms open with an ADAM set up in each. It's a great opportunity solve a problem or make a new friend.

Having the convention run from Thursday evening to Sunday evening was a difficult decision. We knew that there would be some problems, but we felt that having two full days of convention on the weekend would entice more people to attend.

Please feel free to comment on any aspect of the convention. Our goal is to give the people what they want. The final agenda should be set by June and will be sent to all registered delegates and published through the usual channels of ADAM News Network and ADAM BBSs. There will be conflicts for some people but try to look at the convention as a whole.

To paraphrase Lincoln:

We will satisfy some of the people  
all of the time;

All of the people,  
some of the time; but

We can't satisfy ALL of the people,  
ALL of the time.

Please bear with us. We are genuinely trying to do what's best for ADAM.

Dean Roades  
Convention Chairman  
8522 Hohman Ave.  
Munster, IN 46321

\*\*Editor's Note: Looks like Dean has really got things coming together now and I know he has been putting a lot of time into this project. I look forward to meeting him in person along with all the other people I have talked to over the BBS's\*\* <Jim Duffy>

\*\*\*\*\*  
The attached is an excellent article on tools  
for the ADAM and how to use them. It was  
submitted to ANN 9103  
\*\*\*\*\*

## KEEP YOUR ADAM RUNNING

BY JOHN BURNS.

### PART FIVE

#### "A"

Here is the first part of the final article in the series written by John Burns and originally published in the Metro Toronto ADAM Group's newsletter. The series was provided to us by Richard Clee, President of MTAG. It is my understanding that John Burns is no longer a member of MTAG and has ceased providing them with further articles in the series. Rather a pity, because they contained a great amount of information, useful to those of us that are not, as yet, experienced data processors.

#### DATABASES ON ADAM:

##### BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO RESEARCH AND SELECTION.

##### THE HOUSE OF CARDS:

What's a database?. You hear all kinds of talk about them and you know they refer to a lot of computer stored information, but what are they really?.

A database is nothing more than an electronic stack of filing cards with standardized information titles on any subject entered on them. The database will not only deal the cards out in piles (SEARCH FOR A SUBJECT) but will extract, assemble and collate information lines from each card. (REPORT GENERATION.)

##### HANDLING RAW DATA:

You create a database by entering information into the computer in the same way you would make up a Christmas shopping list and a birthday card list on all your friends. You could make two or three different lists covering, say, Christmas cards or Christmas

gifts, but the way most of us do it, especially if we're doing it over a period of time, is to first try making listings on a page, and when we discover that this isn't flexible enough, we go to filing cards and make up one card for each friend. On that card you would record their name, address, phone numbers, likes and dislikes, hobbies and birth date, when they last entertained you, and whether they sent you a birthday present or whatever.

When it came time to send gifts or decide who just got a Christmas card, you would go through the FILE drawer and make selections from the RECORD cards, stacking the cards in BATCH piles, according to the information contained in the headings or FIELDS. The problem arises when you have somebody who should be selected for more than one card pile and you have only one card. What do you do about the friend who has a birthday in December?. Their record card is already on the pile for those who get a Christmas gift. Oh! Oh!. Now you have to start creating duplicate cards. That's the hard way. Enter the tool of the century, the computer database.

##### WHAT IT WILL NOT DO:

Databases WILL NOT eliminate the drudgery of typing the RECORD cards or creating the information FIELD headings on your friends. It won't make the gathering of the information any easier or quicker. In some cases, entering the gathered information into the computer FIELDS takes even longer than just making up filing cards because you are locked into certain information formats. Because no computer is as flexible, as easily prompted or as association-memory triggered as is the human brain, you have to be exact and painstaking in the creation of the headings, questions, or information FIELDS on your RECORD cards.

You have to remember to do the filing (the entries) the same way every time just like training an animal. If you don't do it the same way every time, the poor thing gets confused and can't give the results you want.

##### DATES:

For example, you have to decide, once and for all, how you are going to enter something as simple as DATES. Suppose you want to enter the 19th DAY of the MONTH of March in the YEAR 1990. Your first reaction is "That's simple". Really?. Consider again!. Will it be entered as Mar19/90, 19Mar/90 19,03,90, March 19-90, or full numerics such as 031990, or 190390. The more recognised conventions are the American Date Presentation Format MM/DD/YY, the British format of DD/MM/YY, and ANSI format YY.MM.DD. There are also French, German and Italian formats.

Database programmers manuals seem to suggest using the ANSI format because the date is arranged in proper SORT order and makes for easier handling by the microprocessor. (I presume easier equals faster.) Regardless of which you use, the human brain would look at them and recognize all as variations of the same date, even if mixed up. ADAM can't handle that mix up and not many computers can. Most computer programs don't care how you enter information, as long as you do it the SAME WAY EVERY TIME.

PICKY, PICKY.

It is sort of petty pickiness that sometimes deters people from using or creating a database/ They just can't be bothered. On the other hand, for those disciplined individuals who are willing to put up with the pickiness of computer entry input, there are great benefits. A database will intake all your information (Known as RAW DATA) one time, then select, manipulate and display it in many ways and many times. It could be by the FIELDS of alphabet, by location, postal code, telephone number, likes, dislikes, shoe sizes, the number of children or whether they sent you a gift last year.

You can quickly decide who gets the gifts and who gets only the greeting. (SELECT THOSE WHO SENT ME A GIFT LAST YEAR.) You can print out lists, generate mailing labels or send a personalized form letter to some or all of them and do it FAST.

WHAT A DATABASE CAN DO.

For computer APPLICATION USERS who are not into programming, a database can be a real

business or education tool. It can be trained (or the operator can be trained) to handle anything from a simple customer/prospect list to a completely cross-referenced encyclopaedia with index. (Not recommended on ADAM!) It will handle character or text information, numbers and logic questions.

EXAMPLES.

It can handle business inventories or production solutions. (HOW MANY QUARTER INCH BOLTS IN BIN No. 4 AT LAST INVENTORY?), (HOW MANY QUARTER INCH BOLTS IN TOTAL INVENTORY NOW?). For that repeat order of Widgets, it can remember (and you can locate) the final production settings that worked best on milling machine No. 3 to produce the last order.

It can generate selective customer mailing lists, (DISPLAY ACCOUNT NAMES/ADDRESSES WITH SALES GREATER THAN \$2000 ANNUALLY).

It will do mail merge for personalized form letters, provided you do the proper samples or FORMATS. Instead of "ATTENTION OCCUPANT", it will insert "Dear Larry", or "Dear Mr. Johnson" when it types the letter.

It will generate mailing labels by extracting a multi-line address (Usually 5) or keep track of product development information. (DISPLAY COMPONENTS FOR X-151 SHOE-SCRAPER).

It will keep corporate personnel records and give returns such as, (DISPLAY AND PRINT ALL MACHINE OPERATORS) or more specific, (DISPLAY MACHINE OPERATORS IN DEPT 1011).

Some DB (database) programs will allow you to be sneaky and ask something not really programmed in. More than that, they will understand a short form request. Say, that the normal retirement age for your machine operators is 65 but you really have no specific field for retirement dates. You could get the information in short form like this, (DISP MACH OPS AGE 65 BY 311290). The computer, if it has the right program, will correctly interpret it to mean that you want a list of those machine operators who will be 65 by year end and due for retirement.

LOGIC:



Some database programs will handle logic problems. LOGICAL is when the question can be answered with YES, NO or TRUE, FALSE. Questions like this (IS THIS EMPLOYEE LEFT-HANDED?) or (VALID DRIVER'S LICENCE?). This makes the database excellent for fast input and result gathering of multiple choice tests or examinations. You just input the YES/NO, TRUE/FALSE selections and the computer will give you a correct score count. (Plus do averages and bell curves if you feed it properly!)

#### SPREADSHEETS.

A database will do accounting and payroll and keep track of bills payable and accounts receivable. (DISPLAY ALL ACCOUNTS DUE NEXT WEEK.) If you are heavy into accounting, financial tracking or playing the "What if" projection game, (WHAT HAPPENS TO OUR COMPANY IF SALES PROFITS GO UP 2% BUT THE UNION WANTS 9%?), then you should consider the SPREADSHEET. It is a database specifically specifically geared to financial problems.

#### FIELD LAYOUT:

The secret to this ability to locate, select, display and print information is in the FIELDS you establish on the RECORD card entry to the database. It will handle information on practically anything you can type into HORIZONTAL ROW form or into VERTICAL HEADING templates. Horizontal is when the headings, or FIELDS, are laid out across the top of a columned, accounting type sheet. You tab across the ROW and fill in each box. Vertical Headings are where the FIELDS are repeated once for each card or RECORD on the screen and you go down the list, typing in your responses, (DATA).

#### ESTABLISHING DATABASE USE AND FIELDS:

The difference between having a good, smoothly working database, that gives you the returns you want, and one that is difficult to read and inconvenient to access or use with Print Formats is in the advance planning you do, and the experimentation you try. DON'T DEPEND SOLELY ON THE DOCUMENTATION. When you are setting up your database, you should define the planning of the whole task

and considerations of HOUSEKEEPING, PROCESS and END OF JOB.

HOUSEKEEPING is things like the design of the FIELDS. Are they the proper title length, have they been defined as Character, Numeric, Logic or Text?. Am I exceeding my record limitation of characters?. Housekeeping and the ease of operation is what keep the database growing. Design a sample run of 20 records and try some manipulations and format merges. You'll soon find out if your housekeeping is a good design you can live with.

PROCESS is the actual mechanical and electronic activity of selecting FIELDS or tying the database to your FORMATS. You have to know the limitations of what you can ask your program to handle or you may get the dreaded CRASH CURVE. Overload!. Insufficient memory!. Cannot Access This File!. Cannot Read This File!. The way you design the initial process can make a lot of difference in speed and ease of operation. This is where experience counts because documentation rarely tells you what will cause the software to bomb.

END OF JOB. This is the real heart and justification of a database operation. When all is said and done, what is it to do?. Establish what you want and what you expect the database to do for you. It is a tool. You are buying it and building the database to do something. What are the THREE MAIN items?, your version of EOJ, that are the net result you want?. (If you have a 640K instead of a 64K, the identification list could be much longer than just 3 or 4 items.) Identification of this list is CRITICAL before you start buying programs, let alone start designing the RECORD FIELDS or FORMATS.

There is no point in getting a database program that is so sophisticated that you can't understand it or if it uses more memory than your computer has available. If you just want a program that will alphabetize your address book, then don't pay for a full-blown database. Unless the features are of benefit to you, they are wasted money.

Let us assume you have established your EOJ and it justifies buying a database. Regardless of what type of DB you get, it will have limitations. Your mission is to use and take



full advantage of what you pay for. You can only do that by research on brochures, (Watch out!. They lie, or at minimum, exaggerate), or you can check with a fellow ADAMite, or, finally, you can beg, borrow or buy the program and try it. You need to learn things like FIELD Title and INPUT limitations, RECORD limitations, Search and Display characteristics and Merge capabilities. Most people get so concerned with the creation and input of the RAW database, they forget the importance of those outside FORMATS (or FORMS). A database without them is like a telephone book without a phone. FORMATS are the real users of your database. You've got all that information bottled up but the FORMATS are the way you usefully apply that information for problem solving.

**ADVANCE THINKING:** The problem most people have when they get a new database program is that they charge into their justifying project too soon. After doing input on hundreds of records, they discover they have set up inadequate or inaccurate FIELDS or they have designated Sub-Fields incorrectly or that the fields they have established are just plain inconvenient to input.

Some databases WILL NOT ALLOW FIELD CHANGES in mid-process. You are either locked-into the fields and formats you started with or you have to dump out the whole operation and start over again. Now you know why I suggest the 20-record sample run to test HOUSEKEEPING. Nothing drives you crazier than the discovery, around RECORD 500, that you blew it.

You may want to display a NAME and PHONE number as primary fields, with the address and mail codes as secondaries. But most information sources will give it as NAME, ADDRESS, MAIL CODE then PHONE. What you forgot is that you can usually call up just NAME and PHONE only, but it is a lot easier to input if it corresponds to your information source. Your layout might cause you a lot of back and forth time-wasting effort that can be avoided by advance thinking or some short trial and error work. TAKE THE TIME TO LEARN THE WORKINGS OF YOUR CHOSEN DATABASE FIRST!.

**HEAVY WEIGHT PROGRAMS:**

In the course of my business experience, I have worked on databases using the IBM format, the Macintosh format, the Commodore format and, our poor orphan ADAM. On IBM I used a huge DB on a System 36. The DB was a custom-design using RPG II (Report Generator II).

It was speedy and fully integrated but the most minute field change required an Act of Parliament and a week of high-priced programmer time.

I used an IBM XT clone with dBase III Plus, running a custom personnel-tracking program. It was a cracker!. Fast, comprehensive and the total integration produced mailing labels, generated personalized form letters, tracked personnel by skills, tracked client companies with their own internal changes and maintained an auto-dial library of phone numbers for people who could provide information on any given subject. It would do everything except slice bread. But, it wasn't cheap!. Just the programming cost \$5000, required 640K, a 40 Meg Hard Drive, and about three months to structure. On Mac (Slow, but I love it!), I've used Microsoft FILER and Database on JAZZ.

I found Microsoft FILER, even on the user-oriented MAC, to be difficult. It is advertised as capable of reproducing customized forms, even including graphics, plus sorting of EVERY FIELD. That's true!. It will give you an infinite variety of information manipulation, but it has a complicated entry system and slow operation. The documentation is BAD!.

The database on JAZZ, an integrated program for Mac that includes word processing, database, spreadsheet, communications and graphics (Lotus 1,2,3 for Mac), was less complicated but limited in size and information management. But JAZZ worked well because it had much better documentation.

The instructions actually seemed to be written by a user, not some genius programmer. All of those programs are definitely out of ADAM's league, but I knew I had to have a database for home use. The process of finding a good database, that would work on ADAM, is where this article started.

\*\*\*\*\*  
The following articles were taken from various sources submitted by David Sands to ANN in the 9103 issue.  
\*\*\*\*\*

#### GLEANINGS.

BY DAVE SANDS.

The "Hypercard" software that was demo'd at ADAMCON 02 in Toronto is now available in the form of a demo datapack from the writer, Jason Brown, 312 Adelaide St. W., #805, Toronto, ON. M5V 1R2. Phone is 416-348-9978.

"This programming software is a compact, text oriented approximation of Hypercard for the Apple Macintosh Computer.

The Hypercard for ADAM package consists of the Toolkit and the Engine. With the Toolkit you create a 'stack' of cards of text information. You then offer the user several interactive ways to navigate from one card to another through this Stack.

Each stack may consist of up to 50 cards, and each card can link to any other card in any other stacks on tape. A stack of 50 cards can be held in ADAM's memory at once and a single stack of 50 cards occupies typically 14 blocks on a datapack. This means you can contain linked stacks of virtually 900 cards, (50 cards by 18 decks by 14 blocks each = 252 blocks) on a single 256K datapack."---Jason Brown, "Hypercard for ADAM", MTAG, Sept/Oct 1990.

This development has created considerable excitement in the ADAM world, with writers who were at ADAMCON and saw demonstrations the most enthusiastic, which speaks volumes about Brown's credibility.

"To say our knowledgeable people were impressed is a great understatement" Richard Clee, "Around the Circuit", MTAG, Sept/Oct 90.

The other big news item out of ADAMCON was rumors of new equipment for the ADAM, particularly disk drives. It appears from Metro Toronto ADAM Group and Metro Orlando ADAM Users Group (MOAUG) newsletters, that the supplier will be Mark Gordon of Micro Innova-

tions. This is the developer of the hard disk drive unit for the ADAM called PowerMATE. 320K 5.25" drives at about \$200 (U.S.\$) and 720K 3.5" drives about \$250, according to MTAG, MOAUG and ADAM International Media (AIM) of ADAM's House, Pearland, TX. Availability was to be December. Coleco used its own electronic circuits for its disk drives: the problem Gordon has solved obviously was duplicating those codes, the mechanisms were low-priced off the shelf models. If it all comes true, having large-capacity, low priced drives will make the ADAM very attractive either to keep or buy.

In my almost vast, well, half vast, experience with ADAM newsletters Vancouver and the Islands Senior ADAMphiles' ADVISA newsletter editor David Cobley is unique. As in the dictionary definition: the only one of its kind. His Christmas Bonus edition of the clubs' newsletter is a landmark of ADAMnewsletterdom, a tiny, often hapless little communications niche where editions are late, slim, nonexistent, promised and promised, thinly disguised advertising, undisguised advertising often for the editor himself, occasionally a total waste of time, and never previously to my knowledge, Bonus to the subscription promised.

David Cobley's Bonus edition, produced for no other reason than to thank the membership of his club for being there, and making the club the success it is, gives the editor of every other ADAM newsletter something to emulate. Or eat their hearts out about. BRAVO ! Three Cheers and a Tiger!

Onward!

#### Editor's comment:

Although I have never met David Cobley, I have developed the greatest respect for his work. He appears to be a very dedicated individual and I have enjoyed reading every issue of the ADVISA.

"LABEL MAKER DELUXE is TCR Software's second release for the ADAM, their first being the great enhancement of the public domain French SuperBASIC called SuperBASIC PLUS. LABEL MAKER DELUXE is a simple but very powerful labelling program that can also function as a database program.

It offers the user the capability of creating their own categories which can thereafter be sorted by entering a short criterion. LABEL MAKER DELUXE (LMD) allows for the creation of a 90 record database with each record holding 10 categories (which are user defined) of information." --Jim Notini, NIAD, in AUGER, Emerald Coast ADAM Users Group, Dec/Jan. 90.

Graphics and clip art programs are multiplying for the ADAM. YuleTools 1 is a collection of Christmas - oriented clips; 480 sprites, a candy cane alphabet, numbers, etc. Rated "terrific" by reviewer Faye B. Deere of AUGER. Producer is EyeZod, P.J. Herrington, 1003 Oak Lake, Apopka, FL. USA 32703. Disk \$13, pack \$15, shipping \$3, all US.

And Norman Castro, of the Omaha ADAM Users Group has developed a way to enlarge sprites, using a combination of programs and techniques. Details in the Dec/Jan. 90 AUGER.

If your Florida vacation plans -- we can all plan -- include betting on the dog races, you need "Those Doggone Dawgs" (sic) from Graftex Software (\$14.95 disk, \$16.95 pack, from Joe Quinn, 6665 Timbers Drive, Mobile, AL. USA 36695.

"This is an ingeniously simple program. It prompts you for data available from the racing form, and using that data, evaluates each dog and gives it a comparative score. When you get to the track you simply put your money on the dogs your ADAM has rated highest." ----Monte Neece, reviewer, Metro Orlando ADAM User's Group, Oct. 90.

Didn't Dick Francis do a novel on a computer program to pick horse race winners? He never did print out the program, just did his usual crippled jockey hero, love affair and murders thing.

The Personal Calendar Utility program by Sol Swift has other uses. MOAUG member Robert Slopsema uses it to create business forms. He used a combination of PowerPAINT, Clipper and Calendar programs. A dot matrix printer on the ADAM is another necessity.

A new wrinkle for better looking printing on the ADAM printer proves there's always a new way to do things with our favorite computer:

#### GLEANINGS CONT'D.

"Another fix, which stops the binding around the knurled knob [ on the ribbon cassette ] but can be wasteful, is to take the ribbon out from between the white plastic mechanism on the left side of the cassette, and through which it passes on its way to the take-up spool. Just let it ride free. Boy it sure zips through then...I just recently tried this and printed out one of the sharpest, blackest letters I've seen come from the ADAM printer. When I looked at the ribbon, there was no overlapping of impressions at all. The only justification I can think of to use this, is that the ribbon can be rewound and used several times before its worn out." ----Capt. R. D. Symonds, MC, USN, in Edmonton ADAM Users Group "ADAM's Leaf" via ADAM News Network (ANN), Nov. 90.

New to me is a listing for MAGnet ADAM User Group, c/o Eric Brennan, 888 Templeton Ave. Winnipeg, MB. R2V 3S6, also publishes a newsletter. Listing appeared in the Sept/Oct. NIAD Bulletin Board.

[I wrote to MAGnet ADAM User Group, in my role as New AUG Co-ordinator for the ADAM News Network, but my letter was returned "MOVED"]. BDC.

NIAD is marketing two combination program/instruction sets which will interest the advanced ADAM user. Accessing VRAM, and Mastering Music. Both deal with the ADAM's capabilities in Video Random Access Memory and sound chip, respectively.

Another software/book combo is "Learning to Write with ADAM," Vol 11 in a series that began with "Learning to Read with ADAM." Aimed at the Z80 machine language enthusiast and those seriously interested in ADAM EOS routines. Reviews by Jim Notini in the Sept/Oct.'90 NIAD, available from the ADVISA Editor.

Data drives, the unique-to-ADAM storage media and mechanism, are becoming important again because of their scarcity. NIAD now lists them at \$59.95 US (Nov. '90). This is certainly a recent high.

"In the seven or eight drives I've repaired for myself and friends, I've found that the

heat build up usually causes problems with Q-4 and Q-6 [chips] in the servo unit. This will cause the data drive speeds to be erratic, or the motor will act as if it is burnt out. If it acts like this and you try it too many times, the motor WILL be burnt out... I've also found that the servo board, Revision "C" Q-6 is usually the culprit. Q-6 = 2SD1051 transistor which G.E., E.C.G. and ARCHER list no substitutes for. It is available through Matsushita (that's Quasar or Panasonic Service/Parts Depot). --- Rick Lobbestael, Data Drive Care, NIAD, Nov.'90.

Some short takes on news and near-news in the ADAM world, with sources:

"OASIVE PENSIVE ABACUTORS and PHOENIX 2000 have released no further news on their in-development products and services." NIAD, NOV.'90.

"In our Southern California region, the outbreak of viruses has suddenly grown vastly worse.

Almost no BBS has gone unscathed. Major BBS's are reluctant to admit the extent of damage that they have experienced, because they don't want these vandals to know the degree of havoc they have been successful in creating." Thomas Keene, IEAUG, Nov.'90.

"When Coleco liquidated ADAM systems, most people bought them for less than \$300! Not bad at all for an \$800 computer. When presented with a cost of \$275 just for a disk drive, most people failed (and continue to fail) to consider all the benefits of the device, and fall back instead on the comparison between what it will cost versus what they actually paid for the whole computer! It never dawns on them that they paid a "liquidation price" for their ADAM." ---Ron Collins, "Add-ons for the Coleco ADAM Computer", ADAM Informant, Sept.'90.

PNBL [Project Name By Line] can be acquired on disk or tape from most User's Groups for practically nothing. However, there are limitations when it is booted from any form other than cartridge. If not in cartridge form, PNBL requires a 64K memory expander. Even worse is that the nicest feature in this program will not be functional -- the capability of capturing [high resolution screen]

graphics being displayed on the screen by simply pulling the cartridge reset switch!" --Alan Neeley, review of PNBL cartridge from Walters Software Co. ADAM Informant, Sept.'90.

One of the joys and concurrent frustrations of doing the Gleanings column is the amount of material that is available on a monthly basis. It is practically overwhelming. Any ADAM User Group member will be spending his/her time wisely by reviewing exchange newsletters in the clubs' library. There is gold in those hills of ADAM publications -- and the answers to the mysteries, probably of the universe, and certainly those your ADAM has created for you.

#### LATE BREAKING GLEANINGS.

One of the most exciting hardware projects for the ADAM since the introduction of the hard disk units will be the ADAM Image Maker (AIM) Board. Prematurely announced, and heralded, it has now been demonstrated to the Metro Toronto ADAM Group. President Rich Clee of MTAG says board, software and a Goldstar 14" monitor bundle will be available for \$350.

The AIM Board will give the ADAM an "80-column display" capacity and far more and better screen graphics. The ADAM has always been one of the better computers of its era for graphics -- part of its "game machine" heritage -- and reports on the AIM Board stress the improvement. The "80-column" display means "real computer" on the monitor screen to many of us. The ADAM was built to display only 40 characters because it was made to use TV sets, which lack the resolution needed for finer display.

The AIM Board uses a Texas Instruments graphics chip, and apparently will require its own software and a monitor.

MTAG's Clee also reports some members -- "our more serious hackers" -- are trying to improve on SmartWRITER. It's not a small project, and the club is looking for encouragement. SmartWRITER is on a microchip within the ADAM that is intimately tied into the computers' operation, so any changes will affect the whole thing.

Anything they can do to speed up SmartWRITER and take out its bugs would probably get them nominated for sainthood, at a minimum.

MTAG is at Box 165, 260 Adelaide St.E., Toronto, ON. M5A 1N0.

Note to file and lose: the exact replacement for the microswitch in the ADAM printer that governs the thing's operation (the famous "clunk") is Sony part #1-515-309-00 and Radio Shack part #275-016 will work.---Thomas Keene, 'ADAM Printer Malfunction', IEAUG, via ADAM News Network. His entire article appeared in the ADVISA Sept.'90.C

#### MORE-THAN-YOU-EVER-WANTED-TO-KNOW DEPARTMENT.A

The move toward large capacity disk drives has lead to some large problems. Thomas Keene has discovered some and writes about the disasters possible when transferring CP/M files from 720K disks to ADAM 160K using PIP.COM. The short answer is don't, if there is anything on the 160K. Large capacity disks use a different storage system that totally destroys files on small K size disks. Read the Dec.'90 IEAUG newsletter for a detailed discussion.

There's another way to improve your ADAM screen image, if the AIM Board or Radio Shack RF modulator don't appeal. Shack part # 15-1118, a signal booster, and one each #15-1529, coaxial cable and #42-2365 RCA cable are needed. Cut and splice the two cables to make two coax to RCA units, and connect the booster between the ADAM and your TV. [ Using RCA to Coax adapters, ready made cables may be available ].

Author says this fix will make your color tv work as well as a monitor. If so, a great deal for less than \$20, US. --- Richard Slopsema, 'Blurry-Eyed ?' MOAUG, Dec.'90.

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Editor's Note: Thanks to David Sands for the various articles he submitted to A.N.N that we are also able to use hear! <J.Duffy>  
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The following program and documentation was printed in the ANN 9103 and seems like it could be very helpful to programmers.  
KEYCHECK  
by Joe Alford

The DUNGEON program uses SmartKeys to allow the player to communicate with the program. But where did I get the information? How did I know, for example, the ASC code for Smart-Key I?  
Well, the complete list of ASC codes is published in several places. But the truth is that I have a memory like a steel trap. Rusty. I couldn't remember any of those places.  
So I did what any good programmer does in such a situation. I coded a program that allowed me to get the information for myself. The program, KEYCHECK, is below.  
Note that the only way to exit from KEYCHECK is with the ESCAPE key.

```
10REM KEYCHECK\  
20REM J. Alford, 4/29/90  
30TEXT  
40?:? "Hit a key "  
50GET k$  
60HOME  
70 k%=ASC(k$)  
80IF k%=27 THEN END  
90? "ASCII is "; k%  
100GOTO 40
```

Experiment with KEYCHECK. One thing you will discover is that most keys have several values. "A" and "a", for example, are different. The SmartKeys have different SHIFTed values also.  
Some keys have the same value SHIFTed or not. The arrow keys are examples.  
Some keys have no value at all. The LOCK key has no value whether up or down.

```
10REM KEYCHECK  
20REM J. Alford, 4/29/90  
30TEXT  
40?:? "Hit a key "  
50GET k$  
60HOME  
70 k%=ASC(k$)  
80IF k%=27 THEN END  
90? "ASCII is "; k%  
100GOTO 40
```

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Here is another article from MTAG. They seem to be a prolific group. This article has a lot of truth in it. I know I have thought sometimes of getting rid of my ADAM and getting something better. Each time I stop myself and say, Why!  
DON'T SELL ADAM SHORT!

by Richard Clee, MTAG

Recently a former member of MTAG phoned me in some distress - mostly financial distress. Like so many of us in this recessionary period, he was without a job and prospects were thin, and he felt his ADAM was one of those assets that could be converted into cash to meet immediate needs.

Since that is not his name, I'll call him Joe. Anyway, "Joe" got to talking and I got to thinking.

Oddly enough, when Joe phoned I had been reading the Star, and had noticed an ad for a series of dedicated word processors. Top of the line was a unit that offered 58K of text memory with 20 phrase storage, a nine-inch, 80-column white on black display screen, 3.5" disc drive, and mail merge/ mail list and spellchecker program. It has a detachable keyboard and roughly 18 cps daisy-wheel printer I happen to know has an insatiable thirst for horribly expensive, exclusive printer ribbons. The price tag was \$800, plus taxes and accessories.

Suppose, I suggested to Joe, the ADAM were new and current today. If this line of word processors is worth a half-page ad in the Star, would an ADAM be a fair challenger?

Consider: press one button and ADAM is a dedicated word processor. Let's compare the features. Coleco won't tell you, but in Smartwriter mode ADAM has about 40K of text memory - expandable to over one megabyte, if you can ever figure out what use you would make of it. Expanding to 104K would cost you \$39.95 plus tax.

80-column displays are nice, if you're young enough and your eyes are sharp enough. ADAM doesn't even provide a monitor - but if for some reason you don't want to hook up to the

household color tv (or retired black and white) the nearest garage sale will likely have one for sale at a price cheap enough to be trivial. The display is sufficiently clear and sharp - and BIG - that even this grey-haired retiree can, if necessary, read it without his glasses. The \$800 machine doesn't offer a choice of screen colours; if tiny greenish-yellow letters on a sorta-black background tire your eyes unduly or cause reading difficulties - well, tough, that's all there is in the package.

If you want a disc drive for the ADAM, a 5.25" - 360K will cost you \$200, and a 3.5" 720K \$250 in U.S. funds, plus shipping and GST. But there are those who point out that the big-time computer pros back up their disc data to tape because it's more reliable, and suggest ADAM's built in data drives should be the storage medium of choice anyway. ADAM gives you the option; what you see on the \$800 machine is what you get.

The dedicated machine is a word processor. But ADAM's a computer. So while you have to go into computer mode to get it, ADAM offers mail merge/ mail list functions either as public domain limited programs, or as full-featured databases offering far better performance on these functions and many extra abilities besides. Again, ADAM gives you a choice. A weakness is the ADAM spellchecker; made for the base machine it needs to be re-written to require and use a 64K expander to be better than the \$800 machine.

The \$800 machine has a tutorial disc as well as a manual. It needs one. Most functions are carried out by hitting a "code" (control) key plus a letter. To master the functions, you have to memorize these, or at least remember where they're buried in close to 100 small-type pages. ADAM, with its dedicated function keys, lets you do the main half-dozen functions from clearly named buttons. Then ADAM adds the variable function keys - our Smartkeys - with their "trees" of functions, every single one as clearly marked as the dedicated buttons. When my daughter was still in school, she used my ADAM for all her school-work, without ever even opening the manual. Everything was on the screen; nothing needed to be memorized or looked up. The keys gave such effective guidance she never needed to



opens the book.

ADAM's printer ribbons come cheap and last forever - I think more MTAG members than not are still using the ribbon that came with the machine originally. If you'd rather have speed and a lower noise level, you can add a dot matrix printer with all its extra capabilities in switchable typefaces and graphics printouts, and run it in parallel with the ADAM letter quality unit. The \$800 machine does not offer any flexibility - you're stuck with what you bought.

And of course ADAM has all the advantages of being a real computer. You can run spreadsheets, play games, draw pictures, create files, or do anything else one uses a computer to do. In fact, if you don't like the built-in word processing program, you can even change it - for WordStar, Speedywrite, or any of a number of others. On the \$800 machine, no matter how ill-suited it becomes to your needs, that's all you have or can get.

But, said Joe, I advertised my ADAM in the Buy/Sell at a lousy \$100 and didn't even get a nibble. I wasn't surprised. I suggested to him that people did not look in the paper to buy an ADAM. If five years ago when they were current these buyers knew what an ADAM was, they've long since forgotten. I suggested that instead of offering an ADAM, he offer the item people were looking through the paper to buy.

I suggested an ad like this: "Word processor. Incredibly easy to use. Unbelievably inexpensive. With extra computer capability - runs spreadsheets. Even plays games!. Call Joe (etc.)" And since he had only the base ADAM, in used condition, and was in a hurry to sell, I suggested he ask \$200 for it.

Was the suggested text accurate? Many of our members to this day only use their ADAMs as word processors, and are delighted with them in that role. Or at most they use them to play games. Any of them who have encountered dedicated office word processors will tell you in a hurry how much easier the ADAM is to learn and run. Price? I suggested \$200. To get the equivalent of the ADAM features, think six to a dozen times that amount. And

you still won't get all of ADAM's computer capabilities - try printing out an RLE graphic or running a modem from any dedicated word processor at any price. I know; I used to use a \$2300 unit.

So if ADAM's such a big deal, why did I tell Joe to settle for a lousy \$200? Because anytime anyone sells anything used, it's because it has lost its value to him. You sell a car because it's getting cranky, or isn't fast enough, or lacks a feature you need, or has started looking ugly, or maybe because however much you love it, paying next week's rent is more important yet. Buyers know that essentially you're in distress, and expect a bargain accordingly. Don't we all?

That's why used cars are cheaper than new cars, though there's a scaling based on the original list price. Let's apply this. One computer magazine recently remarked that if cars depreciated at the rate computers do, you could buy a 1986 Cadillac for 23 cents. That is true of the heavy business mainframes, perhaps, but not necessarily lower down the scale.

But the ADAM started out at about \$1100, which made it competitive at the time. But what are the competitors? A Commodore C64 with what ADAM offers costs a great deal less than \$1100 now. So does a bare Apple II, not to mention the even lower priced clones. Ask Gary Bowser what a Geneve reincarnation of the TI99/4A costs now. These are all 8-bit, 64K computers that overall offer very little more or less than the ADAM. They're about as different as the comparable models of Ford, Chevrolet and Plymouth. Obviously if you can get a new one with printer in the under-\$500 range, used ones are going to have to sell for less.

Not only that, to a prospective buyer they won't look that different. If he sees an Apple II with printer at say \$250 in the classifieds, that will be his standard of comparison when he looks at a TI99/Geneve, C64 or C128, Atari XL, Tandy TRS - or ADAM. The price of anything is finally what the mass of buyers will pay, and no one is going to get rich out of any 8-bit, 64K computer.

By the same token, they aren't without value.



If Commodore can continue selling the C64, and Apple the Apple II, and the new producers the Geneve, the used products of the same class have a proportional value. Hence when Joe went to sell his ADAM, I suggested that the value was real and he was entitled to realize it.

But, you may say, the ADAM's an orphan. Yes, Coleco's dead and gone. But take a look at what the "adoptive parents" have done. ADAM was made to be expandable, and today you can get memory expansion, disc drives, hard drives, modems, printers and more the original designers never dreamed of. In fact, try to find a hard drive for a C64. There's a full range of software available.

Between public domain and commercial programs, I own more ADAM software than I will be able to use in what remains of my probable lifetime. And my accumulation is tiddley beside that of the really serious users, let alone what's available. And more is yet to come; we even in some cases know what and who is working on it.

Parts and service? A certain time ago I saw a letter that was none of my business. But in the context of other things, it revealed that a certain ADAM supplier had just bought a hefty six-figure inventory of ADAM parts and accessories, and as a result that supplier was fully confident of its ability to support every remaining ADAM well into the next century. But then, anyone who saw his snapshots at ADAMcon would figure Phil Kosowsky could say the same, based on his basement stash. And he's just across Lake Ontario. But we don't even have to go there; at last reports N.E.S.A. up on Progress Ave. were still fixing ADAMs. As if ADAMs ever broke down anyway, as if Syd and Gary and Mike and Bob and Dave and a dozen others couldn't usually cure such glitches as might turn up, and as if used units weren't so easy and cheap to come by anyway that replacing is often cheaper than fixing.

What more can a computer owner ask? There's more hardware and software than he can use or afford even at the bargain ADAM prices, service support, replacement parts, and through the interlinked ADAM clubs more help and information than he can ever use. And

this can be demonstrated to any potential buyer.

So this was my message to Joe, and you can decide if it applies to you. An ADAM is a contemporary, viable product, hotly competitive with other items on offer in computer stores and office supply shops today. In many applications, it offers more features and flexibility at less cost than the competition. It has available everything its selling immediate competitors offer and more. It's a premium product worth a premium price. Look for it and expect to get it.

The underlying message here is, of course, don't sell your ADAM; the money you get for it will not be worth the services you'll be losing. But sometimes the car won't do any more; you have to buy a truck. And sometimes you have to get a computer that will do things ADAM can't. Sometimes it's a choice of sell something to get the cash in, or the kids don't eat next week. And ADAM may have to go. (How smart it is to sell your ace resume writing machine when you're looking for a job is a question we'll dodge). But if you are forced to these extremes, remember: don't sell ADAM short. You deserve value received for value delivered. And ADAM delivers value - in spades.

#### AN AFTERTHOUGHT

The article above has been concerned with the true value of the ADAM, as a tool and as a commodity. But what keeps your ADAM valuable as it is? The answer is clear. The ADAM is supported - in hardware, software, service, parts, and information. Why is it supported so strongly - because of your user group, and all the others like it around North America. It is this market, tied together in a communications net, meeting together in ADAMcons, linked to let people who develop products reach those who use their products, that keeps ADAM alive and well, and still growing towards the year 2000. It is your membership in your user group that returns value to you now as you use your machine, and will add value later should you ever be forced to sell. Stick with you ADAM User Group and encourage others to join. It's an investment that pays dividends now and capital gains later. That's a deal you can't beat.

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The following is an excellent article from  
MTAG and appearing in the ANN 9103. I'm  
sure you will not only enjoy reading it but  
will learn something too.  
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THE DARTH VADER DEATH SPIN: AN ADVENTURE WITH  
ADAM

by Rich Clee

It's really all Jack Leamy's fault.

For those who don't attend our Monday meetings and missed ADAMcon, let's explain that Jack is one of our members in northwestern Toronto. Each Monday meeting he tends to stride in, a hearty greeting and sly smile at the ready, and take his place to absorb all the latest ADAM news.

It isn't until he starts asking questions that the stories come out. Jack is a retired writer - retired after a long stint in China. Gradually the details come clear - how he bought an ADAM just after they came out and immediately took it to China with him. How he had his ribbons jam. How the tape drives acted up. How he had sudden power failures and power surges that did his machine no good at all. How he coped with the exhaustion of his datapacks, with the nearest Coleco depot half a world away and unable to help. And on and on, until he recently brought his still-running ADAM as hand luggage back to Canada, set it up, and is running it still. And he asks us how to solve ADAM problems!

So it was the other day that I got through the sixth page of a letter to Barry Wilson on ANN matters and decided to save it to disc. I duly pressed all the right buttons, named the file, and pressed "store workspace". The screen changed, the in use light on the disc drive lit up, and matters proceeded to the mid-point.

Regular users of Smartwriter, especially those with disc drives, may have noticed how ADAM stores these files. First the format is read in, margins and page lengths. Then the text is read in. Then ADAM stops for a second, considers things briefly, and writes again. I suspect the second writing may be a backup file. Then ADAM scans the results (you

can see the line indicator on the left of the screen moving), decides all is well, and shuts off.

But sometimes, ADAM gets to the halfway point and stops. Then the message is displayed, "cannot access this file". What to do? The normal instinct is to immediately hit the escape key. This produces results. The message changes to "one moment - restoring files". The computer locks up and will not respond to any key on the keyboard. The line marker starts running through its cycle, over and over, faster and faster, in what other ADAMites have labelled the Darth Vader Death Spin.

This presents a dilemma. If you break in the only way possible, with a full reset, everything you've written is history. If you don't, go and have dinner or something. Ten or twenty minutes down the line, ADAM will get tired and give up. You'll know because the screen will go blank in the text area and the line marker will stop spinning. But the message will remain and there will still be no response to any keyboard input. Not only that, you'll find that every file on your tape or disc now produces the message "cannot access this file" when you try to call it. Don't ask how many hours of creative sweat I've lost this way. And every ADAM owner who uses Smartwriter much has had the same experience.

But with my letter to Barry, I caught on quick. When ADAM balked at the halfway point, I pulled out the disc. Then I hit the escape key, triggering the death spin. I'd read somewhere if you waited it out then did some experimenting, you could recover all but the lost screen of text. Maybe so, but I hit every permutation and combination of keys, including the shifted and control version of everything on the keyboard, without result.

So, I reset ADAM and tried to call the file, and got the message "cannot access this file". This time, though, I could call the other files on the disc, so there was some improvement. However, my letter was a lost cause - another evening down the drain with nothing to show for it.

At this point somehow I heard Jack Leamy's

familiar chuckle somewhere in the back of my head. It bothered me. Would Jack have quit in the face of adversity? No way. He stops and thinks things through. And he doesn't quit. And he asks us questions! Maybe it's time we did something to justify such faith.

So I thought. ADAM did write my file to the disc. I saw the red light on and heard the drive spin. The directory admitted it was there; ADAM just claimed he couldn't get at it. Was the file really there? And if so, why couldn't he get it?

I pulled out my Smartwriter disc and booted MTAG Utilities #1 in its place, then ran the Utility Dump program. Then I put in the Smartwriter disc and used the dump utility to analyse the directory. Aha! The letter entry showed blocks allocated 16, blocks used 1, bytes in last 0. ADAM was being told the file was empty. But was it?

Obviously the answer was to look at the allocated blocks, 74 through 89. So I moved to the block read function of utility dump. Sure enough, block 74 was full of the miscellaneous collection of hexadecimal numbers (e.g. 63 69 6C 2C 40 20 6F 72 20, etc.) that indicated a text file. So were blocks 75 through 88, right to the end. But block 89 had the repeating 00 0E of an unwritten block. Now we were on the trail of something interesting.

Meanwhile, I had noticed when reading block 74 that the first part of the block had a collection of numbers in a repetitive pattern that went on for several lines before the start of any text. Could the answer lie here? I looked at the first blocks of the other files stored on the disc. No, they matched - except that in one of them, what appeared to be a couple of sentences from the end of the letter appeared before the actual start of the text. It looked as if Smartwriter, finding only a few blocks at the end of a file, had transported them forward to some unused space in the header. Could it be Smartwriter is programmed to do this? Is it possible Smartwriter tried to do this with my letter to Barry, misjudged the space, couldn't resolve the difficulty, and crashed? I don't know. There was no trace of any such activity in block 74. But then, I suppose Smartwriter

could have tried to move the text, failed, and rewritten the header to its original state, then lost track of where the leftovers should go. What really happened? I have no way to tell.

But clearly, all but the very last small part of my letter was there. And I'd rather rewrite one paragraph than six pages. So, how to get it out? Let's see - The directory is telling ADAM lies. What happens if he's told the truth?

I remembered that with one of my ADAM purchases I had inherited a copy of a program called Disc Doctor. I had never looked at it, but the label said it was for fixing directories. So, let's boot it up and see if it can be of any use.

Eureka! It reads directories. And it lets you change them. My purchase hadn't included any documentation, but the program (from AJM Software) was so clearly menu-driven that, for my purposes, it didn't matter. I called the directory for the Barry letter. I changed the blocks allocated to 15. I changed the last block to 88. I changed the bytes in last to 1024. I pressed the smartkey to write the changes to the disc. Now the directory information corresponded to what ADAM would actually find if he looked in the blocks involved.

I pulled out Disc Doctor, inserted my file disc, moved into Smartwriter and pushed the store/get button. The directory screen appeared. I moved the little arrow to the Barry letter file, pressed the get smartkey, and held my breath. The screen changed - "one moment - getting file". It changed back to normal; my letter was on the screen. Eagerly I paged to the end. Yes, it was bobtailed - but I remembered what the final sentences had been, and restoring the lost material was no hassle. This time I would do my printout first. And I did. And when I resaved the file, under a new name, it went back in perfectly.

The lessons to be learned from my experience? If you're saving in Smartwriter and it locks up, pull out your tape or disc before you do anything else. Play with the keyboard and see if you can find anything that will unlock it.

If not, don't hit escape and watch the Darth Vader Death Spin; reset and start working on your storage medium.

Can you get the file back? I don't know. I tried and I got lucky. But I don't know how many different ways ADAM has to mess things up, so my manouvres won't necessarily work every time. On the other hand, maybe other programs, or the ones I used applied differently, would bail one out of other jackpots too. Whatever you do, think of Jack Leamy and his stories. Half a world away from any support, strictly on his own resources, he had problems and no help but himself. So he sat back, thought, worked things out, and kept a balky ADAM working for him for over five years. With a newsletter and a meeting full of members every couple of weeks who know things you don't, think of the resources available to you. And use them. At worst you'll have some fun and learn a lot. At best you'll succeed and know how to cope with the problem next time. And there are few satisfactions around that beat solving a nagging problem for good and all. Ask Jack.

The MTAG Utilities #1 is one of a collection of public domain programs you can obtain from the club. Download or one-month rental charge is \$3.00; members who can't attend meetings can send in a disc or tape to have the program copied onto it - please include return postage. Or, you can order a disc or tape from the club and ask that the item you want be recorded on it. Your cost will then be the medium, download charge, postage and provincial sales tax if applicable (GST is included in quoted club prices). If in doubt, you may phone the club number at any reasonable hour - there is an answering machine on line in case we're taking a shower or something and can't hear the phone. A number of very powerful utility collections are available.

My copy of Disc Doctor is very old; I gather recent revisions are much better, and work on tapes as they do on discs. Like many AJM titles, it is available from the ADAM User Friendly Group c/o Ron Mitchell, 210 Gloucester St., Apt. 1107, Ottawa, Ont. K2P 2K4, phone (613) 230-9511 evenings only. Ron Mitchell will happily outline what is available, prices and terms.

NOTE: The following story is a kind of puzzle in which there are several computer terms the reader is supposed to find. It was written by MOAUG member Mike Weber and first published in the October, 1990 MOAUG newsletter. ANN 91

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#### BETTY AND MIKE WEBER'S NARROW ESCAPE by Mike Weber, MOAUG

IT WAS A CLEAR DAY, AND BETTY AND I DECIDED TO TAKE OUR BOAT SYNTAX OUT FOR A CRUISE. BEFORE WE COULD MOVE, WE HAD TO INSERT THE KEY INTO THE LOCK TO START THE ENGINE. WE LEFT PORT AND STARTED TO RUN PAST THE STRING OF ISLANDS KNOWN AS THE MONITOR ISLANDS. WE WERE GOING DOWN TO THE KEYS FOR A PAUSE FROM OUR WORK AT THE STORE. WE WERE CARRYING QUITE A A HEAVY LOAD: WE HAD 1200 BAUD IN THE HOLD AND ANOTHER 300 BAUD ON DECK. WE HAD A COPY OF A MAP SO WE COULD KEEP TAB ON OUR COURSE. AN ERROR IN HEADING WOULD BE HARD TO UNDO!

AFTER AWHILE, I LET BETTY DRIVE. AFTER A BIT, I HEARD A CRUNCH, AND SYNTAX BEGAN TO LIST. THIS THREW ME FOR A LOOP AND I LOST CONTROL. I WAS SURE THAT WE WOULD NOT GET HOME AND I WOULD NEVER AGAIN GET A PEEK AT THE MOAUG NEWSLETTER! THE LOAD STARTED TO SHIFT. THINKING THAT BETTY MADE AN ERROR, I STARTED TO CURSOR UP AND DOWN!!! BUT THEN I LOOKED OVER THE SIDE AND SAW THAT A SHARK HAD DECIDED TO RAM US AND TOOK A BYTE OUT OF SYNTAX. SHE HAD A HUGE CHIP IN HER HULL. I KNEW THAT WE COULD NOT RESTORE SYNTAX AND WE WOULD HAVE TO GET A NEW BOAT SHOULD WE SURVIVE. I TRIED TO CONSOLE BETTY AND TOLD HER EVERYTHING WAS OK. SHE GAVE ME A POKE AND A BOOT IN THE REAR AND SAID, "DON'T GIVE ME THAT BBS! I KNOW THAT WE WILL NEVER GO TO A MOAUG MEETING AND NEVER GET TO MEET PAT!"

I TOOK THE FLARE PISTOL AND FIRED THE LAST CARTIDGE. SHORTLY, THE SHIP SS MODEM PULLED ALONGSIDE AND THE CAPTAIN YELLED, "DON'T WORRY, WE WILL SAVE YOU!" HE BEGAN TO HELP US A BOARD AND INTRODUCED HIMSELF AS CAPTAIN ADAM. HE GAVE ME FIRST AID FOR MY SLIPPED DISK AND GAVE US EACH A BOWL OF SERIAL AND A CAN OF SPRITE. (WE NOTICED THAT HE HIMSELF WAS DRINKING A ROM AND COCA COLA, THOUGH.)

NEEDLESS TO SAY, WE WERE HAPPY THAT WE WOULD RETURN TO HOME PORT, AFTER ALL!!!!

(NOTE: The Story Above Contains at least 82 ADAM terms. Can You Find Them All?)

## B&R HANDYMAN SERIES

### How To Install Outdoor Lighting

Review by Jim Duffy

Gerlack Family Software has come out with another project from the B&R HANDYMAN SERIES called "How To Install Outdoor Lighting". This program is self-booting and makes fine use of title screens and colors much like the first program in the B&R HANDYMAN SERIES "How to install a suspended ceiling".

To begin the project you have a choice from the first screen of pressing A) TOOL AND MATERIAL CHECKLIST B) INSTRUCTIONS or C) END PROGRAM. When you press "A" the next screen gives you three more choices that are A) Display On Screen Only B) Display and Print Out List or C) Return To Main Menu. By pressing "A" again you have a list of all the tools and materials you will need for the project printed on the screen and if you choose "B" you have the choice of using an ADAM or dot matrix printer to print out a hard copy of your checklist. By pressing "B" at the main menu the instructions are presented screen by screen taking you through the project. At certain stages in the instructions you are asked if you would like to see an example or continue. If you choose to see an example it might be a price list you can use (you enter the number of pieces and price per item) to get an idea of the cost of the project or a sketch of the area your working in. And finally by pressing "C" from the main menu ends the program.

I had a chance to meet Ricki Gerlack (the person who put together this program) and I told him how much I liked his idea of using a full graphic screen example in different parts of the instructions. He told me he tried to put the examples on the same screen as the instructions but he had run into problems with this idea and I am glad he did because now when you press the escape key you get a full screen example which is larger.

RATING A+

(Ricki should be coming home soon with the 101st airborne division so I thought I would run this review again so he could see it.J.D)

## SCHOOL DAZE

Review by

Jim Duffy

Wizard's Lair Software has come out with another fine program called School Daze. This is the first math learning program I have seen that is not just user friendly but also is fun to use with all of the different graphic features included in this program.

All you have to do to get things going is to put the disk or DDP in and pull the reset. Then after a nice title screen and some fine music you will see a multi-colored menu with the following Smartkey numbers:

I=MATH

II=MATH CLIMBER

III=READ INSTRUCTIONS

IV=ADAM SUPPORT

V=RESET ADAM

Every area you go into is Smartkey driven and easy to get in and out of. By selecting Smartkey I you go to the Math menu where you can select:

I=ADD

II=SUBTRACT

III=MULTIPLY

IV=DIVIDE

V=ESCAPE

Within each of these areas the Math table can be increased by 1 up to and including 12. This screen looks very nice with a report card on the left and with a right answer you get a series of smiling faces and with the wrong answer you get frowning faces. You can also change screen colors upon being asked at the beginning of the game.

Selecting Smartkey II takes you to the MATH CLIMBER game where the object of the game is

to climb 16 steps of a ladder and you do this by giving 16 correct answers to random math problems that appear on the screen in a window of the wall the ladder is on. For each incorrect answer the climber comes down a step and if you miss five answers you lose. You are also shown the high score, current score, number of right and wrong answers and the percentage of correct answers. MATH CLIMBER really makes learning math fun. Smartkey III of the main menu gives you a nice set of instructions one screenfull at a time with easy to read bold fonts.

Pressing Smartkey IV from the main menu takes you to the Adam Support area of this program. This is a very good feature and one that is seldom seen in the world of Adam. Here you are given the names, addresses, telephone numbers, and type of groups (AUG, Vendor or Developer) that deal with the Adam and you can either read them or print them out on an Adam or a Dot Matrix printer by pressing a Smartkey. I counted at least 60 different Adam groups, vendors or developers on this list.

With Smartkey V on the main menu you have to be careful because it does just what it says which is Reset Adam.

The developer of this program gives Sol Swift, Power Paint, Sprite Power, Font Power and Super Basic Plus credit for making the program easier to develop. And if Wizard's Lair Software continues to develop new programs for the Adam as good as this one, I can see nothing but good happening in the world of Adam.

#### RATING A+

(Editor's Note: I used this review quite some time ago and the reason I am running it again is that I think this is a good educational program which I do not think there is enough of in the Adam community at the present time but I know that can change VERY fast. If you do not think things can change very fast within the Adam world just look at some of the hardware changes that have come about in the past few years i.e., hard drives, new disk drives 160,320,360 and 720's, 80 column boards, a mouse, and now talk of vga video through a different chip.)  
<J.Duffy>

{This is an excellent article taken from ANN}

#### FASTER SMARTWRITER By Dave Sands

Here is the second part of Dave Sands' series of articles on speeding up your word processing with SmartWRITER. This series is now being circulated throughout the ADAM world via the ADAM News Network. The first part, originally published in the ADVISA, was recently featured in the Puget Sound ADAM Network, PSAN, newsletter, the PSAN Newsnet.

I covered some of the basics of faster SmartWRITER in the first of these columns, and now I want to deal with a miscellany of techniques for getting the job done in less time and hopefully with less aggravation.

In no particular order, these ideas are some that I've used successfully and can recommend.

The more you use your ADAM, the better you'll be on it. It doesn't have to be word processing, but doing everything on the ADAM keeps you current -- no time spent remembering.

A little thing like a power bar can save a remarkable amount of aggravation. One switch on a conveniently located bar and everything is on.

Prices on these things are now down to the reasonable level if you stay out of computer stores. Get your Club Z points and save.

A decent, i.e. comfortable place to work is not only better for you and the ADAM, making the whole process more attractive, but a titanic timesaver.

Working when you're fresh, eager and willing helps everything go better. I know a lot of you will say why waste being fresh, willing and eager on the ADAM, but that's your business.

Storing often gets mentioned with boring regularity, but, it doesn't hurt to keep it up. These days, paranoia is probably good mental health. The utility company is going to get you, if you work without Storing.

Preset formats can save a small amount of



time every time you use them. If for example, you always write letters and print them out on letterhead paper, make up your margin/tab settings, horizontal, vertical, spacing etc., key in "Done" and then Store it as LTRFormat or something you'll always recognize. Since you'll always put a disk or data pack (DDP) into the ADAM to Store on, make LTRFormat the first file on each new one. When starting each letter, Get File your format and save the resetting. Store the letter under its own filename, of course.

Envelopes benefit from this system, too. Because they're fussy, setting up a format you know prints right saves real time the next time.

If you write a lot of very similar things, letters for example, its obvious that a preset complete letter will be useful:

Barry A. Wilson,  
Attorney at Law,

Dear Sir,  
Your client has made some completely unjustified and shocking allegations about my payment habits and moral qualities, and besides, the cheque is in the mail.

Yours truly,

Adam Wombatt, Esq.

An obvious timesaver, just change the names.

Another great timesaver is having a good number of disks or DDP's. Especially DDP's. Because they're slow, keeping even single files on a single DDP can be a real time saver. The files on a DDP are stored one after another. The farther away from the Directory your active file is, the longer it takes to Get. Keep the file selection small and get there faster.

But the more packs or disks you have, the greater the problem of knowing where the file you want is among those assorted media. Here I'm speaking from experience, all of it bad. Use a Catalog printing program from the Public Domain or a good copy program like Backup + 3.0. Print out those Directory listings. Stick 'em in the packs or on the

sleeves. You can scan a dozen printed listings in the time it takes to get a Directory on the screen.

Sometimes you don't much care how much time the ADAM needs, but others...

Keep a supply of formatted disks or packs handy. Nothing wastes time like looking for something that ain't where it should be. Same goes for paper, ribbons and envelopes. I want you to know I am not speaking from any feeling of moral superiority for knowing all this stuff -- everything I've learned has been The Hard Way.

File management on media (disks and DDP's) saves time and conserves space. If you are a good writer and revisor, you'll keep improving your piece, probably Storing again and again. Culling those early versions makes the Directory smaller. Storing the final perfect effort on a separate medium lets you recycle the work tape/disk with an INIT or Format and you can fill it again. When I look at DDP's filled with filenames that don't ring any bells I know it's time to clean house.

FASTER SMARTWRITER,

PART 2, CONCLUSION.

Moving on from purely mechanical techniques, let's deal with some behavior modification.

The best book on Time Management I've ever seen said it simply: Time management is really Self management. So it is with word processing.

\* You save time when you know what you want to say, say it, and stop.

\* You save time by having a dictionary and a guide to correct English usage beside the ADAM.

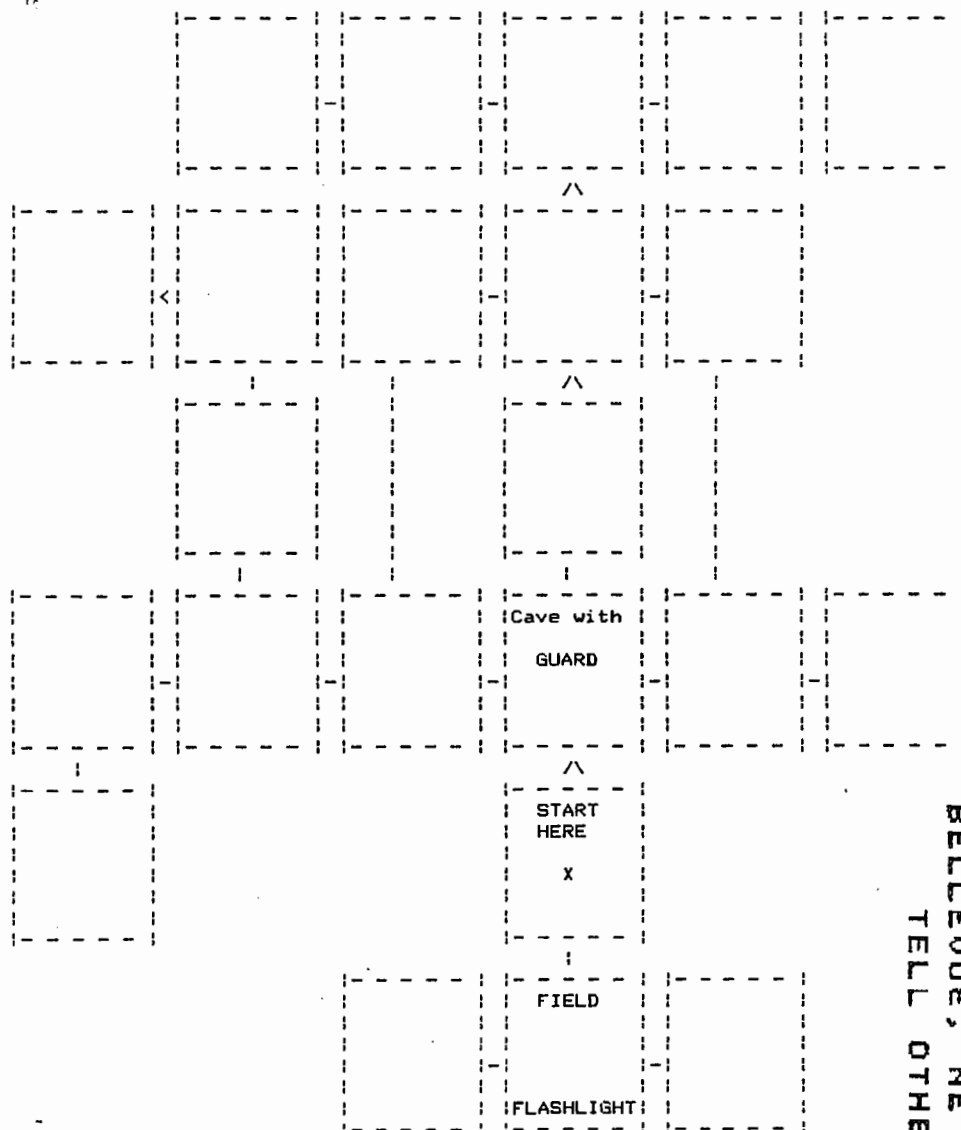
\* You save time by outlining if you find you work hard at writing but never write what you wanted to say.

\* You save time, for yourself and your reader, by editing everything you write.

Early studies of word processors discovered that they were slower than typewriters on first drafts, and faster on subsequent drafts. They're slower because you can easily go back and improve, correct and, especially, edit.



STARTER MAP for TROLL'S TALE page 1 of 3



CHECKLIST of the 16 TROLLS TALE TREASURES

TREASURE	SCREEN WHERE FOUND	PREVIOUS SCREEN
COPPER PENNEY		
DOLLAR and a CENT		
DIAMOND RING, KINGS		
FIDDLE		
FLASHLIGHT		
GIFT FOR THE GUARD		
GOLD, Bag of		
GOLD BRICK		
JEWELS, Box of		
POT OF MONEY		
QUEEN'S NECKLACE		
RARE PENNIES, Bag of		
SILVER CUP		
SILVER SHELL		
SUCKER, One		
TREASURE CHEST		

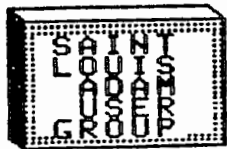
Symbols used on my maps:

- | Can go up or down
- ^ Can only go up: NOTE after all 16 treasures are found you can leave the Cave with Guard (screen).
- \ Can go diagonal either direction
- / Can go diagonal either direction
- < Can only go Left
- > Can only go Right

Map by Norman R. Castro, 809W 33rd Avenue, Bellevue, NE 68005

BE BELLEVUE, NE 68005  
TELL OTHERS

Form by Norman R Castro, 809W 33rd Avenue, Bellevue, NE 68005 (402) 291-4405



12967 Weatherfield  
St. Louis Mo. 63146



TO:

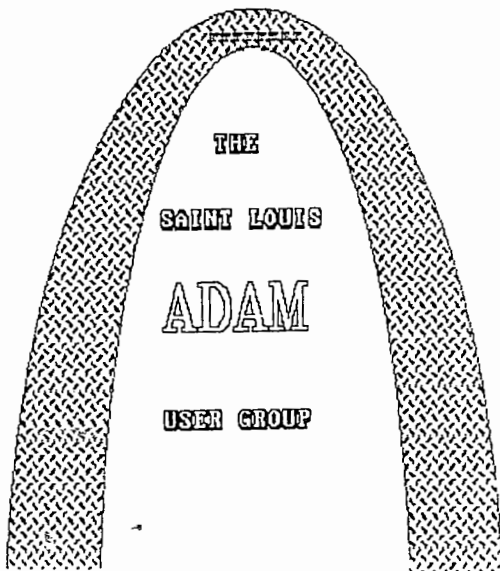
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USER GROUP

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The St. Louis ADAM User Group Newsletter is produced to keep our members up to date on new software and hardware for the ADAM computer. It is also our desire to pass along ideas, hints, and tips for programming, word processing, telecommunicating, and gaming. Each of our members can help us in this task by sharing your ideas with us.

We meet on the second Saturday of each month at the Thornhill Branch of the County Library. This is located on Fee Fee Road across from Parkway North High School. We meet from 12:30 to 4:00 pm. All of our members are urged to attend. We welcome visitors to come and see if we can help each other.

This newsletter will be distributed at each of our meetings. For those members who have paid their dues we will mail your newsletter to you if you are unable to attend the meeting. You can help keep our costs down by being at the meeting to pick up your copy. The postal rates have made mailing costs a serious matter.

SEE YOU AT THE MEETING!!