

EXPANDABLE COMPUTER NEWS

Issue #3

July/August 1984

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An Independent Newsletter for the Adam & Other Computers
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**CES
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SOUND**

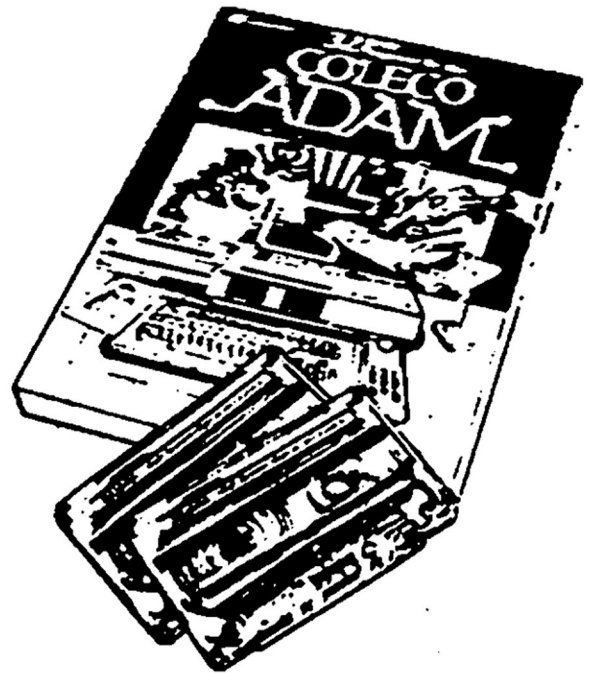


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For some contributors I cannot find any other information. Either I lost it or you did not send it in.

Ramblings From The Ridge **by D. Sage**

After you finish reading this you should understand where the title comes from. First of all, we are working very hard to squeeze in as much information in each issue as is possible. We have received a large amount of mail. I am getting very behind in answering personally. So unless you request a personal answer and enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope, you will generally find your questions answered in ECN.



Due to the large number of reviews that we have received for the same product, it is necessary that we edit the material down to a manageable level. Out of necessity we will refer to the initial review that was published and number the additional ones as follow-ups. In addition we will list our contributors on the second page along with background information and list only their names with the reviews themselves.

We recently returned from the June Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Chicago. This issue will focus on what we saw and learned at CES. I will cover some of it here and some of it in the specialized columns.

The trip itself deserves some mention. Unfortunately we were unable to get reservations in Chicago and ended up staying in Hammond, Indiana. Somewhere on the way to Hammond we lost a gas cap. This was on a Sunday, so I figured there was no way we would find a gas cap. Well, if you ever lose a gas cap on a Sunday and you are in Hammond, Indiana, go to Perry's Drug Store and Autoparts. They will have it and almost anything else you can use.

After that we headed for the CES in downtown Chicago. This year the show was scattered over four locations--McCormick Place, McCormick Inn, McCormick West, and the Conrad Hilton Hotel. Needless to say we had to park some distance away and walk. Well it wasn't long before Shirley had her shoes off.

We spent that afternoon just trying to find where the displays were located that we wanted to visit on Monday. It was almost overwhelming. I had seen McCormick place before from the outside, but it is bigger than it looks. The displays are on three separate levels. A number of the computer displays were located there, but most of them were at McCormick West which is a smaller building located within walking distance. It wasn't long before I had seen enough to be convinced that the Adam was going to be around for a while. A number of companies were showing Adam software. Games

constituted the bulk of the third-party displays.

Coleco was showing a much wider range of software. While Commodore 64 software dominated the show, Coleco appears to have made some gains.

A number of smaller companies who are known to be producing software for the Adam were not at the show. A number of displays were featuring break dancers. These groups usually attracted bigger crowds than any of the displays by themselves. The only other crowds seemed to be collecting in the vicinity of the Penthouse and Playboy magazine booths.

Monday was spent talking to representatives from Coleco and the various software companies supporting the Adam/Colecovision. We also tried to cover as much of the other computer hardware/software companies as was possible.

At the end of the day we loaded up all of our press kits and returned to Hammond. We were both too tired to go anywhere else. On Tuesday morning we headed back to Missouri so that we could begin sorting out the mass of information that we had acquired. Fortunately the rest of our trip was relatively uneventful.

While we have received a large number of reviews, so far we have received only a few programs from our subscribers. Come on gang get out your Basic manuals and start plugging away.

Those of you who have already written programs how about sharing them with everyone else. The more support Adam users get, the longer it will be around. After all it is really a terrific system with a lot of flexibility and potential built in.

This issue has a music program and next time we hope to have sprites. We will publish our sections on companies carrying products and lists of products in the next issue. We hope to have a number of new software packages for review in the next issue. Some of these sound pretty good but everyone seems to be running behind schedule.

West Hartford Happenings: June CES-Chicago **by D. Sage, Editor**

Coleco had an impressive yet somewhat subdued display at the June CES. We were pleased to see Coleco taking a more conservative approach concerning the announcement of new products. On the other hand, their commitment to ADAM and their strong approach to support for retailers and consumers was anything but conservative. The theme of the display seemed to be: ADAM is back and better than ever.

A large number of ADAMs were on display running much of the new software that is to be available during the remainder of the year.

A portion of the display dealt with Coleco's promotional support for retailers and distributors. Coleco has announced that persons buying ADAMs between May 8, 1984 and September 15, 1984 will be eligible to receive a package of 32 Basic programs for the ADAM. These programs are the same as those published by Dilithium Press in a book of the same title (see coupon).

FREE. 32 VALUABLE PROGRAMS.

To Receive Your Bonus: Purchase the ADAM™ Family Computer System or the ADAM™ Expansion Module *3 anytime from May 8, 1984 through September 15, 1984 and get the ADAM™ Home Software Library free by mail. Send this coupon to the address indicated below along with a copy of your dated sales receipt showing the store name and circled sales price, and the completed warranty card.

PURCHASED:
 ADAM™ Family Computer System
 ADAM™ Expansion Module

MAIL TO:
 ADAM Home Software Library Bonus
 P.O. Box 9722
 Bridgeport, CT 06699

please print
 NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____
 CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

This bonus offer is good only in the U.S.A. Void where prohibited by law. Allow 8-10 weeks for processing and delivery. This coupon dated sales receipt and warranty card and store company name required. Duplicate for item or program off the warranty card will not be honored. Offer expires 9/15/84. Request for this offer must be postmarked by 10/13/84. Printed in U.S.A.
 The ADAM™ Home Software Library is marketed under license from Dilithium Press, Ltd.



In addition Coleco is packaging a kit including an extra data pack, print wheel and ribbon with some ADAMs. Coleco is also going to be giving away Cabbage Patch dolls to purchasers of the ColecoVision Video Game System (see coupon).

Buy ColecoVision™ and any Game Cartridge and get a Cabbage Patch Kid™ FREE!

To Receive Your Cabbage Patch Kid™: Purchase a ColecoVision™ Video Game System and any ColecoVision™ game cartridge manufactured by Coleco anytime from May 10, 1984 through December 31, 1984. Mail this coupon to the address indicated below along with the following proof of purchase materials:

- (1) A copy of your dated sales receipt(s), showing the store name and circled sales price.
- (2) The proof of purchase seals from the boxes of both the ColecoVision™ Video Game System and the ColecoVision™ game cartridge made by Coleco that you have purchased.
- (3) The guide numbers clipped from the corners of the Instruction Booklets of both the ColecoVision™ Video Game System and the ColecoVision™ game cartridge.

NOTE: If you wish to have your Cabbage Patch Kid™ arrive before Christmas, we must receive your coupon and accompanying proof of purchase materials no later than November 15, 1984.

MAIL TO:
 ColecoVision™/Cabbage Patch Kids™ Offer P.O. Box 9727 Bridgeport, CT 06699

PLEASE PRINT LIMIT 2 PER FAMILY

NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____
 CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Check One: Black Cabbage Patch Kid™ White Cabbage Patch Kid™

This offer is valid only for retail purchases made in the U.S.A. Void where prohibited by law. Allow 8-10 weeks for processing and delivery. However, Coleco cannot be held responsible for delays beyond its control. This coupon, dated sales receipt, and proof of purchase for both the ColecoVision™ and the ColecoVision™ game cartridge, as well as the guide numbers from both Instruction Booklets must accompany your request. Offer expires 12/31/84. Request for this offer must be received by 1/11/85.
 Your Cabbage Patch Kid™ will be selected at random. Request for specific characteristics (i.e. hair color, sex, style of clothing, etc.) cannot be honored, except as noted above.
 Printed in U.S.A.
 © 1984 Cabbage Patch Kids™ is a trademark and is licensed from Original Appalachian Artworks, Inc. Cleveland, Georgia, U.S.A. All Rights Reserved.



The ADAM warranty has been extended to six months as a means for Coleco to demonstrate their faith in the reliability of ADAM. In addition Markline, in cooperation with Coleco, was offering ADAM on a 7 month billing without interest through July 15. They were also including a free War Games cartridge as part of the offer.

Coleco announced the June shipment to dealers of a variety of software including: SmartLogo, Smart Letters & Forms, SmartFiler, Recipe Filer, SimpleCalc, Electronic Flashcard Maker, Dr. Seuss

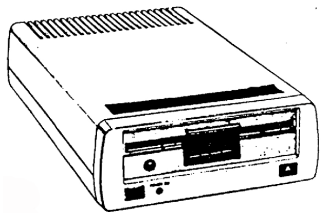
Fix-Up the Mix-Up Puzzle, Brain Strainer, ExperType, Smurf Paint 'N Play Workshop, Telly Turtle, Bump 'N Jump, Roc 'N Rope, Zaxxon, Tarzan, Super Action Football, Dukes of Hazard, and Antarctic Adventure.

Additional software will become available throughout the remainder of the year. We know that some of this software is now beginning to reach the consumer.

How much is available now is uncertain. We know SmartLogo is available and from all reports it is terrific. It supports sound and graphics in an easy to use fashion.

In addition to the software on display, Coleco also had a number of peripherals up and running. These included disk drives, a modem, 64k expansion RAM, and a Universal Interface which includes RS232 and Centronics ports.

Coleco has settled on a single-sided double density disk drive that will have a storage capacity of 160k (see picture). The ADAM can support two such disk drives in addition to two digital data drives. The ADAMLink direct connect modem will also be available. The modem will operate at 300 baud and will include communications software and two free hours of time on Compuserve. The 64k memory expander will fit inside the ADAM. Most of these peripherals will be available in August or September.



The universal interface will probably not be available until November. We talked to Tony Shepard, Technical Liaison Marketing Communications, Coleco, about the new products. He indicated that Coleco was taking great pains to insure that all new products were fully tested before releasing them for production. Many of the recent delays in releasing software and hardware were due to this extended testing.

In another development, Coleco announced the elimination of their previous third-party licensing requirements for software developers. The new approach will make software development information more easily available to independent software producers.

This will result in more software for ADAM owners in a shorter period of time. The effects of this policy change are already being seen in the market place. Coleco also announced that they will be producing

versions of their software to run on Atari computers, the Commodore 64, and the Apple IIe and IIc.

As I indicated in RAMBLINGS, a number of companies were showing software for the ADAM/Colecovision.

Whiz Kids Educational Computer Centers Inc., 23-238 Davenport Rd., Toronto, Canada M5R 1J6, indicated they would be producing their StepOne computer course for the ADAM. Flip Track Learning Systems, 999 Main, Glen Ellyn, IL 60137, was also offering a computer course for the ADAM.

Activision was showing Decathlon and indicated that it along with Zenji and Pitfall II would be available in the third quarter with Space Shuttle, Explorer, Wonderbolt, Camp Clean-Up, and Toy Bizarre coming out in the 4th quarter.

Fisher Price, a new entrant in the software field, will be producing Linking Logic, Memory Manor, and Logic Levels. These are all learning games.

MicroFun was showing some excellent games for the ADAM/Colecovision including Boulder Dash, a hit at CES, which features a two-dimensional scrolling maze. Other offerings will be Crisis Mountain, Short Circuit, Miner 2049er II, and Scraper Caper.

This fall much of their MicroLearn software will be available on data pack for the ADAM. We hope to be receiving some software from them real soon now.

Spinnaker's Learning Adventure Series will be available soon for the ADAM. These include Snooper Troops I, In Search of the Most Amazing Thing, and Trains. Aerobics will also be available.

Sierra formerly known as Sierra-On-Line will be releasing WizType, Grog's Revenge, and Stunt Flyer. In addition they are considering producing a version of King Quest for the ADAM. This is a super 3-D graphics, text adventure game that you would have to see to believe. Lets hope they get this out.

Imagic was showing Tennis, Wing War, Fathom, and Dragon Fire. Epyx had Pitstop and Summer Games on display.

Parker Bros. was showing Star Wars, Frogger II, Mr. Do's Castle, Gyruus, and Circus Charlie. Xonox had Motocross Racer, Artillery Duel, Robin Hood and Tomarc the Barbarian.

Sunrise, looking to be a strong supporter of ADAM, had Campaign 84, Gust Buster, Quest for Quintana Roo, Rolloverture and Mountain King.

Several companies had on display equipment for point-of-sale downloading of software directly to cartridge and disk. These systems will allow buyers to try out software before purchase. They will also provide consumers with a wider range of software without the retailer having to maintain large inventories. This is a development that is worth following and could easily lead to lower software

prices.

I know we probably missed some companies while we were at CES. I apologize if I did. I would also like to thank the representatives of Coleco and the other companies who were very helpful to us. We are looking forward to January 85 at Las Vegas.

What About The Competition?

June CES - Chicago

by D. Sage, Editor

The latest news dwarfs just about anything else we had to say. We will get to that shortly. Originally we thought the big news was the introduction of Atari's new video game system, the 7800. Atari had a large display at CES with many 7800's up and running. Only a few of Atari's computers were evident. The AtariSoft portion of the display had several brands running, but only one Colecovision.

The 7800's look pretty good, better than the 5200 fiasco and will be priced around \$150.00. One advantage of this machine is that it is compatible with the 2600 VCS cartridges and controllers. The system comes with Pole Position.

This system was developed in cooperation with Phillips Electronics, developers of Odyssey. Many analysts expected Phillips to buy out Atari. Atari also introduced by special invitation a partially? IBM compatible, revamped 1450XL for around \$1000.

I doubt that this product will ever make it to the market place without substantial redesign. Atari also had a headband controller called MindLink on display. It was far from impressive and tended to fall off regularly.

Before we return to CES let's get to the big news. Jack Tramiel, founder and former president of Commodore International purchased Atari, Inc. from Warner. Surprise, surprise. Well maybe not. It is a lot easier to acquire a company than it is to start from scratch.

Tramiel promptly installed his sons in management positions in the company. Now the question is, will Tramiel's Atari do to Commodore what Tramiel's Commodore did to Atari and Texas Instruments in the home computer market?

I suspect he will at least give it a try and it looks like Commodore's new management will help him succeed. If you look at Commodore's latest introductions you will see what I mean. The Vic-20 has been dropped and replaced by the Commodore 16 which is not compatible with anything but the new Plus-4.

The Plus-4 is a non-compatible revamped version of the 264 introduced in January at the Las Vegas CES and later canceled. I really don't understand. If Commodore is going to introduce a non-compatible

computer, why they don't go with a faster processor. The 6502 is ok but there is a faster compatible version of the processor and there are even faster 8-bit processors such as the Z80B. I really feel that unless they adopt a strategy that provides for upward compatibility they will start hurting Commodore 64 sales and eventually be their own undoing.

Elsewhere in the industry, IBM has cut the price of its line of pc's including the dreaded Jr. A number of IBM compatible companies have responded with cuts of their own.

Returning to CES; there really was not much new in the way of home computers. The only introduction of any consequence was the Sinclair QL. This machine comes with 128K, expandable to 640K, a full-size keyboard, two micro-drives, and two RS232c ports. The processor is a 32-bit Motorola 68008. The QL comes with word processor, spread sheet, graphics and data base software built in. All of this will be available for \$499. The only problem is that the machine will be available initially only by mail order and so far there has been no word on an American distributor. Maybe Atari ought to look at the possibility of distributing this product. It really looked good and the software looks great.

The MSX computers from Japan have still not arrived. Word is that they won't appear here until next spring. Maybe in January at Las Vegas. I sure don't want to miss that show.

Things I Have Learned About ADAM

by Harry L. McDonald

When ADAM first appeared in the Service Merchandise catalog, I was fascinated. I had always wanted a computer with a daisy wheel printer to write my papers for college. I had just returned to college when ADAM appeared.

The promised delivery date in the catalog was October 15, 1983. On the eighteenth I called the store. Call again in two more weeks, I was told. The two week cycle continued until January of 1984. In the meantime I began to hear all sorts of wonderful things about the ADAM.

I also heard some bad things but these I discounted. ADAM was for me, I waited.

I have learned several things about the ADAM from research that I have done in the Eastern Illinois University library. Some may be true, some may not. They are offered here for the consideration of others. Here goes.

ADAM's printer is English, made in Northern Ireland. I have lost the name of the company. ADAM's operating system is InfoSoft I/OS which is CP/M "compatible." I do know that InfoSoft truly

helped on the SmartWRITER program.

Other facts: If the control key is pressed and then the "r", when ADAM is first turned on, then the number of your version of ROM is displayed where SmartKEY III should be. Any number of 79 or higher is good. Any lesser number means there will be bugs.

If PRINT PEEK(260) is executed in SmartBASIC, then the revision of SmartBASIC is displayed. Again, 79 or higher is desirable.

These things can be done, they work, but their meaning is only something I have read. For older versions of SmartWRITER (less than 79), go to "Moving Window" mode before scrolling backwards in a file (workspace). After moving back, return to "Standard Format." This prevents the turning of files to gibberish and weird symbols. The Horizontal Margin is too long, the default values (settings when the machine is first turned on) print all the way to the bottom of the page when single spacing is used.

I have read that setting the margins all the way to the edges of the paper causes the keyboard to lock up. I have not found this to be true. I have read that the printer must be kept away from the rest of the computer or lines of text will be lost. I have not found truth in that, but adding lines or words in Standard Format and then Moving Window causes loss of text.

One book even mentions that. I have used Moving Window to prepare columns of numbers and it works fine.

Ordering supplies from Coleco is getting easier all the time. It used to take two months, it only takes about three weeks now. Contacting Coleco on the phone is easier now. Supertime seems to be the best. The people on the phones are now telling owners things to do to fix their machines. They used to tell people to send their machines to Connecticut. They used to offer to pay the postage.

There is an 83 and an 84 model ADAM. My man at the store told me that. He also told me that Coleco doesn't like to have machines returned to them, they make it very difficult. He also said Coleco had problems when the ColecoVision game first came out. His theory is that they let customers do the testing.

The prongs on the left side of the print mechanism are wrong on many machines. The prongs should both have the same angle, one should not be level. The bottom prong's angle should be the same as the angle of the top prong. Bending them down, however, is tricky because it increases the tension in the switch which may then not open at all. It may be dangerous so I won't elaborate. Get that information from Coleco.

The wire that goes from the computer to the

television needs to be made into a couple of loops that are held with a twist tie for garbage bags. Make the loops by wrapping extra wire around the hand. By experimentation, I found that the ADAM is capable of colors that can be described only as dazzling. It is a very fine picture.

Much of what is written about ADAM is untrue. By monitoring several magazines and professional publications, I found some of the darndest rumor mongering I had ever seen.

For the price ADAM is unbeatable.

Sometimes when ADAM's keyboard seems to be locked up. it really isn't. It's doing some electronic housekeeping.

Those unfortunates who joined Coleco's video game club only received one or two issues of the magazine for their \$6.00. They were supposed to get a free issue of the new ADAM magazine.

Personal CP/M is ready to go. Sorcim's SuperCalc2 ADAM version has been abandoned by the company. Infocom has contemplated putting their adventure games on digital data packs but they may wait for a disk drive.

These things I have learned by owning a Coleco ADAM. They, again, may or may not be true. Any information that any subscriber has would be much appreciated. Send them along to me. In the meantime I'll try to gather some more facts.

Making RND(X) Random by D. Sage

Many readers have written or called about the RND function, wanting to know how to get truly random numbers.

In most microcomputers the RND function in BASIC returns an illogical sequence of values. The problem is that the sequence is not really random. Every time you run a newly loaded program using this function the same value will be returned the first time the function is used. In addition each subsequent use will follow a pattern.

Some microcomputers use a built in clock, called a jiffy clock, that allows the programmer a means of generating truly random numbers. You simply have to read the last digit generated by the clock (this number is usually in seconds) and enter the value in your randomization routine.

Unfortunately the ADAM does not have a Jiffy clock, so you must create one. A simple timing loop will generate a sequence of numbers over and over until interrupted. The interrupt is a random event and takes the last value of the counter. This value is then used in the randomization routine.

At the end of this article is a subroutine that uses this method. The timing loop (lines 1010-1060) is

broken when a particular value (lower case s) is entered in the keyboard. The keyboard entry is detected by peeking the memory location (line 1030) for the last key pressed.

A GET INPUT statement will not work because the timing loop cannot advance pass these statements until keyboard input is made. This routine will return random value from 1 to 10. For larger values simply increase the value of the terminator in line 1010.

There are many ways to accomplish this process using a PEEK of the keyboard. You could place the RND function in a loop called from the beginning of your program. Since RND would be called a random number of times the next time you used RND in your program you would be assured of obtaining a random number.

```
100 REM True Random Number Generator
110 PRINT "Press s when ready"
120 GOSUB 1010
130 z=INT(x+RND(1)+.5))
140 PRINT Z
150 END
1000 REM RANDOM SEED ROUTINE
1010 FOR i=0 TO 9
1020 x=1
1030 y=PEEK(64885)
1040 IF y=115 THEN RETURN
1050 NEXT i
1060 GOTO 1010
1070 RETURN
```

Sounds Like Music? by D. Sage

Making sound on most computers is not an easy task. In this respect the ADAM is no different. As most of you know figuring out how to get to the sound chip was the first obstacle to overcome. Another problem is that ADAM's BASIC does not directly support sound.

Now that the various addresses for the sound and video chip are available the first hurdle has been overcome. In this and subsequent issues I will attempt to demonstrate how to access the sound chip to produce music, or at least musical notes, and sound effects.

Sprites and graphics are a great deal more complex and others in addition to myself are developing some programming tools that will make accessing the video chip easier.

Articles on graphics and sprites will appear as soon as they are ready.

At the end of this article is a relatively simple program that will turn your ADAM keyboard into a piano of sorts. It really is not as complex as it may

appear. Using the sound chip requires that you direct the appropriate data to the appropriate port in the microprocessor. The ADAM uses port 255 (\$FF hexadecimal) for the sound chip. Our program includes a short machine language routine that transmits the data to this port. That routine simply takes data that is poked into location 28006, loads it into the accumulator and then outputs it to port \$FF. The machine language routine is accessed by using a CALL statement (CALL 28000). Don't worry if this does not make any sense. You do not have to understand this in order to use the routine or the program. The first step in the "piano" program involves setting up an area to store the machine language routine. This is done by setting LOMEM to 29000. Line 195 dimensions two arrays that will store data on keys pressed and values to generate notes. Line 210 sets "s" equal to 28000 which is the starting point of the machine language program. Lines 220-250 store the DATA in line 200 in memory. This is the machine language routine. Line 260 contains some important values: sd=144 turns on voice 1, qu=159 turns off voice 1. lc=28006 is the location where the data will be stored for the machine language routine. Lines 280-290 contain the data for the keyboard characters that are used and the data used to generate the notes. Lines 300-330 store the data in the two arrays. Lines 410-455 print the instructions which explain which key to press to obtain each note. Line 460 is where you press a key. Lines 470-510 check to see which key was pressed. If a key other than "x" or the keys for the notes is pressed then the program goes back to 460 and does nothing. If you press "x" the program stops. If you press a note key then you will hear a note, if you have the volume turned up on your tv. Lines 710-780 are the ones that actually generate the sound. In line 700 p2=n is the note and p3=128 is what might be called the base value for voice 1. These values are poked into location "lc" (28006) and then the machine language routine is called. Line 760 is a delay loop. Line 770 turns the sound off and line 780 returns the program to get another note. It may not look simple but it works.

The second program makes a sound effect. The best way to use something like this is to make it into a subroutine that can be called using a GOSUB when you need the sound. This program is similar to the first so I will only explain the differences. Lines 300-380 make a whistling sound like a bomb falling. This is done with voice 1 and involves varying the pitch and volume of the sound. Lines 400-450 use white noise to create the sound of the exploding bomb.

In future issues we will try to provide you with

sufficient information to allow you to write your own programs using music and sound effects. We will also explain how to use the sound chip more fully and try to provide you with subroutines that will simplify your efforts. We hope you enjoy these programs and will share your efforts with us.

```

5  LOMEM: 29000
10 REM PIANO
20 REM by D. Sage
195 DIM a$(8), P(8)
200 DATA 58,102,109,211,255,201
210 s=28000
220 FOR i=s TO s+5
230 READ x
240 POKE i, x
250 NEXT i
260 sd=144: qu=159: lc=28006
280 DATA "a",26.9,"s",23.9,"d",21.3,"f",20.1
290 DATA "g",17.9,"h",16.0,"j",14.2,"k",13.4
300 FOR i=1 TO 8
310 READ a$(i)
320 READ p(i)
330 NEXT i
400 REM instructions
410 HOME: PRINT "PIANO - Instructions"
420 PRINT: PRINT "Press the appropriate key"
425 PRINT "enter x to stop"
430 PRINT:PRINT
440 PRINT " KEY= a s d f g h j k"
450 PRINT "NOTE= c d e f g a b c"
460 get k$
470 FOR i=1 TO 8
475 IF k$="x" THEN END
480 IF k$<>a$(i) THEN 500
490 n=p(i): GOSUB 700: GOTO 460
500 NEXT i
510 GOTO 460
520 END
690 REM make sound
700 p2=n
720 p3=128
730 POKE lc, p3: CALL s
740 POKE lc, p2: CALL s
750 POKE lc, sd: CALL s
760 FOR j=1 TO 140: NEXT j
770 POKE lc, qu: CALL s
780 RETURN

```

```

5  LOMEM: 29000
10 REM bombs away
20 REM by D. Sage
185 PRINT: PRINT "press any key"
190 GET a$
200 DATA 58,102,109,211,255,201

```



```

210 s=28000
220 FOR i=s TO s+5
230 READ x
240 POKE i, x
250 NEXT i
260 lc=28006
300 FOR j=5 TO 17
310 FOR i=128 TO 143
320 POKE lc, i: CALL s
330 POKE lc, j: CALL s
340 POKE lc, 144: CALL s
350 FOR I=0 TO 5: NEXT I
360 NEXT i
370 NEXT j
380 POKE lc, 159: CALL s
400 POKE lc, 228: CALL s
410 FOR i=240 TO 255
420 POKE lc, i: CALL s
430 FOR I=0 TO 75: NEXT I
440 NEXT i
450 POKE lc, 255: CALL s
520 END

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Product Review Summary by D. Sage

We have several cartridges for which I have not had time to write detailed reviews. Since we have not received reviews on these products I felt it would be better to give you a short review than nothing at all. Hopefully, we will be able to provide more detailed reviews in the next issue.



Rocky from Coleco - an enjoyable two-player game that uses the Super Action Controllers. This is fun but rough on the hands. We need more games like this where two players can interact.

War Games from Coleco - based on the movie. This gets tough real quick. Requires more than dexterity as you must make choices fast. Takes advantage of the keypad.

Frenzy from Coleco - the arcade game at home. I liked it and hated it at the same time. This was addictive for me. Much better than Atari's Berzerk.



Sir Lancelot from Xonox - a Joust like game with some differences. In the alternating screen you have to save a princess

from a dragon. The graphics are good but this game gets too difficult for me too quickly. Maybe a sign I am getting old.

Threshold from Sierra - this has been around for other computers for some time. It is a well developed alternative to space invaders games. At first I did not like it, but as I played it more it got to be quite enjoyable for a blasting game.



Learning with Leeper from Sierra - this is an educational game for younger children. How about a review from someone with small kids?

B.C.'s Quest for Tires from Sierra - I loved it. The graphics are superb, but the game play tends to get old rather quickly. If you don't buy it at least you have to see it played.



Gust Buster from Sunrise - this also is for younger children, although I had some difficulty getting the hang of it. You have to travel

around a carnival using your balloons and sell them to crowds. I kept overinflating my balloons and plunging to the ground.

Campaign 84 from Sunrise - this is an educational game that requires you to make some decisions and then combines game play in determining who wins the election.

Sorry these were brief but hope to have more next time.

Just a reminder that many of our reviews are second and third opinions of a product reviewed in an earlier issue. If the review has a number such as (1-3), this means the first review appeared in issue 1 and this is the third review of the product.

Product Review - Bounty Hunter by D. Sage

Product: Bounty Hunter game
Manufacturer: Victory Software, distributed by Star-Byte, 2564 Industry Lane, Norristown, PA 19401

Requirements: ADAM
Media: Digital Data Pack
Warranty: 30 days
Price: \$24.95

Bounty Hunter is one of four text adventure game available from Victory Software. The game was

written by Bruce Robinson and Dr. Alan Stankiewicz.

This game is a nice change of pace from the dungeons and dragons type of text adventure. You are the "Bounty Hunter" and your Job is to find and arrest all of the members of the "Oil" gang.

The game starts out fairly easy and becomes more complex as you proceed. The programmers have also hidden a surprise inside the adventure. I won't tell you what it is.

I enjoy text adventures, but they can eat up a lot of time. My only complaint about the game is that you cannot readily make a backup copy. On the whole I would rate "Bounty Hunter" a 7. It is enjoyable and worth owning at this price.

Product Review - Oil's Well

by Nick Mucciariello

Product: Oil's Well game cartridge

Manufacturer: Sierra, Sierra On-Line Bldg., Coarsegold, CA 93614

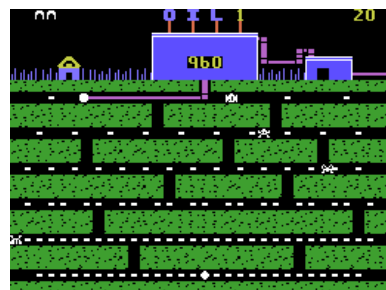
Requirements: ColecoVision/ADAM, joysticks

Media: Cartridge

Warranty: 90 days

Oil's Well is a one or two player game with various degrees of play (regular, unleaded and premium). It has the overtones of PacMan and is a gas to play (Editor's note: we are not responsible for the quality of puns used by reviewers).

You are drilling an oil well which consists of an underground maze. You control a drill bit through the maze and as you move you leave a trail of pipe. Oozies attack your pipe causing you the loss of a drill bit if one touches your pipe. You can eat the Oozies



with a drill bit. You can also retract the drill bit as far as you want by pushing the side button, doing away with any existing pipe. If your drill bit touches a land mine-while extracting the oil pellets (similar

to the dots in Pac-Man) a drill bit is lost. There is a Petromin (power pill) in each maze. This special oil nugget slows down the Oozies.

Also goblets of super-rich deposits float through the maze. If your drill bit can touch one of the goblets, you earn bonus points. You start with 3 drill bits and earn another for every 10,000 points.

There are 8 mazes, and after completing them, you start with the first maze again at a faster pace. The scenery and layouts of the maze changes with each new maze getting more difficult as you progress

to the next level. I've had this game for a month now and still have not tired of it. It has lasting play value and I would rate it a 10.

Product Review - Squish 'Em

by Nick Mucciariello

Product: Squish 'Em game cartridge

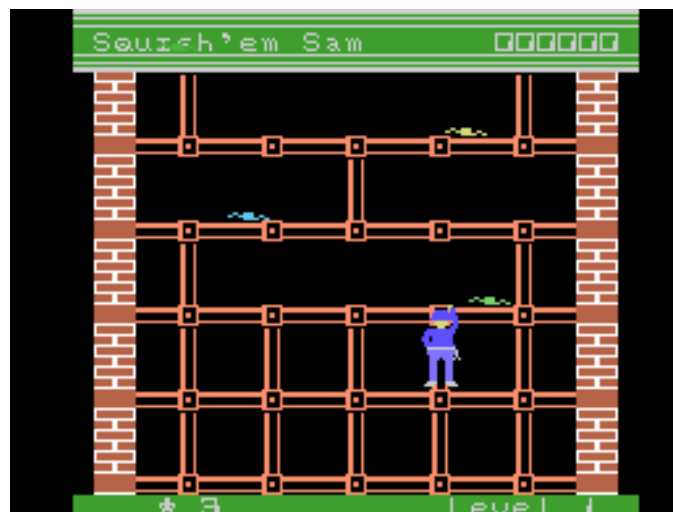
Manufacturer: Interphase Technologies

Requirements: ColecoVision/ADAM, joysticks

Media: Cartridge

Warranty: 90 days

Squish 'Em is not that exciting graphically, but it is the first game I've purchased with VOICE. Sam must climb a 48 story building to collect a suitcase full of money. There are creatures on each story who are determined to knock him off the building. Falling objects make the climb even more difficult.



You score points by climbing to the top of the building and squashing the creatures or jumping over them. Sam shouts "squish 'em" when he stomps a creature, "money, money, money" when he reaches the suitcase. If he is knocked off the building he says "whoops", and if a creature touches him he says "ouch." Once you stomp a creature, in a few moments he will turn white and get up. You can jump over a white creature but can't squish him. After stomping a creature your best bet is to head for the next floor.

If Sam is hit by one of the 5 different falling objects, he falls off the building and starts at the beginning of that level again. There is one prize per screen, and if Sam touches it he earns an extra life.

The game is fun, but easy at beginning levels. The voice is the novelty in this game since you don't need any additional hardware. As the levels progress the creatures become larger and faster, making it harder to jump them. I rate this game a 7.

Product Review - Destructor

by Joe Blenkle

Product: Destructor game cartridge

Manufacturer: Coleco

Requirements: ColecoVision/ADAM, driving module

Media: Cartridge

Warranty: 90 days

Price: \$4.95 at J.C. Penney closeout, \$29.95 elsewhere

Finally, another cartridge for Coleco's Driving Module (Expansion Module 02). Destructor is the first game released by Coleco since Turbo to use the driving module and it's long overdue (Editor's note: Destructor was available in some areas as early as last November.) While Destructor is far from being a classic, there is something about the game that keeps you playing it over and over.



The object of the game is to guide your Ram-car through the city of Araknid on a distant and hostile planet, collecting power crystals for your starcruiser. Along the way you must avoid the evil Destructor and deadly Insektoids. The game is fun in that there is a sense of urgency while playing. You know that you must collect a certain number of crystals (creatures called Krystaloids until you touch them) before moving to the next round. You also know that all the while Destructor and the Insektoids are pursuing you. The fact that the Krystaloids are moving adds to the difficulty of the game. The city streets change in each round as does the location of a remote teleporter which allows you to return instantly to your ship. This becomes a very handy device for escaping Insektoids in a hurry. Your Ram-car is aptly named as it can ram through crystals blocking your path. Once during the game I accidentally blocked my own path with crystals and was delighted to learn that after several attempts

I rammed right through them. I won't say what happens when an Insektoid catches you, but it involves a crunch-crunch sound not unlike that heard on one of those science-fiction movies when the giant bug catches you. I played Destructor for several hours straight to see if I'd tire of it. I didn't, but the game still lacks something that would make it a real winner. However, it is a lot of fun and probably rates a 7.

Product Review - Miner 2049er

by Joe Blenkle

Product: Miner 2049er game cartridge

Manufacturer: Micro Fun, 2699 Skokie Valley Rd., Highland Park, IL 60035

Requirements: ColecoVision/ADAM, joystick

Media: Cartridge

Price: \$39.95

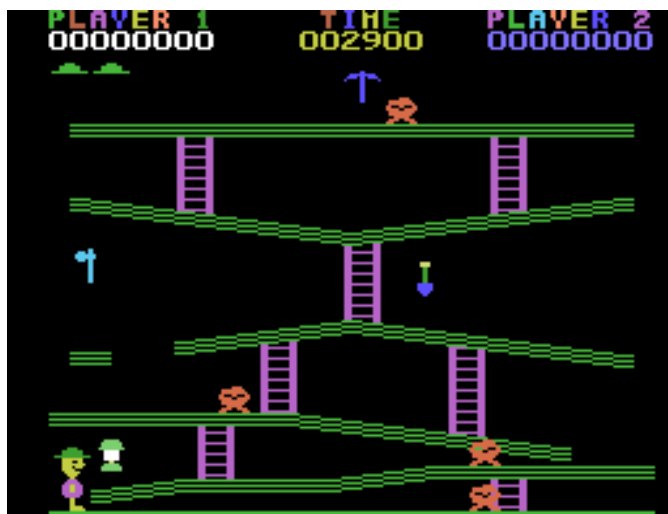
Rating: 9

Count-em! Miner 2049er has 11 screens, something almost unheard of in the world of cartridge based video games. This awesome accomplishment is only a preview of things to come.

The object of Miner 2049er is to guide Bounty Bob through the 11 levels of a mine. The legend has it that Bob is searching for an escaped criminal, but somehow this criminal must have got clean away as he never puts in an appearance or is even mentioned in this version's instructions.

Instead, Bob is in search of the uranium to be found in the eleventh level of the mine. Let me tell you...it's no easy task.

Miner 2049er is a very difficult game until you learn how to master it. One mistake can cost you your life, making you repeat that level over. Often you are given only enough time for one clean sweep through a level. One mistake anywhere along the way will cause you to run out of time and you'll wind up



dying only steps away from completing the level.

Bob encounters killer mutants along the way which he can render harmless by collecting one of the miner's tools scattered throughout the game, then running over the creature for extra points.

Miner 2049er is a masterpiece. Each level is totally different than any of the others. Along the way you must navigate ladders, elevators, radioactive pools and stompers. You'll even get to fire yourself from a cannon if you make it to level 10! Full use of the keypad on your joystick comes into play in this game as you punch different numbers for floor levels on the elevators.

The game's only real drawback is its degree of difficulty and skimpy instructions. Different difficulty levels and some hints on how to get through the levels would be useful and perhaps a feature that would enable you to start the game at any level of the mine.

The first three levels are fairly easy, but the fourth level on are very difficult. Some apparently have only one way to get through them and any mistakes in the process can cost you dearly.

Miner 2049er is a game you will keep coming back to. Even after you have successfully completed all 11 levels, you will want to see if you can make it through again.

I've made it to level 11 for the second time, but have failed to get past that to start the game for a third round. If anyone out there is having difficulty at a particular level I will be glad to help. Just send a self-addressed stamped envelope to me, Joe Blenkle, 6229 Channing Dr., No. Highlands, CA 95660, and I'll pass on some tips for whatever level you want.

Product Review - Q*Bert

by Joe Blenkle

Product: Q*Bert game cartridge

Manufacturer: Parker Bros., Beverly, MA 01915

Requirements: ColecoVision/ADAM, joystick

Media: Cartridge

Price: \$36.95

Rating: 6

Lovable and cuddly Q*Bert comes to the home video arcade in this cartridge game from Parker Brothers. Q*Bert is one of the best arcade to home adaptations I have ever seen. The Coleco version is superior to almost all the other versions I have seen.

The object of the game is to hop Q*Bert from cube to cube on a pyramid shaped structure, changing the color of each cube as Q*Bert touches it. There are four rounds to each of the nine levels, with variations on how the color of the cube is changed on each one. After the ninth level the game repeats that level until

you run out of lives. Q*Bert must contend with a variety of enemies along the way, the most prominent of which is Coily the snake, who first appears as an egg hopping from the top cube to the bottom before hatching into his adult self.

Q*Bert must lure Coily off the edge of the pyramid and then reach safety by jumping on one of the multi-colored discs at the edge of the screen, which transports him back to the top of the pyramid.

Q*Bert must also contend with Coily and Ugg who criss-cross the screen at crazy angles, Slick who changes the cube colors back to their original colors, and bouncing red balls which can squash Q*Bert on contact.

Poor Q*Bert's only rest comes if he can catch the bouncing green ball which freezes all other objects on the screen for a few seconds. The graphics, sound and color in Q*Bert are splendid, but the game becomes tedious after playing it for awhile.

It's a good choice for your game library if you don't mind giving it frequent rests. It's a nice game to come back to after playing your other ones.



Product Review - Quest For Quintana Roo by Steve Chamberlain

Product: Quest For Quintana Roo

Manufacturer: Sunrise Software, Inc., 2829 W. Northwest Hwy, Suite 904, Dallas, TX 75220

Requirements: ColecoVision/ADAM, joystick

Media: Cartridge

90 day

Rating: 10

In this game your task as Yucatan Sam is to explore the many chambers of Quintana Roo temple. Guarding the chambers of the temple are spiders, snakes, and mummies that you have to avoid or kill with your acid or gun.

Inside of each chamber is a vault (inside of one chamber is the map vault) which you open by using your chisel or by throwing acid. Inside of the



vaults you can find treasures, acid (to restock your supply), or mapstones. You must find five mapstones and place them (in the correct order) in front of the map vault to go on to the next level. When you make it to the second level you are given a code which you can save and type in at the beginning of the game to go directly to the second level. You get a similar code if you make it to the third level.

This is the first real adventure game that I know of for the Colecovision and I recommend it highly. If you like adventure games I'm sure you'll love this one. I bought my copy of this game from Video Take-Out (phone 800-22VIDEO).

Product Review - Gateway To Asphai

by Jason Hirsch

Product: Gateway To Asphai game cartridge

Manufacturer: Epyx, 1043 Kiel Court, Sunnyvale, CA 94089

Requirements: ColecoVision/ADAM, joystick

Media: Cartridge

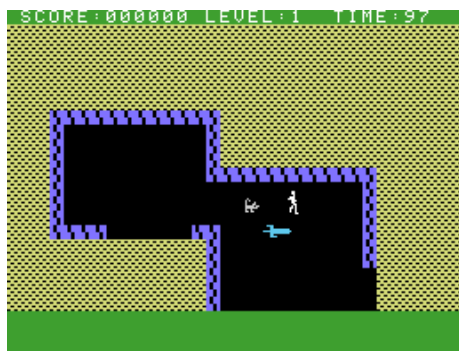
Warranty: 1 year

Rating: 10

This is the Coleco version of the popular computer game and is the first adventure style game for Adam. And it's a good one at that. Epyx's slogan is "strategy games for the action game player." They rate this game two parts strategy and one part action. I agree.

First you are shown your status and equipment. You start out with a dagger and leather armor. Then you are asked to choose a dungeon level from 1-99.

After this play really begins. You are represented by a human-like figure. He begins in a room but cannot see the rooms around him. On the bottom



third of the screen is a message area which will display vital information throughout the game. To see a room, he must first enter it. There may be monsters,

treasure, weapons, spells, traps or any combination of these in the room.

If there is a monster you may choose to fight, cast a spell or run. Using the joystick and keypad you are able to control these functions. You have many options such as searching for secret doors, unlocking doors, searching for traps, checking your status, weapons or equipment, dropping an item or moving

to the next level.

You have five lives and approximately 7 minutes to explore each dungeon. The instruction manual is good but you will probably not understand all of the intricacies of the game without extensive play.

Gateway to Asphai is an excellent game. The graphics are eye pleasing. The animation and sword-play are especially nice. A lot of memory was apparently needed for other features. The variety of monsters, equipment, spells and dungeons is incredible.

As you progress to deeper levels (there are eight) you receive more powerful weapons and spells, which you will need because the enemies become more dangerous.

I have used the cartridge for about three weeks. I bought this game because I wanted to try an adventure and I think this was the perfect choice. There really are no negative comments to make. This is the closest thing to the perfect game I have ever played.

Product Review - Moonsweeper

by Joe Blenkle

Product: Moonsweeper game cartridge

Manufacturer: Imagic

Requirements: ColecoVision/ADAM, joystick

Media: Cartridge

Warranty: 90 day

My first impression of Moonsweeper was, "Oh no, not another space shoot-em-up." But, upon playing Moonsweeper for a couple of hours I found that the game is anything but another one of those space games.

The object is to guide the U.S.S. Moonsweeper on a rescue mission to the moons of the four galaxies of Quadrant Jupiter. To start the game, you must choose one of four galaxies, each of which is worth more points and exhibits more challenging obstacles.

You then find yourself in orbit around a planet (oddly it resembles Saturn) and you must find one of four colored moons to land on. In your way are comets, space debris, meteors and alien vessels.

Upon reaching the moon, you must pick up five stranded miners, avoid deadly towers, orbital launchers and surface destroyers. You then make your way through acceleration rings to build up enough speed to leave the



moon and continue on your mission.

The graphics in Moonsweeper are superb, all the way from the 3-D effect of the comets, space debris, etc., to orbiting the planet and to the scrolling of the surface of the moon. The game's only drawback is that you are restricted to flying in only the lower portion of the screen. The game requires total concentration. Any slip and your ship is gone. This game could use a pause feature. If you like non-stop action then you will like this game.

Product Review - Super Donkey Kong by Jeff Silva

Product: Donkey Kong super game

Manufacturer: Coleco

Requirements: ADAM, joystick

Media: Digital Data Pack

Warranty: 90 day

Price: \$34.95 at Toys R Us

Rating: 9

This is one of the first games Coleco has made specifically for the Adam and if this game is any indication, Adam owners will soon be treated to some of the best video computer games ever made.

You turn on your Adam, pop in the data pack and hit the reset button. First you see a very nice Adam title screen, then an equally nice Donkey Kong title screen. When the data pack stops loading you select the player options, skill level and number of players.



Then there is a brief delay before you are treated to a virtual replica of the arcade game from the opening, where Donkey Kong stomps the girders and grimaces, to the how high can you get screen, to the ramps, rivets, elevators and even the conveyor screen.

The graphics are more detailed than the Colecovision cartridge version and the music and sound effects are also enhanced. There is a pause feature and pauses are accompanied by a very nice little melody. The game plays harder than the cartridge and Mario moves a little faster as well. Kong also thumps his chest periodically as he throws and rolls barrels, adding to the fun. At the end of the game the high score screen comes up and the arrow pointer you control is a Mario figure. This is accompanied with a carnival-like melody.

The only negative comments I have about this game are the slight delay between screens as the

tape loads and the constant noise of the tape drive loading and rewinding the tape. A disk version would be faster and quieter but Donkey Kong is a great game overall and is very close to the arcade version.

It is a lot better than the already good cartridge version. Donkey Kong has excellent playability and only the slow, noisy tape stops it from being a perfect game.

Product Review - Super Donkey Kong (3-2) by Steve Chamberlain

Product: Donkey Kong super game

Manufacturer: Coleco

Requirements: ADAM, joystick

Media: Digital Data Pack

Rating: 10

This version includes many things that were missing from the cartridge such as the girl yelling "Help!", Mario spinning around when he dies, the springs in the elevator screen, and Donkey Kong grabbing Pauline. Even if you have the original, this one is still worth buying.

Product Review - Super Donkey Kong (3-3) by Joe Blenkle

Product: Donkey Kong super game

Manufacturer: Coleco

Requirements: ADAM, joystick

Media: Digital Data Pack

Rating: 8

While Super DK is an improvement it does have some drawbacks that could stand to be ironed out. The game does handle much better than the cartridge version. I was disappointed to find that the game does NOT contain the original "fifth" screen that was so often mentioned in some of the game magazines and Coleco literature prior to release. In all the game plays very well.

Product Review - Super Donkey Kong Jr. by Jason Hirsch

Product: Donkey Kong Jr. super game

Manufacturer: Coleco

Requirements: ADAM, joystick

Media: Digital Data Pack

Price: \$36

Warranty: 90 day

Rating: 8

This is the "super game" version of Donkey Kong Jr. It has four screens including Mario's hideout and all intermissions which were absent from the earlier versions.

Screen one is a jungle scene; screen two is the chains scene; screen three is the jumpboard screen.

These first three screens look and play exactly like the cartridge version. The fourth screen looks better than the first three, unfortunately it is very hard to reach.

DK Jr. loads faster than Buck Rogers. The game can keep permanent record of up to eight high scores. It has a pause feature and you can print out the Hall of Fame screen. There are three cartoon intermissions including the famous opening sequence.

A very good cartridge version of DK Jr. is already available and is selling for as little as \$15. You should decide if the extra features in Super DK Jr. are worth the extra money before buying. The buyer should certainly consider the cartridge to be an attractive alternative.

Product Review - Super Donkey Kong Jr. (3-2)

by Jeff Silva

Product: Donkey Kong Jr. super game

Manufacturer: Coleco

Requirements: ADAM, joystick

Media: Digital Data Pack

Price: \$34.95 at Toys R Us

Rating: 8

While Super Donkey Kong is a better game, Junior may still be worth having around, especially if you don't own the cartridge version.

The graphics are more detailed, the tunes more tuneful, and the animated intermissions are cute, but in my opinion it just is not different enough.

There is a notice packed with this game that on-screen garbage may appear during game play which can be eliminated by hitting the reset button.

This to me is another indication of Data Pack Drive problems and I for one will be anxiously awaiting the disk drive. If you already have the cartridge I rate this a 6.

Product Review - Super Donkey Kong Jr. (3-3)

by Joe Blenkle

Product: Donkey Kong Jr. super game

Manufacturer: Coleco

Requirements: ADAM, joystick

Media: Digital Data Pack

Rating: 9

Super DK Jr. is another case of the missing "fifth" screen. This was to feature a crane and girder sequence with tar-men and a lunch whistle. So where are the fifth screens?

A call to Coleco produced no answers except that perhaps the designers found that they could not add them. Are Adam's Super Games pooping out already? Faults aside, the Super game is faithful to

the arcade version. Its only shortcomings being that it falls short of pre-release hype.

Product Review - Defender

by Jeff Silva

Product: Defender game cartridge

Manufacturer: Atari Inc., 1312 Crossman Rd., Sunnyvale, CA 94086

Requirements: ColecoVision/ADAM, joystick

Media: Cartridge

Price: \$34.95 at Toys R Us

Rating: 8

This is one of the first games Atari has made for Colecovision/Adam and graphically it's a beauty, capturing virtually all of the fun of the original arcade game.

This version is definitely better looking than the Atari 400/800 computer version. You use your Colecovision controller to destroy a variety of aliens before they can kidnap your humanoids and change them into aggressive killer mutants out to destroy you.

First you use the control stick to steer your ship up, down, left or right through space. The left controller button fires the missiles, while the right fire button unleashes one of a limited number of smart bombs which destroy everything on the screen.



Additionally, you press the "0" button on the keypad to go into Hyper-space (this feature does not work with the super-action controllers). This cartridge is one of the first for Colecovision to fit the definition of a "fast action" game like Atari is famous for.

The graphics are first rate and the play action is frantic.

My 14-year-old brother, who has been dying for a fast action game for Coleco was not disappointed. He did, however, turn the game over within three days of frantic playing, after which he lost interest.

I have yet to make it past the sixth wave. For some reason, when my brother played, it never got hard enough to abduct all his humanoids which starts the mutant wave.

He kills all his humanoids first to do this so there must be a flaw in the program.

The control of your ship is hard and the overall speed is pretty slow. Overall, it's a very good start for Atari and I can't wait to see what games will come next.

Let's hope Atari games for Coleco sell well so that Atari will continue to support our game and computer systems. If you are looking for a fast action arcade game this is it.

Product Review - War Room (2-3)

by Steve Chamberlain

Product: War Room game cartridge

Requirements: ColecoVision/ADAM, joystick

Media: Cartridge

Rating: 9

The instructions included do a very good job of explaining the game and there is also a map and chart included to help you learn the attack regions of enemy satellites. There are enough levels of play to keep just about anyone on their toes. As you begin to develop strategies your games will become longer and your scores higher. The graphics are done very well and the gameplay is excellent. This is one game that will not sit in the back of your closet.

Product Review - ADAM Accessory Kit

by Joe Blenkle

Product: Accessory Kit

Requirements: ADAM

Price: \$39.95

Now you can have the cleanest ADAM in town with Coleco's new ADAM Accessory Kit, including a tape head cleaner kit complete with cleaner and swabs, a blank digital data pack, a printer ribbon and three daisy wheel print wheels - Pica 10, Courier 72 and Emphasis.

The kit, while functional, is somewhat of a question mark in my mind. There is nothing contained in it that you couldn't obtain from another source



separately and there is some question as to whether it might actually be less expensive to buy the components rather than the kit.

While Coleco's individual price list on the back of the instructions adds up to slightly under \$35.00 and the complete kit sells for \$33.95 from Coleco, I paid \$39.95 for my kit from the store.

Still, it's nice to have all the pieces in one place and perhaps more convenient as a kit than having to buy them individually. At least Coleco is putting forth the effort to support ADAM and I can see no part of the kit that might go to waste, although I don't plan on doing a lot of print wheel changing.

The ADAM Accessory Kit is available in local stores or from Coleco Industries, Inc., 23 Chelton Ave., West Hartford, CT 06110 (ATTN: Order Processing). The mail order price is \$33.95 plus \$2.00 shipping (Connecticut, New York, Illinois, California and Massachusetts residents must add sales tax).

Product Review - Loran Digital Data Pack

by Joe Blenkle

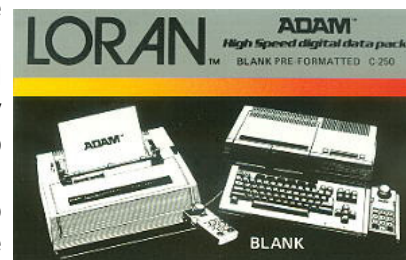
Manufacturer: Loranger Manufacturing Corp.

Requirements: ADAM

Price: \$7.98

Quick to jump on the Adam bandwagon, the Loranger Manufacturing Corp. has come out with its version of the Digital Data Pack for the Adam Computer System. (Editor's Note: It is our understanding that Loranger is the primary manufacturer of the data packs distributed by Coleco.)

There is no apparent difference in the quality of the Loran Digital Data Pack as compared to Coleco's own version. The DDP saves and loads with equal ease and its only handicap appears to be an annoying tendency to hang up in the data drive when the user tries to eject it. The packaging is both attractive and informative, with precise instructions on the DDP's use both on the package and inside the cassette case. The retail price of \$7.98 does seem a bit high. After some tendency for companies to wait and see how initial Adam sales went, it appears that there will now be lots of support for the system from other manufacturers. The Loran tape has even beaten Coleco's own DDP into the stores on the West Coast.



Product Review - Data Backup

Digital Data Cassette

by D. Sage

Manufacturer: Data Backup, Box 335, Iona, ID 83427

Requirements: ADAM

Price: \$4.95 each plus \$1.50 shipping or \$3.95 each in quantities of 10 or more plus \$2.00 shipping for each lot of ten.

There is now a source of data packs available at a reasonable price. We have been using these data packs since our last issue and have experienced no reliability problems. The manufacturer deals directly

by mail order and offers prompt shipment. Our only problem has been that the data pack occasionally will not eject completely and has to be pulled from the drive. You can get ten of these for the price of three from Sears or Wards. If you should experience any problems with these data packs let us know. I must acknowledge that this company has advertised in our newsletter but we would like their product even if they did not advertise with us.

Product Review

Wico Command Control Joystick (1-2)

by Maureen Zabel

We purchased ours (we call it the "Wacky") because the firebuttons on one of the Adam controllers were becoming more and more inoperable.

Poor Time Pilot would get in a tight situation and couldn't fire. My husband (6'3" with hands to match) has little difficulty with the Wico but our two sons (ages 9 and 5) and I experience all the same problems mentioned in the first review.

It seems that the smaller the hand, the less the control. The response problem may be due to a defect in the controller. We ran the paddle program in the Adam manual and our Wico worked smoothly until the joystick was rotated to about the 10 o'clock position. The screen went berserk with unplotted splatterings of color and lines of numbers, letters and symbols.



We shipped ours back with the \$3.00 postage and handling required. To have to pay for warranty service irritated me. It took two months for Wico to return the controller. The Wico seems to be repaired and working fine, for now. Before our Wico was returned our other Adam controller was giving us trouble so we bought another Wico. The second one did not hesitate or hang up and does not foul the Adam paddle program.

However, the side firebuttons seem stiffer and even my husband complains of sore, crampy hands after a few rounds of Time Pilot. In general the four of us agree that Wico for Coleco is Wico for the birds.

Product Review - Amiga Power-Stick (2-2)

by Jeff Silva

Here is another ColecoVision compatible Joystick/keypad that is supposed to be an improvement over the sometimes awkward Coleco controllers.

Like any other Joystick you just plug it in and you

are ready to blast away. The keypad is on the top with the Joystick nearest to you. The power-stick also has two sets of fire buttons. On the bottom of the keypad section are two little plastic push-in type buttons, which serve as the right fire buttons. On both sides of the control stick are two lever push-in type buttons which are the left fire buttons and allow for rapid fire.

While the lever type buttons work good for rapid fire on games like Zaxxon or Carnival, it is more

awkward in games like Buck Rogers and Cosmic Avenger, where both buttons are needed. This is very awkward on Buck Rogers, where the little white hard-to-push buttons are the fire buttons, while the easy buttons are your speed.

If you could switch these buttons it would help. The keypad works fine, and the control stick offers the smoothest most fluid and least strenuous control yet.

My other complaint is that these controllers are too small for adult hands. Yet this Joystick is an improvement in some respects.

If you are looking for the perfect ColecoVision controller, this isn't it. It has not been made yet. If the Power-Stik were bigger and its good fire buttons were for both left and right, I would recommend it. As it is, it's better than the Wico, but not better than Coleco's Super Action Controllers.

Product Review - How To Use The Coleco ADAM

by Kenneth Lee Petersen

Title: How To Use The Coleco ADAM

Author: Jerry Willis

Publisher: Dilithium Press, Beaverton, Oregon

Length: 121 pages

Price: Soft cover - \$5.95

This is the first book I have seen out on the Coleco Adam. It is well written in an easy-to-follow style. In fact, Jerry Willis now has a new fan. He has some sixteen books under his belt for Dilithium Press and a goodly number are in the "How to Use..." series including several on other home computers. With this experience, Willis has done an outstanding job in introducing the Adam to potential buyers or now users.

This book could well have been used as the introduction material that Coleco includes with the Adam. I have not looked at many computer manuals,



but the first one that Coleco supplied with the Adam must have been rushed into production. In contrast, this book is professionally laid out, closely proofed and edited, and logically put together.

Willis' book introduces you to the basic ADAM components and how they work together. It gives step-by-step instructions on how to set up and run the Adam, it tells how to load and save programs on the standard Adam cassette (data drive) system; and how to use the Adam printer. Although not designed for the advanced user, the introduction to SmartBASIC answered some questions I still had after reading through the revised SmartBasic manual supplied with my second ADAM.

Have you wondered how to access the hearts, music clefs, diamonds, etc. that occasionally appear when you type an illegal Basic Command? Willis tells you how. Willis covers some of the same problems mentioned in BYTE (April 84) but does so in a much more positive manner. The machine has had some start up problems, but despite these I am impressed with ADAM's potential. I am willing to get along with the current inconveniences (software shortage, SmartBASIC on a data pack that can easily be erased, dropped spaces in the screen display, etc.) because it fulfills some of my specific needs right now and has promise of being even more useful in the future. I find that Willis shares my opinion of the machine.

I was delighted with Willis' history of the ADAM's development because it encapsulized the events I had to glean from news accounts, industry watchers, the Wallstreet, and local newspapers.

Apparently the book was largely written in December 1983 so many of the facts are based on an early production model. However, Willis does an admirable job of forecasting further developments and his book should be up to date for sometime to come. I can highly recommend this book for anyone considering buying an ADAM because it even weight the pros and cons of the machine. It will also be a welcome addition to the library of ADAM owners who are trying to find out everything they can about the ADAM from any source.

Product Review - The First Book Of ADAM - Using And Programming The Coleco ADAM

by Harry L. McDonald

Author: Pamela J. Roth

Publisher: QUE Press

Length: 223 pages

Price: Soft cover - \$12.95

One of the first books on the Coleco ADAM computer, this book suffers from many shortcomings.

The author is not mentioned on the cover. She has also written a companion volume called -- The Second..." which covers the use of SmartWRITER.

The author evidently has an inside contact by way of a relative and she may have used a preproduction version of ADAM.

Many of the details about the computer are incorrect. There is a mention of not removing a tape while the red light on the memory console is "on." This type of mistake is easily detected by the reader and is of little or no consequence. Of particular interest is the mention of the many items of both hard and software available "now" for ADAM. The author has been fooled by the sweet tones of the Connecticut company.

The book is, however, a good introduction to programming in SmartBASIC. Some of the functions that are available are not discussed, while on the other hand, some that are not mentioned by Coleco are included.

No one yet, neither Coleco or the author, has mentioned the FLASH command that my version has. The book suffers from the lag time from authorship to print.

This book makes a very good replacement for the manuals supplied by Coleco, because it has appendices and an index. I would recommend it. It has programming examples that teach SmartBASIC features and functions. Some of it is quite a bit of fun. I would rate it a 7.

Product Review - Coleco ADAM User's Handbook by Harry L. McDonald

Author: WSI Staff

Publisher: Weber Systems Inc.

Price: \$9.95

This book is the best of the ADAM books that I have encountered so far. While it too has a few omissions (of Bload, Bsave and other less used commands), the User's Handbook is more complete than the other books. Its price makes it a good value. The back of the book has an Appendix that contains SmartBASIC function descriptions and examples. Anyone who has ever tried to locate something in the ADAM's own manual would appreciate the alphabetical listing in this book. It is quite thorough. This book is the one I use more than any other manual. SmartWRITE(ing) is completely demonstrated as is troubleshooting and equipment hook-up. I would rate this book an 8. I bought it to see what it contained. I have discovered that every book has a few new tidbits available nowhere else.

I was quite surprised to find an ADAM book at a small local bookstore. I usually have to travel 50 miles to find offbeat books.

Product Review - ADAM's Companion

by Richard Weiderman

Author: Ramsey J. Benson and Jack B. Rochester

Publisher: Avon, New York

Length: 394 pages

Price: \$9.95

This book could well be called a compendium of information on ADAM. The most tantalizing is about ADAM's future which details software innovations in the Family Learning Software series. Included here are programs like Smurf Paint 'N Play Theatre that allows users to create their own skits using Smurfs.

Also soon to be on line are programs for SmartWRITER, the heart of ADAM. In addition, ADAM will be polyglot, thanks to new language programs like SmartLOGO and SmartBASIC II, which supports sprite graphics. ADAM will communicate with the world through ADAMLink.

Benson and Rochester tell the reader everything about the ADAM. Each chapter discusses an aspect of ADAM in great detail to help the reader use the computer correctly to its fullest potential.

This potential is realized in part through several lists of addresses throughout the book for computer equipment. Further help comes from the excellent annotated bibliography at the end and throughout the text listing practical books and articles. In the latter category is one describing how to build a printer muffler to dampen the noise of the SmartWRITER.

The authors are practical throughout. The reader never suffers from tedious discussions of theory that can interest only an engineer or from inane exercises in BASIC. Instead, each chapter helps the reader use ADAM to perform tasks like writing a letter in six easy steps, turning ADAM into a pocket calculator, singing "Happy Birthday," drawing pictures and designing and playing BASIC games.

With the exception of letter writing, all the tasks just mentioned are used to introduce the reader to ADAM's potential as a computer in BASIC.

For the more advanced programmer there is a mailing list program that takes more than 30 hours to type in. The latter can be modified to fit the user's needs. Also of use to programmers are the encyclopedic appendixes A and B, "Description of ASCII Character Code" and "SmartBASIC Command and Function Summary" respectively. The latter alone at 103 pages is a treasure worth the price of the book.

Not so valuable is the book's tone. The authors attempt to write simply and clearly. They succeed most of the time. Computer experts rather than writers, Benson and Rochester attempt to explain the mysteries of hardware and software to the uninitiated.

They frequently lapse into condescension, giving their book a needless carping tone that grates on the reader's sensibilities.

Take, for example, this caution on page 26: "This is not to say it won't take you some time to become accustomed to ADAM, or that you way not spend a lot of time with your ADAM, for you probably will. In fact, computer addiction is a serious subject to psychologists and sociologists. Some people become so involved with their computers that they neglect their friends, families, and jobs. If you find anyone in your family displaying obsessive interest in ADAM, you may want to put limits on the amount of time you permit its use."

Written in cooperation with Coleco Industries, the book is a soft sell and a hype for Coleco products. In the chapter on games, for example, only Coleco games are reviewed. Completely ignored are the fine carts from Parker, Epyx and Sierra.

Despite its hype and condescension ADAM's COMPANION succeeds where similar books fail. Its completeness in covering all aspects of ADAM from word processing through introductory BASIC to advanced programming along with sound and graphics makes it a must for all ADAM users.

It is the most thorough and multi-dimensional book available for the ADAM. It is truly a companion, something as essential to ADAM as electricity, a helpmate meet for this computer.

Product Review - The First Book of

ADAM The Computer

by Joe Blenkle

Author: Arthur Dent

Publisher: TAB Books

Length: 202 pages

Price: \$9.95 softcover

After reading the 200 pages of text within the book, one has got to believe that Coleco's best move would be to buy the rights to the book outright and throw it in the box along with ADAM's own instruction manual.

The book is a pleasure to read, explaining all of ADAM's functions in detail and providing a number of test programs for the machine.

Divided into five chapters, the book covers ADAM completely, from the early days of Coleco right up to the present and future prospects for the machine. It covers complete details on how to set up your ADAM, as well as what each piece of ADAM does in relation to the rest of the computer.

Chapter three introduces you to ADAM's capabilities as a word processor and even gives you an opportunity to determine what "edition" of

SmartWRITER you have by using Control-R in the Electric Typewriter Mode.

In chapter four, programming the ADAM is covered with lots of test programs and suggestions for writing your own programs. This chapter also explains in detail all the SmartBASIC functions and is superior in this respect to Coleco's manual.

Of interest is the section on graphics, which explains how to draw pictures on the computer screen using the DRAW statement. It even gives you a graph to plot low resolution graphics on, and prompted me to go buy some graph paper to work out my own hi-res graph. With 256 columns and 192 rows you can create pictures on the screen.

The final chapter in the book talks of some of the planned software - for ADAM as well as what is already available.

This book is well worth the \$9.95 selling price. Many comparable books sell for twice that and, in fact, don't tell you anything you didn't already know. This book is a must addition for every ADAM owner's library.

The final paragraph of the book indicates more ADAM books are on the way, filled with programs for the ADAM. If they are as well written as this book they are definitely worth waiting for.

EDITOR'S NOTE: While I like this book I do have one major complaint. The Computer Book Club, Blue Ridge Summit, PA, originally advertised this book as including: "the chapter on advanced topics which includes using machine language programming, hardware interfacing, ADAM's memory map...the list goes on".

This book does not contain a memory map and makes only brief reference to machine language programming. These claims are repeated on the back of the softcover version of this book, even though no such chapter exists.

Page 106 in the text even makes reference to the chapter (chapter 5) on machine language programming. I am extremely disappointed in TAB Books and Arthur Dent for allowing a book to go to print while still containing such misleading and incorrect references.

I have always considered TAB to be reasonably consumer oriented, but now have serious doubts and will approach any of their claims with skepticism.

Glitches, Bugs, Errata, Etc.

- Line 111 in GREETING2 should read:
111 IF i=42 THEN GOTO 125

- There is no easy way to translate Apple programs that use pokes and peeks to run on the ADAM. As

detailed memory map information becomes available maybe someone would like to try to tackle this problem.

- Joseph Shepard went through seven ADAMs and still has problems with his printer in SmartWRITER. The printer tends to start the first line without moving over for the one inch margin and overstrikes the first line. This problem only occurs the first time printing is done after ADAM is turned on. After that it works fine. He also lost a file once by plugging in a joystick while saving a file. This is something that should never be done. When you save files, do nothing until the process is complete. This applies to ALL computers and not just ADAM.

- Joe Blenkle's ADAM will lock up in SmartWRITER if a tab is executed with the cursor to the right of a return symbol.

- Some printer tips from Coleco via Nick Mucciariello: if your print wheel sits in one place and turns, remove the print wheel. There are two sensors behind the wheel. Just blow them clean. Canned air is great for blasting dust out of areas like this.

- You should not use any of the SmartBASIC key words as variable names in a program. It is also wise to avoid using them to name programs and files.

- Many manuals can be ordered directly from Coleco. Write them for a price list.

- Another printer problem. The IC's (integrated circuits) chips can come loose causing printer failure. However, never poke around in the printer unless it is unplugged.

- In reference to our Table of Shape Table Values in the last issue, the effect you get from a particular value may depend in part on the direction last plotted. Experiment with values if you don't get what you want.

- Ken Petersen has had problems with his video breaking up if he closes the data drive too hard. Sounds like a loose IC or connection. If this problem develops your ADAM may need a quick trip to the repair shop.

- Any variable name followed by a % (a%) will be treated as an integer variable. Also our monitor program output had values preceded by a \$. The dollar sign is usually used to designate a

hexadecimal value (base sixteen). If you got into programming in assembly language you will have to get used to using hexadecimal values.

- We have a solution to the RND problem of generating predictable values elsewhere in this issue.
- Failure to CLOSE files on a data pack or DELETEing open files will result in "NO ROOM" errors. If this happens you will have to copy your remaining programs and files on to a new data pack and use INIT on the data pack with "NO ROOM" errors.

User's Bulletin Board

- Lane Moore is looking for a program that teaches typing skills. If you have one let us know and we will pass the info on to Lane.
- We have two people who are trying to find the Power Lords cartridge from Probe. If anyone can help contact:

Chris Braun
2 Pearl-St., Apt 102
Woburn, MA 01801

and

Steve Chamberlain
120 E. 4th St.
Bloomsburg, PA 17815

- Joe Blenkle thinks someone should develop an alternate power supply that will let you run your ADAM if the printer dies. How about it. Anyone out there an electronics wizard?
- Steve Orr asks why we don't print our subscribers addresses. Well Steve, not everyone out there likes to get as much mail as I do. If anyone wants to have their address published. we will put it in this column. Better yet if you want to start a local user's group we will print the info in our user's group column.
- Mike Elsila has asked about back issues. Right now we are out of the first issue. If we decide to reprint we will publish a rate schedule in a later issue. If any current subscribers are interested let us know. The more we print the cheaper it will be.
- Joe Blenkle, 6229 Channing Drive, North Highlands, CA 95660, has volunteered to compile a high score column for Coledo/Adam compatible

games. We are willing to give this a try. If you have a really great score on a game, send it to Joe along with the game level and variation. Pictures are not necessary. We will trust everyone to be honest.

- Philip Teders wants to know if anyone knows of an adapter that will allow you to use other roller-controllers (trac-ball type) with the Adam/Colecovision. Non-Coleco controllers would have to have an external power source that would be compatible.

Public Domain Software - ECN Program Library

The first Program Library data pack is now complete. We apologize for the delay. We have delayed a general announcement because of problems in maintaining an adequate inventory of data packs.

For those of you who order our data packs we hope you will be patient. We are making every effort to maintain an adequate inventory but from time to time, because of shipping delays, we may run short causing delays of two weeks or more. An order form is included as part of this issue of ECN.

The title for this column is being changed to ECN Program Library. In order to prevent unscrupulous persons from duplicating our data packs and selling our programs, we have been forced to copyright them. We are not trying to discourage the distribution of this software. You may copy it and give it away, but you cannot charge for copying it.

From my own experience I have seen companies take a public domain program and offer it for sale for as much as \$30.00. We also ask that if you modify the programs that you include the original author's name in the program and indicate that it is a modification.

We are experiencing another problem. Some of you have sent us programs from other publications. We cannot use these programs. By virtue of their being printed in a copyrighted publication, the programs are also copyrighted.

Others have offered to send us copies of copyrighted programs. We will not accept any such copies. This constitutes piracy and is illegal. If someone wants to loan us an original program for evaluation and subsequent return that is fine.

Normally we would prefer to purchase all software we evaluate, except when a company sees fit to provide us with a review copy. Start writing some programs and if you are interested in sharing them, send the program on a data pack. We will either present it in an article or add it to the program library if you wish.

Data packs are returned within two days of receipt and usually are in the mail by the next day after receipt.

User Group News

We are glad to see the list of ADAM user groups growing. On the other hand we really would like to see more local groups develop. There is a function that large national groups can perform. In many cases you will find them to be quite helpful. We do urge that before you join a national group that you find out what the group has to offer before you pay your membership fee. In addition if you should have a bad experience with a group pass it on to us and we will let everyone else know.

Again I would like to urge those of you who have the time to start a group. There are many of you out there who live in the same cities. A user group can really make the process of learning about computers enjoyable.

Al Gerson has been in touch with me about the Adam User's Group. Al started the national Kaypro User's Group and is well experienced in this area. His group has reached an agreement with Coleco to serve as a beta test site. This means that Coleco will supply them with new products for testing before final release.

In addition Coleco will be supplying information and articles for the groups newsletter. Their first newsletter should be out by October. They plan to establish a public domain library for members and will also provide support to local user groups. This will include a newsletter specifically for such groups in addition to the one for members. Anyone interested in starting a local group should contact Al at the address below.

If you are a British subscriber you will find a group listed below. They support a variety of computers and are planning on writing a version of Forth for the Adam.

Those of you who have groups started write us and let us know what you have been doing. We will continue to provide a free listing of such groups.

LOCAL GROUPS

Norman Castro
809 West 33rd Ave.
Bellevue, NE 68005
(402) 291-4405

Harry L. McDonald
1222 Division St.
Charleston, IL 61920

Robert R. Marentes
9425 N. 38th Ave.
Phoenix, AZ 85021

Metro Adam User's Group
414 W. 149th St.
New York, NY
10031
(212) 208-0645
(9am-5pm M-F)

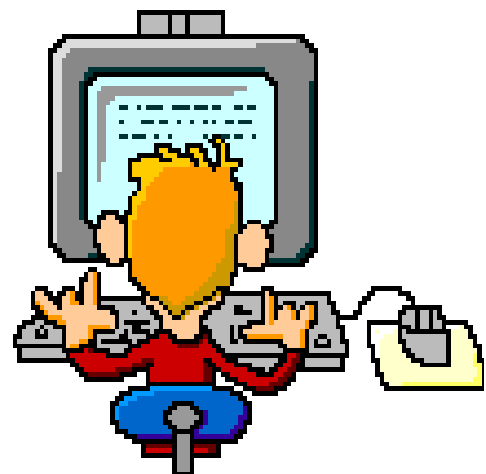
NATIONAL GROUPS

Taylor Barcroft
Adam User's of America
P.O. Box 6307
Huntington Beach, CA 92615
(714) 841-1771

Adam User's Group
P.O. Box P
Lynbrook, NY 11563
(516) 746-0066

Raymond So
71-11 Ingram Street
Forest Hills, NY 11375

Towcester Micro User's
P.O. Box 9
Towcester, Northhamptonshire
England NN12 70G



ADAM

Dear ADAM Owner,
 I'm one of the first West Coast people to have purchased our home computer last Fall. At the time, I was completing my M.A. Communications Management at USC in LA. In May, I moved further south to Orange County where computers per household rank among the most in the entire world!

I'm a long time observer of the home computer's evolution and am already looking at tomorrow. I think you'll want to keep in touch with as many other users as possible so you can really grow and learn from one another.

As a Charter Member you'll receive the official newsletter monthly, have access to the AUA Computer Bulletin Board, and save more in discounts for software, peripherals, and accessories than the cost of a full year's membership. As a Founding Member you'll also receive a special list of other members in your area to help you find each other and start local users' groups.

I encourage you to participate by sending in monthly notes, news, freeware lists, and hot discoveries (both good and bad) so we can pass them on to the rest of the club. Ask questions too. Welcome to the future of home computing now!

Sincerely yours,



Taylor Barcroft
 Founder/Publisher

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