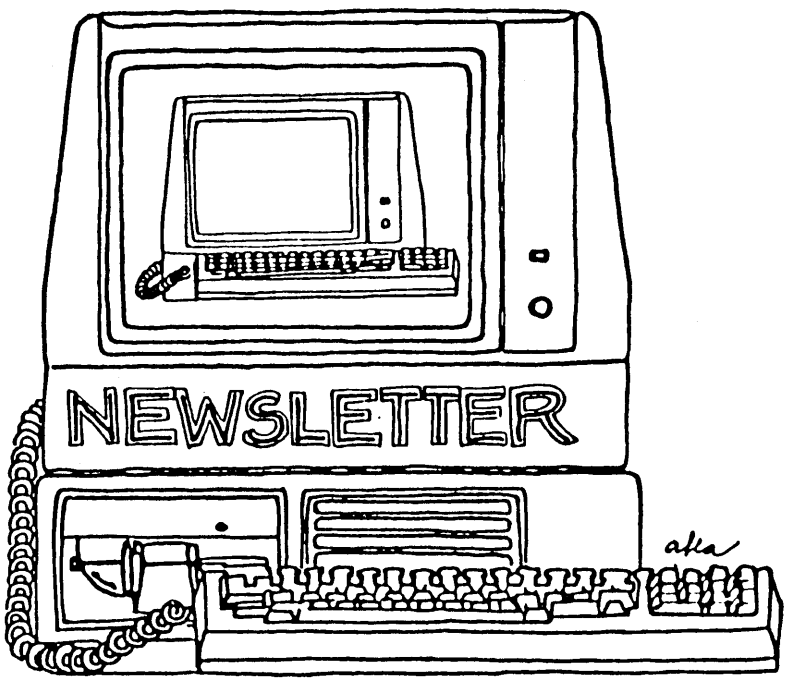
May 8, 1985 Volume 3 Issue #5

BAY AREA MICRO DECISION USERS ASSOCIATION

BAMDUA



A MUTUAL SUPPORT NETWORK FOR USERS OF MORROWS' MICRO DECISION COMPUTERS-

P.O. BOX 5152, BERKELEY, CA.94705
415 : 644-2805

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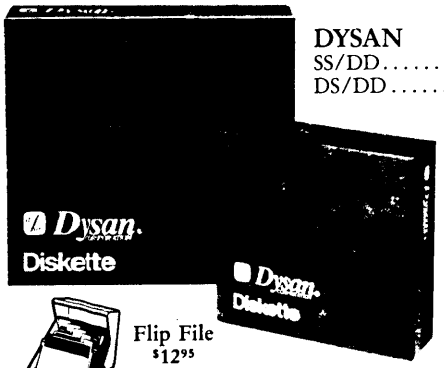

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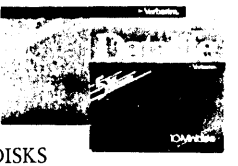

8" DISKS
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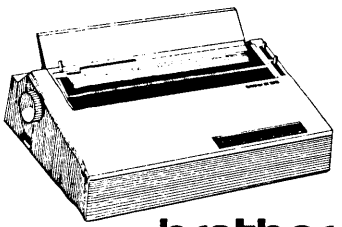

brother

HR 15-XL.....$339.00
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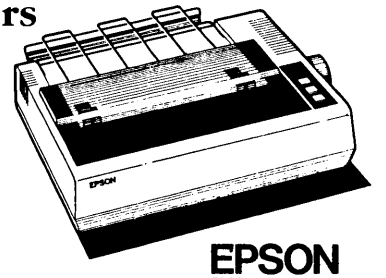

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BAY AREA MICRO DECISION USERS ASSOCIATION
A Morrow computer users' group

Monthly newsletter, Vol. 3, Issue 5 May 1985

BAMDUA, P.O. Box 5152, Berkeley, Ca 94705
(415) 644- 2805

BAMDUA, the Bay Area Micro Decision Users Association, is open to all who are interested in Morrow's Micro Decision computers. Membership fee is currently $16 per year and includes a subscription to our monthly newsletter. For information, membership application forms, etc., please send a self-addressed stamped envelope to the BAMDUA P.O. Box.

The BAMDUA office is open 8:30-4:30 weekdays; the answering machine will take your messages from 12:30 on. When Dana is in the office, she will answer the phone in the morning.

The main BAMDUA meeting is held the last Tuesday of each month.

+++ Next main BAMDUA meeting: ++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++

+		+
+	WHEN:	Tuesday, May 28, 1985, 7:30 p.m. +
+	WHERE:	West Branch, Berkeley Library +
+		1125 University Avenue, Berkeley +
+	GUEST:	David Price, CEO of Westwind Computer +
+	TOPIC:	Hard disk demo +
+		also, special interest groups and discussion +

++

PLANNING AHEAD: Information about next month's meeting.

WHEN: Tuesday, June 25, 1985, 7:30 p.m.
WHERE: West Branch, Berkeley Library
1125 University Avenue, Berkeley
GUEST: (none)
TOPIC: Special interest groups and discussion

LOCAL MORROW USER'S MEETINGS:

MUG/MARIN (Marin Users' Group) meets on the fourth Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. The address is P.O. Box 925, Mill Valley, Ca. 94942. For information, contact Susan Miller (415)383-6276 or Jim Kelly (415)472-1499. The group describes itself as a small but stimulating group which tries to diversify information for both novices and pros alike.
Stanford Morrow Users' Group, (S.M.U.G.) meets on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7:30 PM on the Stanford campus: Polya Hall (also known as Turing Auditorium), room 111. Info: Ed Gallaher (408) 749-9285 (H)

SCMDUG (Santa Cruz Micro Decision user's Group) is now meeting the first Thursday of the month at P.C. Land, 245M Mount Herman Road, Scotts Valley, 7-9 p.m. Info: Marianne Russell, Sect'y, 425-2061, office; 438-0662, home.

PETMUG (Petaluma Users' Group) meets on the 4th Thursday of each month at Advanced Information Management, 245 North McDowell Blvd. (in Petaluma Plaza), Petaluma, CA. For info. contact: Don Waite, 707/763-6891 or Dick Hoffman, 707/762-8286 or mailing address: P.O. Box 948, Petaluma, CA. 94953.

CLASSES:

Classes are scheduled as soon as enough participants sign up for them (a maximum of 5-6 people, except for Personal Pearl: max=14). Mail $10 to BAMDUA to reserve a space in class. For information, call BAMDUA (415) 644-2805.

MODEM7 etcetera.

Intermediate CP/M class,

Novice Emergency Clinic,
A class especially to get over beginners frustrations.

Personal Pearl Class,
This is the third PP class taught by Rick Rowe, formerly of Morrow. Half the participants must bring an MD3 and a working CP/M diskette.

Public Domain Software.

QUEST ACCOUNTANT program.

Advanced CP/M and Systems class.

TOUR OF MORROW: If there is enough interest, a fourth tour will be scheduled. Call or write the BAMDUA office to get on the list.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

For information about BASES (users'group re: data bases) call Darrell Bross, 415/586-5788. Subscription rate will be $30 for one year to BASES, 254 Winding Way, San Francisco, CA 94112.

NEWWORD version 2.14 provides a printer driver identified as GEM10X for the Gemini 10X/15X and Radix 10X/15X family of dot matrix printers plus updated printed information on printers and other additional features for inclusion in the User's Guide. You can get it for $25 plus your old NewWord distribution diskette.

*****

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DISK

by Sypko Andreae

About a year and a half ago, when everybody was so excited about personal micro computers, we used to have a meeting attendance of about half the membership. Now the times are a little different. People are generally less excited about our new fangled tools. The owners have gone through a period of familiarization (sometimes a painful one) and they have learned for one thing that a computer won't help you if you don't know how to solve your problems yourself. In other words, the computer is not going to do it for you after all. That burst the bubble for quite a few folks.

The non-owners have picked up so many stories from their owner-friends about how difficult a tool a personal computer is to use, that they don't even want to try. Result: Personal computers are far less popular than they used to be a year or two ago. Perhaps our culture is cultivating a more realistic view of personal computers. Perhaps a lot of it was a fad. Perhaps it has become clear that a personal computer is too expensive and too hard to learn to use for the returns some owners get. For small business and word processing use it is great in many ways, but not everybody has a small business and not everybody is a writer or lawyer. And so the personal computer has not become the home appliance it was expected to be.

You can even see that shift of appreciation for personal computers within BAMDUA. Attendance in meetings and classes is really down from what it was last year. It may just be that we have far fewer people among us who desperately need to learn about computers. Most people have settled for some (limited) mode of use of their machine, some have simply given up. Does this sound a bit depressing? It doesn't need to be. Look at it this way. Perhaps this whole personal computer thing went too fast for us anyway, grew at a pace far beyond our own human pace. Perhaps the computers were having us somehow, rather than the other way around. Now we may be in a period where we are coming to terms with ourselves in relation with our new tool. Time to slow down a bit, time to reflect on the wave of excitement that just went by, time to find ourselves back. This just could be a most fruitful time; could be.

One institution within BAMDUA that is really blossoming is our BAMDUA Electronic Bulletin Board System and Remote CP/M, BBS-RCP/M for short. The activity is remarkable. We have just over 200 registrants, about 50% of them BAMDUA members. They make together about a thousand calls a month posting a hundred public messages in the process. No one knows how much private Electronic Mail (E-Mail) goes back and forth. It seems that everybody on the BBS is on its best behavior. People with problems often get offers of help from two or more others within a day or so. They all act "like angels" as Stewart Brand would have it. Now here is a part of BAMDUA that works very well indeed. Question remains: Within other activities of BAMDUA, what should we do differently that will keep our users group as useful as possible? Give this some thought and drop me a note if you come up with something.

EQUIPMENT HELP CALL LIST - UPDATE

prepared by John Argue

, Quentin , 1090 Page St., #5, San Francisco CA, 94117
(415) 621-3413 (H); (B); * MD1: MD2: MD11: x
PRINTER: Smith-Corona D200 TERMINAL: MDT 60
MODEM: OTHER EQPT: Brother CE-60

Milton Amgott, 420 Lexington Ave., New York NY, 10170
(212) 580-2421 (H); (212) 986-0656 (B); * MD1: MD2: MD3:
PRINTER: Juki 6100 TERMINAL: MDT60
MODEM: OTHER EQPT:

Dick Baker, 7004 Westmoreland Rd., Falls Church VA, 22042
(703) 698-8017 (H); (202) 485-2214 (B); * MD1: MD2: MD3:
PRINTER: MP-200 TERMINAL: MDT-70
MODEM: Anchor Signalman XII OTHER EQPT:

Michael Blessing, P.O. Box 882, El Sobrante CA, 94803
(415) 234-2636 (H); (B); * MD1: MD2: MD3: x
PRINTER: Oki-92 TERMINAL: AD-31?
MODEM: OTHER EQPT:

I.I. Butler, 1182 Market St., Suite 320, San Francisco CA, 94102
(H); (415) 863-5953 (B); * MD1: MD2: MD3: x
PRINTER: MDT-60 (ADM 31) TERMINAL: MP 100
MODEM: not yet OTHER EQPT:

Jonah Chang, Rev., 330 Ellis St., Room 508, San Francisco CA, 94102
(415) 233-4739 (H); (415) 776-7747 (B); * MD1: MD2: MD3: x
PRINTER: MP 100 TERMINAL: MDT 60
MODEM: OTHER EQPT:

Jim Crosswhite, P.O. Box 754, Northbrook IL, 60065
(312) 498-1403 (H); (B); * MD1: MD2: MD11: x
PRINTER: Okidata 92 TERMINAL: MDT 60
MODEM: Robotics Password OTHER EQPT:

Janice Deenean, 750 Sylvan #61, Mountain View CA, 94040
(415) 965-4078 (H); (408) 299-3621 (B); * MD1: MD2: MD3: x
PRINTER: Okidata u92 TERMINAL: TTX
MODEM: OTHER EQPT:

David K. Denton, 1065 Ashmont Ave., Oakland CA, 94610
(415) 465-7496 (H); (415) 271-9256 (B); * MD1: MD2: x MD3:
PRINTER: Brother HRI TERMINAL: Freedom 100
MODEM: Anchor OTHER EQPT:

Tim Evans, 8530 Dogwood Rd., Baltimore MD, 21207
(301) 944-4622 (H); (301) 597-4709 (B); * MD1: MD2: x MD3:
PRINTER: Silver-Reed 500 TERMINAL: Lear-Siegler ADM-31
MODEM: Anchor I OTHER EQPT: Morrow 20

Arent Greve, 455 Spruce St., Berkeley CA, 94708
(415) 527-2719 (H); (415) 642-6334 (B); * MD1: MD2: MD3: x
PRINTER: Kaypro (Juki 6100) TERMINAL: MDT 70 (Morrow)
MODEM: OTHER EQPT:

Ronald W. Hahn, 1001 Westport Place, Victoria, B.C. , V8Y 1G3
(604) 658-8034 (H); (B); * MD1: MD2: MD3: x
PRINTER: Epson MX-100 TERMINAL: ADM 20
MODEM: Radio Shack OTHER EQPT:

Peter Hahn, 23 Lapidge, San Francisco CA, 94110
(415) 861-5843 (H); (415) 666-1033 (B); * MD1: MD2: MD3: x
PRINTER: MP 100 TERMINAL: MDT 60
MODEM: OTHER EQPT:

David B. Hall, P.O. Box E, 934 H. St., Arcata CA, 95521
(707) 822-1253 (H); (707) 822-7241 (B); * MD1: MD2: MD3: x
PRINTER: Qume/Okidata TERMINAL:
MODEM: OTHER EQPT:

Darryl A. Hart, 25 Rocklyn Court, Corte Madera CA, 94925
(415) 927-0828 (H); (415) 927-0828 (B); * MD1: MD2: MD3: x
PRINTER: Qume Sprint 9/55 TERMINAL: MDT-60
MODEM: OTHER EQPT:

Walter Hoffman, 20 Mt. Shasta Pl., Clayton CA, 94517
(415) 672-0827 (H); (B); * MD1: MD2: x MD3:
PRINTER: Gemini-10 TERMINAL: Liberty-Freedom 50
MODEM: Rixon 212 A OTHER EQPT:

Steve James, 21071 Gary Dr., #103, Hayward CA, 94546
(415) 881-8877 (H); (B); * MD1: MD2: x MD3:
PRINTER: Silver Reed TERMINAL: ADM 31
MODEM: OTHER EQPT:

Mike Lippitt, 6 - C Commodore Dr., #235, Emeryville CA, 94608
(H); (B); * MD1: MD2: MD3:
PRINTER: TERMINAL:
MODEM: OTHER EQPT:

Anthony Lopez, 4945 Champlain, San Antonio TX, 78217
(512) 657-9706 (H); (512) 366-6332 (B); * MD1: MD2: MD3: x
PRINTER: Star Micronix/Gemini 10X TERMINAL: Liberty Freedom 100
MODEM: U.S. Robotics OTHER EQPT: EPD Orange Surge prote

Lee McKusick, 1928 McGee Ave., #1, Berkeley CA, 94703
(415) 849-9053 (H); (B); * MD1: MD2: MD3: x
PRINTER: MP100 TERMINAL:
MODEM: Signalman 1200 OTHER EQPT:

Robert B. Newcomb, 3890 Great Salt Lake Court, Fremont CA, 94536
(415) 489-1275 (H); (415) 952-4888 (B); * MD1: MD2: x MD3:
PRINTER: Star DP 510 TERMINAL: Liberty 100
MODEM: OTHER EQPT:

Maureen O'Rorke, 1859 Powell St., San Francisco CA, 94133
(415) 221-8636 (H); (415) 986-1213 (B); * MD1: MD2: MD3: x
PRINTER: Morrow MP-100 TERMINAL: MDT-60
MODEM: OTHER EQPT:

Rebecca Radner, 3025 Steiner #12, San Francisco CA, 94123
(415) 556-3876 (H); (415) 563-8746 (B); * MD1: MD2: MD3: x
PRINTER: MP100 TERMINAL:
MODEM: OTHER EQPT:

Kenneth M. Steele, Rte. 7, Box 8A, Chapel Hill NC, 27514
(919) 942-5309 (H); (919) 684-4164 (B); * MD1: MD2: MD3: x
PRINTER: TERMINAL: Qume QUT108A
MODEM: OTHER EQPT:

Robert Stevens, 267 Louette Ct., Hayward CA, 94541
(415) 276-0704 (H); (415) 430-9484 (B); * MD1: MD2: MD3: x
PRINTER: MP 300 TERMINAL: MDT-60
MODEM: MM300 OTHER EQPT:

Alan Wiener, 102 Rolling Green Place, Missoula MT, 59803
(406) 721-1424 (H); (B); * MD1: MD2: x MD3:
PRINTER: C.Itoh F-10 Starwriter TERMINAL: Qume OV-102
MODEM: OTHER EQPT:

Dennis Young, 3701 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette CA, 94549
(415) 284-7324 (H); (415) 284-9500 (B); * MD1: MD2: MD3: x
PRINTER: MP 200 TERMINAL: 50
MODEM: OTHER EQPT:

This update is as of March 25, 1985. There are no additions to the Software Help List at this date.

*****

SUBSCRIBE? Yes, indeed!

Greetings BAMDUA Members! Have you subscribed to the Morrow Owners' Review yet? If you send in your $18.00 for a years subscription today you won't miss the June '85 issue! ($32.00/2 yrs.) Just send your name and address along with your check to Morrow Owners' Review, Attn: Subscriptions, P.O. Box 5487, Berkeley, CA 94705. MORE MOR!

FROM THE MAILBOX

To any BAMDUA members interested in statistics:

Have just completed a set of "homemade" mBasic programs that will calculate mean and standard deviation on 1 to 4 columns of numbers. A relatively small number of values can be input at the keyboard, or will interface nicely with Pearl (to accumulate, select, and report out large volumes of data). A Pearl "master" input form and four reports are included (to produce data files of 1 column, 2 columns, 3 columns, or 4 columns). It seems too specialized for the library, but I will share it with other members who request it and send me a formatted disk and a stamped, self-addressed disk mailer; a 4 page "documentation" is included.

-- Don Waite
P.O. Box 948
Petaluma, CA 94953

I think I goofed in the piece on RS-232 communication. Printers are usually DTE devices and hence can talk to a DCE like a Morrow with a straight cable while modems are DCE and hence need a cable with reversed pins 2 and 3 to talk to Morrow.

I think I accidentally discovered something useful about floppies. I bought a used disk drive that happened to have an old floppy in it. I had no idea what all the floppy had been through but I could not format it. On a hunch, I used a bulk eraser for tapes on it. Lo and behold, it formatted! In an earlier piece someone indicated that disks just sort of "wear out." Maybe they just accumulate random signals that don't entirely get erased in normal rewriting of files, etc. Bulk erasing might just fix them up! It's worth a try if you happen to have a bulk eraser.

-- Frank Oechsli

EX14 UTILITY....I use Personal Pearl to do most of the accounting for a small church and I find it quite tedious winding my way through the menus when it comes time to run my reports. What I wanted was to be able to key in one command line and have all the necessary parameters inserted and several reports printed out. I tried the SUBMIT.COM utility but found that it would only act upon data that was inputed from the A prompt (A>), such as command files like PIP or FINDBAD that required no further attention after the command was entered. Attempts to incorporate XSUB usually caused the computer to hang and a cold boot was necessary. I then noticed that Micro Cornucopia, P.O. Box 223, Bend, OR 97709 had a utility on their Morrow Disk M9 called EX14 that is a replacement for SUBMIT and XSUB. I ordered the disk and found that it really gets the job done. This allows me to get down into the bowels of a program and upon executing a SUBMIT file can call up Pearl forms,

reports, insert the correct parameters and then run the reports.(and take a break until I hear the printer stop printing) In other words when the software looks for a call from the keyboard it executes a line from a SUBMIT file. Very slick indeed! Space doesn't permit me to go into more detail here but I would certainly elaborate if interest warranted.

Occasionally I like to change the attributes of my Gemini printer when I run Pearl reports. These usually consist of changing the pitch and line spacing and are initiated upon entering the EX14 command string. The following instructions enable one to create a COM file from coding created from a Wordstar file.

Open a non-document Wordstar file called XXXXXXXX.ASM (XXXXXXXX = any file name) and key in the following:

```
          ORG       0100H
FUNCTN    EQU       05H
START     LXI       H,STRING
          MOV       B,M
PRINT     INX       H
          MOV       E,M
          MVI       C,5
          PUSH      H
          PUSH      B
          CALL      FUNCTN
          POP       B
          POP       H
          DCR       B
          JNZ       PRINT
          MVI       C,0
          PUSH      H
          PUSH      B
          CALL      FUNCTN
          POP       B
          POP       H
STRING    DB        05,27,66,3,27,48
          END
```

The next to the last line is the important one. The 05 shows that there are 5 characters in the escape sequence that will be sent to the printer. The 27,66,3,27,48 will condition the printer to print 17 characters per inch (compressed mode) and space at 8 lines per inch. A whole series of COM files can be made up by just changing this line. These codes can be referenced from your printer handbook. Exit Wordstar at this time.

The next step would be to assemble the program by loading your CP/M utility disk and keying in ASM B:XXXXXXXX. After the program is assembled, key in LOAD B:XXXXXXXX which will place the XXXXXXXX.COM file on disk B.

-- Karl E. Montstream
3414 75th Avenue N.W.
Gig Harbor, WA 98335

PASS THE NOTEPAD

Q: Has anybody installed SuperCalc 2 for the MDT-50? The only installation notes available from Sorcim are for the Freedom 100, and they don't set the right attributes for the cursor when it is in a protected cell. Pete Campbell, 415/524-4486.

A: Try installation as ADM-3A (terminal should be ADM-31 but that installation doesn't work; ADM-3A does).

Q: I keep "losing" files that I save on LogiCalc. Only one of them has ever even once "come back" for me. What am I doing wrong or not doing to get them back on the screen? Louise, 415/752-5144.

A: Are you sure you are saving prior to quitting? After ";S" follow the promts in the lower half area of page; previous info does not erase and new prompts are overwritten in that area.

A: When you have finished entry, type the command (;) and then save (S). Answer the question prompts. At name of file, type drive and filename, e.g., B: Finances. When you return to work on that file at some other time, load LogiCalc as usual then the command prompt (;) and ask it to load (L); at the question for filename, tell it B: Finances and your saved LogiCalc data will come up.-- ed.

A: When trying to produce reports with Personal Pearl I am getting message "1204 Program Logic Error." Can't find this in the manual. What does it mean and how do I fix it? Quentin, 415/621-3413.

Q: Can't seem to run JETSET 2 from the BAMDUA RBBS. Has it been squeezed? Sharon.

A: Are you RUNing it from MBASIC like other basic programs?

Q: Does anyone know where I can get an extra (cheap) keyboard for my MDT60. I'd like to try to have one set up for DVORAK. Peter Hahn, 415/861-5843.

Q: I would like to know if there is a way to add a hard disk to an MD3. Chuck Wilson, 707/528-3190 (eve.); 707/577-3848 (day).

A: See announcement in Special Deals, this issue. --ed.

Q: I have the possibility of adding quad drives and a 20 MB hard disk to an MD2. I would like to talk to somebody who can apprise me of the dangers inherent in such a conversion. Matt Herron, 415/479-6994.

Q: Does anyone know how to use the Modern PS wheel properly on the MP100? Charlie Clark, 415/863-5536 (eve.); /397-2680 (day).

SPECIAL DEALS

1. HARD DISKS

Interested in a group purchase of a hard disk to upgrade your Morrow? At the March BAMDUA meeting Jon Gordon, of Berkeley Computer, demonstrated a NEURAN hard disk that can be attached to either an MD-2 OR MD-3. He stated that he was willing to offer BAMDUA members a $150 discount on 5, 10, 15, 20 and 40 megabyte hard disks on an individual purchase. His offer was originally good through May 26th, but he has offered to extend it to the end of June 1985. If you decided to buy a hard disk under this offer you would have to bring in your computer so that they could put in a controller card to run the hard disk.

I have talked to Jon about a group purchase. His initial offer is $200 off the price if we had 5 or more purchasers at the same time. I think that we might be able to do better than that because the price of hard disks is coming down. Since I want to get a good hard disk at the best possible price I would be willing to coordinate the negotiation and purchase of the hard disks. I envision a three step process:

1. Call or write me, before June 15, 1985, at the address below and let me know that you are interested. On June 16, 1985, if five or more people have called me, I will go to Jon and attempt to negotiate the best possible price and terms. The relevant terms are - the warranty period, minimum deposit, delivery dates and service plus any others that people want.

2. I will then get back to you and tell you what I have been able to negotiate. If you are still interested and the terms are acceptable I will send out a contract for your signature stating the terms of the agreement with Berkeley Computer. In the contract I will ask for a $100 deposit.

3. When I get all the deposits I will go back to Jon; give him the deposits and ask him to order the hard disks for you. You will then pay him the rest of the purchase price. Then the deal will be between you and Berkeley Computer. The deposit will be non-refundable if the deal is consummated and no one can be found to take your place if you drop out.

Because I am not now nor do I ever plan to be in the computer buiness I do not want to spend too much time answering requests for information. Nor do I want to spend money calling beyond the local area. I probably know less than most of you about hard disks. I just want one at a low price so that I can do my computing more rapidly. I do not want to be responsible for anything except getting people the best possible deal. Therefore if you have any technical questions not related to the group purchase negotiations please call Berkeley Computer at 525-5600.

The hard disk price offers as of March 27, 1985 are:

Size mB	List Price	BAMDUA Individual Price	Initial Offer Group Price
1. 5	$1100	$ 950	$ 900
2. 10	1300	1150	1100
3. 15	1500	1350	1300
4. 20	1700	1550	1500
5. 40	call	?	?

STAN NAPARST
901A Santa Fe Avenue
Albany, CA 94706
(415) 525-2086
Call anytime. There is an answering machine.

2. UNIFORM

An upgrade of UNIFORM (version 3) is available for hard disks. Persons already owning UNIFORM may turn in their distibution disks plus $18 and get the upgrade. Persons wantint to purchase UNIFORM may benefit from a group purchase. The retail price is $69.95 but if we have 10 or more purchasers, we can get a rate of $44 (plus taxes and handling, of course); if we can get 25 or more purchasers, the price is even better: $39.75. UNIFORM was reviewed in Morrow Owners Review, V.2(2), April 1985, p. 23 by Tim Evans. Take a look. If you like the idea, call me to make arrangements.

Gene Korte
415/525-8944

3. GRAPHICS SOFTWARE

I am negotiating a group deal for members of BAMDUA for a graphics software package which is not dependant on your terminal but is dependant on your printer (dot matrix printers). I have a preliminary agreement that members can buy DataPlotter for a 20% discount (that is, for $79 rather than $99) if we have 4 or more purchasers. My impression is that there are plenty of people out there interested in doing bars, graphs, pie charts, etc. Each program must be configured for your particular printer, so if you are interested you must specify the printer you have. Shipping costs are $3, regardless of the size of our order. I am planning a review of this software soon, but my preliminary impression is favorable. If you know you want it, let me know. Write if interested, giving specifications, and as soon as I have something to go on, I'll request your money!

-- Georgia Babladelis
1064 Sterling Avenue
Berkeley, CA 94708

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NEWSLETTER

If you wish to submit material to the newsletter, please follow these guidelines:

- Submit material before the last Saturday of the month
- Submit hard copy along with a WordStar file on a SSDD diskette; left margin, default; right margin, 68 and right justified. (NewWord files are acceptable).
- Include your name, address and telephone number
- Send newsletter materials to: Newsletter Editor
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Your disk (and "gift" for articles published) will be returned to you.

If you have questions about newsletter submissions, call me afternoons only on Wednesday or Friday (415-843-8167). If you have other questions about BAMDUA, call the BAMDUA Office, 415-644-2805. If you need technical help, use your DIRECTORY.

IMPORTANT: If you have something you especially want in the next Newsletter but are unsure you can get it in before the deadline, be sure to call me so that we can make special arrangements. The deadline is important in order to enable me to plan and produce the Newsletter.

If you have tried one (or more) of the utilities available on the library disks, write a review and send it in! If you know the answer (or think you do) to new or recurrent questions in the Notepad or Mailbox departments, write me so that I can make the information available to all. Thanks. --Georgia Babladelis, Ed.

A REVIEW OF GRAFIX 2.4 AND GRAPHIC EXPRESS

by Wallace B. Riley

The Grafiks 2.4 software, produced by Robonics, Inc., of Hermosa Beach, California, and offered by BAMDUA a few months ago to its members, draws very pretty graphs and charts, but has some serious shortcomings for certain applications. These may well have been minor bugs that could be corrected by the manufacturer, because they have been significantly improved -- although not eliminated -- in an upgrade called Graphic Express, available to Grafiks purchasers for $25. Graphic Express is part of a package called Stardrive, which also includes Math Express, Spelling Express, and Word Express (a synonym finder) -- all usable in conjunction with WordStar. I tested only Graphic Express.

Installation and basic use are fairly easy and the results are satisfactory (see BAMDUA Newsletter, Dec. 12, 1984, p. 20), but I was unable to make the original program work the way I really wanted it to -- to make block diagrams of hardware and software organization. I rarely have occasion to put graphs in my work, but I make block diagrams frequently. The manual implies that block diagrams can be drawn with Grafiks, but the results, except in the simplest cases, were far from satisfactory. Graphic Express does a better job, but it is still not perfect.

A block diagram in Grafiks must be created as a sort of line graph, with some lines traced twice as necessary (you can retrace a line, but you can't "lift the pen" to jump from one point to another). This is much simpler if you first draw the graph with pencil and paper and note the coordinates of each corner of every box, and the coordinates of every intersection of two or more lines. Enter these coordinates in Grafiks or Graphic Express as part of the Create function. Either program can handle up to 200 points, sufficient for very complex block diagrams.

Unfortunately, the list of coordinates is not human-engineered. The screen shows up to 88 coordinates, which looks like the coordinates of 88 points; but it is only 44 points, two coordinates per point: 1:x; 2:y; 3:x; 4:y; etc. Furthermore, the numbering from 1 to 88 seems very peculiar. If you are re-creating a diagram in order to change one or more coordinates, locating them in the table is not easy. I would find a list easier to use in the form 1:x,y; 2:x,y; 3:x,y; etc.

Another difficulty surfaces if your diagram contains more than 44 points. After you specify the 88th coordinate, the list disappears and is replaced by a new list. These are also numbered from 1 to 88. Subsequent lists are also numbered from 1 to 88. A more logical display would number the second list from 89 to 176, the third list from 177 to 264, etc. Since Grafiks can plot up to 200 points, it can handle 400 coordinates, the 400th of which appears in the fifth list as entry No. 48. However, the fifth list is also numbered 1 to 88.

A feature that is both a convenience and a difficulty is the need to specify the total number of points in a diagram before specifying the coordinates. The program counts the entries, and automatically leaves Create mode when the last coordinate is specified. If you entered something twice unnecessarily (an easy mistake for the 89th coordinate, when the new list appears), this exit occurs unexpectedly; if you inadvertently omitted a point or a coordinate, the exit does not occur when you expect it, and you cannot force it. You have to retrace one or more lines of the diagram until the program has counted as many points as you originally specified. It would have been relatively simple to include a way to force an exit, say by pressing ESC, and to have the program ask "LAST POINT? Y/N" after the count has been reached.

The block diagram as simply created in this way has coordinate axes, with coordinate values and tick marks. These can be deleted in Edit mode, but Grafiks cannot be told ahead of time that axes or ticks are not wanted. The choice is only how many ticks per axis, and whether the graph also contains a grid.

After the block diagram has been created, it can be viewed in video mode, but the screen display has very poor resolution. It is good only for a quick check for completeness, and details are easy to overlook even then. A better check is to print the diagram (best to print it before editing, just in case, although you can remove the axes and coordinates before the first printout if you want.) Printing is maddeningly slow, at least on my IDS 480 MicroPrism printer, presumably because the program is very busy when translating keyboard and other textual data into graphics data for the printer.

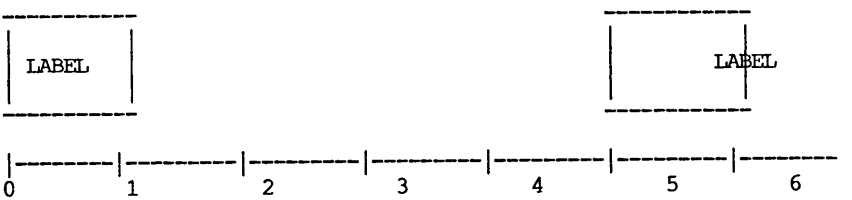
In Edit mode, plain straight-line boxes theoretically can be enhanced (see below). But no substantive changes to the block diagram can be made in Edit mode -- for example, making a block larger or smaller, or moving it to a different place in the diagram. To do this, the entire diagram must be re-created. As when initially creating it, you call up the file name in Read mode to restore the parameters to memory, then go automatically to Create mode. If no other graph was loaded since the original graph was created, you can go directly to Create mode, because the original parameters are still there. You then must step your way through the entire Create process, by pounding the <RETURN> key ad nauseam, changing only the parameters you want to change.

For example, a diagram can be specified to occupy a full page, or the top or bottom half of a page. This choice is made fairly early in the Create sequence; a complex diagram has a great many other choices and coordinate values to step through after the size of the printout is changed.

This is somewhat easier if the terminal has a repeat function for <RETURN> -- you just hold the key down -- but you might inadvertently go past the point you want to change, or make some other

mistake. It would be better if, having made a change early in the Create sequence, you could press ESC or some other one key and skip the entire remaining sequence, as you can in WordStar with the Print command.

To add lettering or change the graphic appearance of the diagram, go into Edit mode. The lettering apparently goes into a separate file that is overlaid on the block diagram in Print mode or Video mode. These two files are not well aligned; a legend placed in the centers of two blocks near the left and right margins is printed near (but not necessarily at) the center of the left block and "leaking out" of the right side of the right block. Coordinate values on the horizontal axis are also inaccurately placed; thus:



If the coordinate values exceed 10, the two digits are printed vertically, with the more significant digit on top; but the second row with units digits overlaps the upper row. (This illustration was created with WordStar.)

In Edit mode, to delete a single character, place the cursor on the character and press ctrl-G, or (preferably) place the cursor one step to the right of the character and press DEL. The latter deletes as you press the key; the former redraws the display on the screen, which is slow, especially for complex displays.

Characters or words can be inserted in existing legends in Insert mode, which is toggled on and off with ctrl-V, just as in WordStar.

The manual says that ctrl-T deletes a text word in Edit mode, and does not disturb the graphics data. In general, that is true, but I found that ctrl-T sometimes deleted everything from the cursor to the right margin, including the graphics data — rather like ctrl-QY in WordStar.

Ctrl-^ (control-caret) inserts a line or column, ctrl-Y deletes a line or column. After the first command of either type, the program asks whether a line or column is to be inserted or deleted, and then which way the remaining text should be shifted, if at all (up or down, for a row; right or left, for a column; for a deletion, the no-shift option is also available). Thereafter, for every ctrl-^ or ctrl-Y command, the program assumes the same kind of insertion/deletion and shift, but it checks with you anyway to make sure. To change either the row/column choice or the shift, the manual says ctrl-- (control-hyphen) resets the earlier choices, but

the correct command is ctrl-shift-hyphen, or equivalently ctrl-underscore. I learned this during a telephone call to Robonics.

An Edit operation can be aborted, with or without saving changes, just as in WordStar (but an attempt to abort without saving does not produce the warning message that WordStar provides). But a Create or re-Create operation cannot be aborted. You have to step through the whole process, or hold the <RETURN> key down (if that works on your terminal). When ending an Edit, the display contains a spelling error: "NOW QUITING FILE," irritating to me, because I make my living as an editor and writer.

Graphic Express has one significant improvement over Grafiks. In Grafiks, when a printout is being made, the screen says, "To interrupt or stop printing, simply turn your printer off." That instruction is nonsense. It stops the print, but it doesn't stop the program, which simply waits for the printer to turn back on. If you take the printer off line without turning off the power, and do a form-feed before putting the printer back on line, the resumed printout begins where it left off, but after a couple of passes across the page it does a reverse form-feed and tries to finish the diagram somewhere near where it was interrupted. The only way you can really stop a printout, for good, after stopping the printer, is to cold-boot the computer (press the Reset button); and that can adversely affect the graph you are working on.

In Graphic Express, as in WordStar, to interrupt printing, press P. You get the WordStar-like message "Press Y to abort, N to resume." This capability saves much trouble in fine-tuning a block diagram.

The manual says you can return to a previous step during a Create operation by pressing the Up arrow on the keyboard. However, on my terminal, in either Grafiks or WordStar, pressing any of the arrow keys moves the cursor on the screen but does not inform the processor of this movement; the next command takes effect at the point where the cursor was before the arrow key was pressed. I found in both programs that I could back up during Create with ctrl-K, but the manual does not mention this fact. (Backspacing within a particular text entry is possible with the BackSpace key).

When Edit mode is entered, the default is normal text characters, for inserting labels on a graph or in a block diagram. This can be changed to graphics by entering ctrl-\ (control-backslash). When in Edit mode, the graphic material is displayed on the terminal in low resolution as rows and columns of asterisks; in graphics mode, these asterisks can be replaced by other characters representing various kinds of graphic symbol.

For example, an upper-case Q represents the upper left corner of a heavy box that should appear at the left side and at the top of the character position occupied by the Q; while an upper-case I represents a similar corner with the vertex at the center of the character position. All four corners and left, right, top and

bottom sides of such boxes have their corresponding characters in graphics mode. By using both kinds of corners and sides, a double heavy box should be printed. Alternatively, various kinds of shading, arrowheads, and special characters are supposedly available. When I tried to use them in Grafiks, however, I ran into a great deal of trouble.

I tried to apply this technique to a very simple diagram of five blocks and their interconnections. (Most readers recognize this as the organization of a simple computer with von Neumann architecture.) I drew up the basic diagram and printed it; then made one change at a time and printed each version. (See figures 1-3 below)

The basic diagram printed well. But when the top box was changed to a heavy outline, the fun began. I tried several different characters but found none of them to work correctly. For example, in both programs, arrowheads are very small, and hardly visible. In Grafiks, most of the special characters printed the graphic representation they were supposed to, but for each use of a graphic symbol, a dot was printed at the left margin, and the symbol was pushed to the right a short distance. If the symbol is to be repeated along a horizontal line, as along the top or bottom side of a block, the corresponding number of dots was printed and the entire block edge was shifted well to the right of where it should be. An exception was the upper right corner of a heavy block, translated from E in Edit mode: it was shifted to the left.

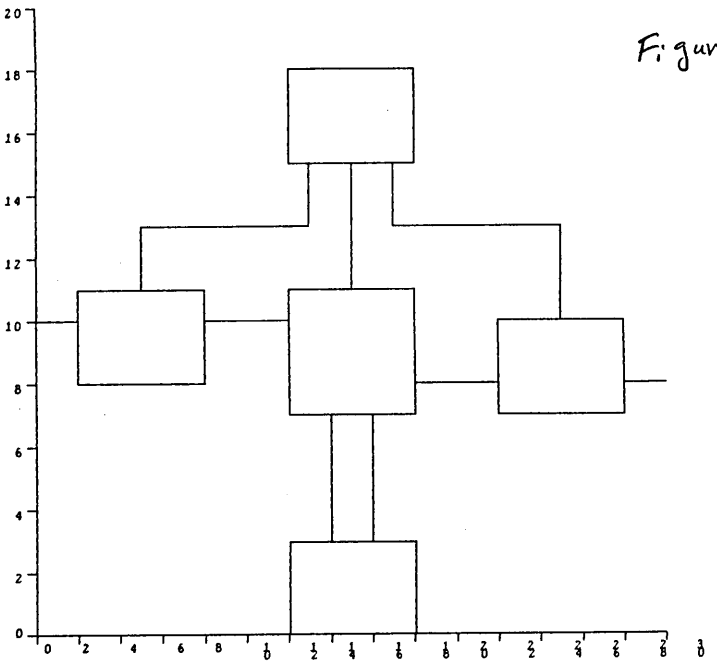


Figure 1

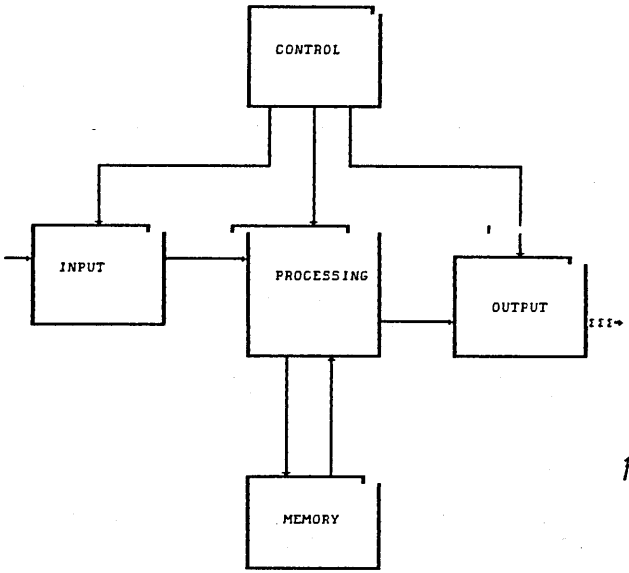


Figure 2

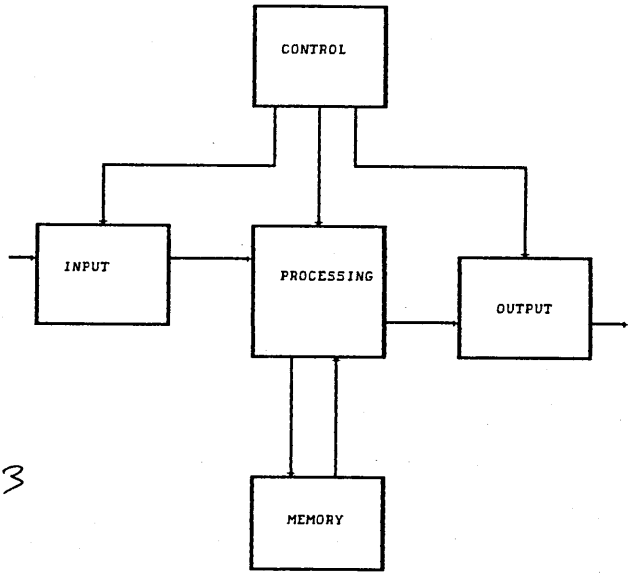


Figure 3

This problem has been corrected in Graphic Express. The upgraded program leaves no dots in the left margin, and registration is much better -- but still not perfect. Misregistration cannot be

corrected except by printing a diagram, then editing the file. Several passes are usually necessary, and since printing is slow, this can take quite some time.

Both programs share an odd characteristic: If you abort a printout and forget to form-feed the printer manually before the next printout, you may get a reverse form-feed and an overprint.

A continuing problem is a tendency for equally spaced vertical lines in a basic block diagram to become unequally spaced after enhancement. I don't know why the program does this, or how to fix it.

Graphic Express has corrected the worst failing of Grafiks, which occurred when I put labels in the boxes. Labels in plain boxes are not affected, but labels in enhanced boxes in Grafiks create breaks in the sides of the box, and labels on the same level as enhanced lines are totally wiped out -- apparently interpreted as control codes.

Conclusion: Grafiks is a good program with lots of nice features, and with the capability of producing some really fancy graphics -- but it needs a lot of work by its developers. Some, but not all, of this work has been done in Graphic Express.

*****

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UTILITIES IN REVIEW: N C A T

by

Bruce D. Welch

This article is a description of how to use the catalog programs contained on BAMDUA Library disk number thirteen. Although it is written for systems with two disks, it can be applied to a single disk system as mentioned at the end of this article. There are several related programs that generally contain the letters "CAT" somewhere in their name. Rather than an exhaustive attempt to describe in detail all of the arcane subtleties of all the combined program features I will be discussing, from a practical standpoint, how to catalog all of the (as of late March) thirty BAMDUA Library disks. When done you will have an alphabetical list of all the files on the disks, some six hundred of them, and a reference to the disk number they are found on. If a file is found on more than one disk then each disk containing the file will be listed by number next to the file name. The programs needed for insertion into disk A: are: MAST.CAT, NCAT.COM, and XCAT.COM. These, as well as many others we will not be using, are on disk thirteen.

Before actually starting the cataloging process we will have to change one default value in NCAT.COM. NCAT.COM is set for a buffer default that will allow only 256 different file names. This amount will be used up with less than eleven of the library disks, so we have to change the default. This is most easily done with the dreaded DDT. Not to worry, this is by no means a lesson in CP/M's DDT--just a simple follow-the-steps process to patch NCAT.COM.

Load a copy of the following four programs on disk A:

MAST.CAT
NCAT.COM
XCAT.COM
DDT.COM

Type, without the quote marks, "DDT NCAT.COM" and hit the "RETURN" key. The screen will show some numbers and letters that end with a line that contains nothing but a hyphen in the left most column, this is the DDT prompt. At the prompt type, without the quotes, "s0104" (that is ess-zero-one-zero-four) followed by the "RETURN" key. The screen will display the characters "0E" followed by the cursor. Type "70" (seven zero, no quotes) and hit the "RETURN" key. A new set of numbers will be displayed on a new line with the cursor. Type a period (".", without the quotes) and press the "RETURN" key. You are now finished with your patching. To exit DDT do a ctrl C (hold down the "CONTROL" key and press "C"). Next, to save your patch and make it work for you, type "SAVE 27 NCAT.COM" (no quotes) and "RETURN" and you are done. Congratulations, you have patched NCAT.COM with DDT so that it will now be able to hold 2048 file names. Now the easy part.

With the patched program and its companions in A: type NCAT B: (NCAT [space] B colon) and return. The program will load and tell you to place the disk to be cataloged into B: Do this with one of the BAMDUA Library disks and answer the question, querying your readyness, with a "Y" for yes. In only a few seconds it will finish reading the directory and ask you to place the next disk to be cataloged into B: Each time you do it will ask if you are ready. When you are done just answer the question in the negative and the cataloging will be done. To sort the cataloged file name entries into alphabetical order, type "XCAT", without quotes, and a carriage return. The program will ask if you want any ".FRE" listings. If you answer yes it will list each disk you have cataloged with the remaining free space on each disk. It will then ask if you want the output sent to a disk file or the printer. Since I must print one sheet at a time I send it to disk and print it from WordStar.

This catalog program will work on any disk that contains a file name that begins with a hyphen and has a file type of a unique number, which all of the BAMDUA Library disks do, for example, -BAMDUA.001, -BAMDUA.002, etc. Additionally, you can get the program to ignore repetitive files that may be on each of your disks, such as PIP.COM, XDIR.COM, READ.COM, etc. by taking advantage of the MAST.CAT file. Use your word processor to open the file MAST.CAT copied from disk thirteen. You will see that it contains only:

(DUMMY.ABC)

MAST.CAT must have <u>something</u> in it for NCAT to work. You may put in it any files you want NCAT to ignore. Open the file MAST.CAT in the document mode. The first character on the first line must be a left parentheses. Do not skip any lines and don't indent, the "(" must be the first character in the file. Then add your file names thus:

(PIP.COM
XDIR.COM
READ.COM)

When you are done, end the list with a closing parentheses and a carriage return, don't omit the carriage return, and save it with a ctrl Kd.

There is much more that can be done with the catalog programs on disk thirteen. For a complete look at the documents refer to the files READMEFI.RST and NCAT.DOC. "NCAT ?" (not a listed file name to be read, just a command to be entered at the A> prompt) provides an overview of the inner workings of the program NCAT. If you are working with a single drive system, after reading NCAT.DOC type "NCAT ?" to see the provisions NCAT has for single drive systems. Alternatively, the Morrow virtual drive feature could be employed. NCAT.SET discusses the patch to change the buffer size and LISTCAT.DOC may be of interest.

FOCUS ON AGING EYES

by Phyllis Brooks

"...and I see nothing with my eyes."
--Sappho

Computers used to be a young man's game. Then women got into the act, along with the not-so-young. Now a get-together of personal-computer users looks like a cross section of the population, at least here in the Bay Area. Along with the bright-eyed youth, a good number of us quadrogenarians (and on up) come to meetings, seeking and imparting wisdom--something we're supposed to be good at. Unfortunately while we may be wise, we also have to admit that despite good diet, exercise, and positive thinking, most of us have lost complete control of one of our faculties: we don't see as well as we used to.

While I sat in my eye doctor's chair a couple of weeks ago, I pumped him for some statistics. How many people above, say, age 45 need bifocals? Without a moment's hesitation, he said that anyone who has suffered from astigmatism or shortsightedness before that time will need bifocals within a narrow range of years in the mid-forties. A few lucky people who have never needed eye-glasses in the past will be able to get away with just reading glasses, but the absolute number of people in the over-45 population who need some kind of corrective lenses is astronomical.

So how does this affect computer users? If almost all of us veteran users have some problem with our vision, looking at screens for long periods must bring further problems for most of us in time. But we can do things to alleviate the troubles that at least this part of aging brings. (Younger readers, do not be smug. Time moves apace, and you'll be here all too soon.)

First of all, consider the poor wearer of bifocals. If I sit down to write at my computer wearing my bifocals, I'm in trouble. Sit close enough so that I can see through the reading areas at the bottom of my lenses, and I have to throw my head back at an awkward angle. Within half an hour my neck and shoulders ache. I also worry about being so close to the screen that mysterious rays can zap me into balding, osteoporosis, bad breath, and brain tumors. If I sit far enough away to use the distance part of my lenses, the letters become too small to read before they get into focus.

Solution? Anyone who has worn glasses for more than a few years has the last pair of reading glasses, the ones discarded before the current pair were bought, tucked away into a drawer against the terrible day when she crushes her working glasses in a slamming door or under a car wheel. My out-of-date reading glasses

(not bifocal and so useless for all-day use elsewhere) fit the computer screen perfectly. I can sit with my eyes a comfortable three to four feet from the screen, with everything in focus and without any crick in my neck from trying to see through the lower segment of bifocals. If I'm copying text, it's simple to set the copy at a readable distance--usually just beyond arm's length, a distance normally useless for reading books and other kinds of text.

If you don't use bifocals but must use reading glasses, you'll probably find that your lenses are not quite right for the computer screen and you must hunch closer than you like to the green-eyed (or amber-eyed) monster. Once again, try some discarded glasses to see if you have a pair that fits this particular need. Don't worry if you have to wear a pair of rhinestone-decorated upswept cat's-eye frames. Remember that nostalgia is in.

But all of us don't have old glasses and lenses lying around waiting for resurrection. My eye doctor told me that anyone can go to an ophthalmologist or optometrist and be fitted for lenses to bring text into focus at any distance needed. We think in terms of reading books and newspapers, or of seeing things clearly as we drive down the freeway. But it's perfectly reasonable and possible to be fitted for any intermediate needs.

The old reading glasses routine has done wonders for me, and for other bifocal wearers I've mentioned it to. But one other experiment failed. I thought that the glaring contrast of the various screens I was looking at on contract jobs here and there around the Bay would be less troublesome if I had slightly tinted lenses. In fact, the tinted lenses made no difference at all to me, and I found that they made me look as though I was recovering from the flu--perpetual dark circles around the eyes. When enough people tell you your eyes look tired, they start to feel tired. So I abandoned the tinted lenses and relied on adjusting the brightness of the screens I was working on until I found a comfortable level.

Articles grow by accident as well as design. I'd just finished the last paragraph when a much younger friend, a woman in her late 20's, read over my shoulder what I had just written. She wears glasses, but not bifocals. Half an hour later she called to say I'd made her life easier. Her former glasses worked much better with the screen than her current ones did! So experiment until you feel comfortable.

"What a pair of spectacles is here!"
--Shakespeare, Troilus and Cressida

* * *

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Back issues of BAMDUA Newsletter cost $1.00 for issues 1-3, and $2.00 for each issue after that. They are also available at BAMDUA meetings or through the mail. The price is the same either way. Make your check out to BAMDUA.

Dave Block's Preliminary Question and Answer Book can be purchased by sending a check for $1.00 to BAMDUA, above address.

A cassette tape of the "Once Upon a Morrow" meeting held in January is available. It costs $6. Order now!

To receive issues 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 of M.O.R., send a check for $2.00 each to M.O.R., P.O. Box 5487, Berkeley, Ca 94705. After April 15 this cost will be $3.00 each. To subscribe, send $15.00 (after April 15 subscription cost will be $18.00) to M. O. R.

A directory of approximately 300 BAMDUA members available for $3.50 Get your copy now so you will be able to know who to call when you need help or want to exchange information. Make your check out to BAMDUA.

SPECIAL DEALS: As of March 15, the arrangements for special deals has been cancelled. We are working on providing alternatives, such as making arrangements for special deals with the distributor so that BAMDUA members can deal with them directly. The following deal is such an arrangement:

REACHOUT, a menu-driven telecommunications program that works with any modem, including the CTS MM-300 Modem System. A special version of ReachOut is available for all Micro-Decision computers. The price is $125.00, which is 40% off the price of the standard version ($199.00). Full end-user telephone support is provided by the manufacturer. Send $132.50 (includes tax and shipping by U.P.S. to a daytime address) to Applied Computer Techniques, 21 Cottonwood Drive, San Rafael, CA 94901; 459-3212. ReachOut is reviewed in Morrow Owners' Review #2 & #3.

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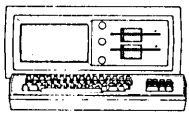
THANKS

Many thanks to all the members who contribute ideas, questions, answers, and articles to the Newsletter.

-- Georgia Babladelis

MD-3P



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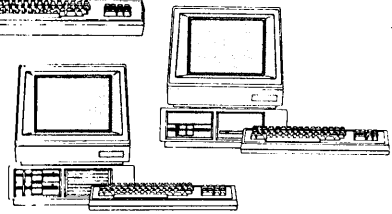

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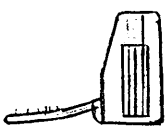

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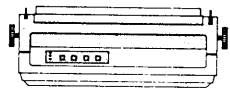

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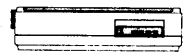

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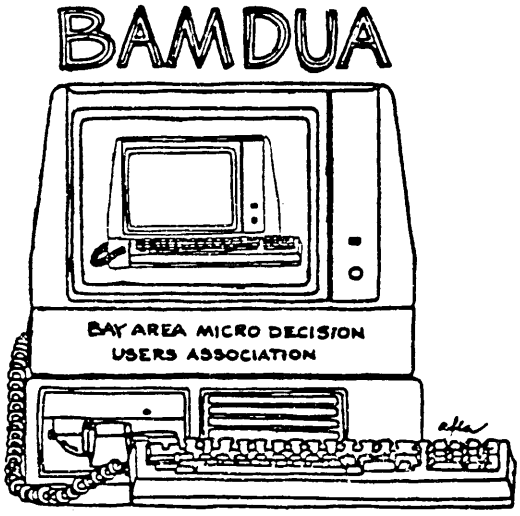

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