

# ANIGN

ISSUE 1.6  
SEPTEMBER 1985

## The ANY NEWS IS GOOD NEWS Newsletter

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Greetings fellow ADAMites!

Once again, we find ourselves way behind in our publishing schedule, but we have so much new information to give you, the wait will be worth it!. As far as Coleco is concerned, the final days of ADAM are nearing. This Christmas, I suspect, will officially be ADAM's last. Unofficially, this is the start of ADAM's Renaissance, as we see more new Hardware and Software becoming available than we have ever had!

Much has been said about a Mr. Buck Rogers in Lander, Wyoming. This man has ambitious plans for ADAM. Slated for delivery soon are yet another RS-232C interface, a 200+K memory board, and an 80-column card. The Rs-232 interface as mentioned above will be a 'transparent' one in that no additional software will be required to operate it. What could you do with 200+K of memory when Coleco's 64K ramdisk wont work with all software? Rogers' memory boards will be of the DMA or Direct Memory Access type, those found in computers such as Commodore's new Amiga and the IBM PC. Thus, they will be ideal for use in his Apple and IBM emulators scheduled to come out toward the beginning of 1986. And to top it all off, he's also working on an RGB card for ADAM's Christmas (or Chanukkah, which ever you prefer). Much more to come on this very interesting man.

On another front: We are earnestly looking into software licensing agreements with other software companies. Our first project comes to us from Sunrise Software. We have been negotiating for the right to produce two of their previously unreleased titles, Number Bumper and Wrath of Quintana Roo. We are also talking about rereleasing the titles they have already produced. We are looking for partners on these deals, so if you or anybody you know would like to make some money, let us know.

We will be expanding our CP/M library very soon with the entire public domain libraries of CP/MUG and SIG/M. They will be available for sale and rental. Our first Group Library volumes are now available. Volume One contains all the ADAM programs published in Family Computing through their first two years ending August, 1985. Volume Two contains various CP/M macro and disassembler programs. Volume Three is purely BASIC utility-type programs. The exact contents of each of these volumes is listed towards the end of the newsletter.

We continue to improve our 'standard of excellence' with this, our sixth issue. We hope to begin publishing monthly again very soon. Please enjoy yourself with all the information we present to you this month.

Don Reese

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### WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE...

Letter from the Editor.....1	A Rebuttal to Darrel Sage.....6-7
Review: SoftPack 1.....2	Coleco Stock Watch.....7
Home-Brew 64K RAMDisk.....2-3	First Look: Business Pack 1.....8
Pictures: ADAMLink 300/1200.....4	Library Volume Listings.....8
Pictures: ADAM 64K Expander.....5	Retrospective.....9

SoftPack 1 is the first release from Ed Jenkins and E & T Software. It includes four BASIC programs that all use the same data base you create using the programs. Included are an excellent checkbook program called SoftCheck, a checkbook reconciler, a checkbook totalizer, and SoftMailer 1. To start using the programs, you must begin with SoftCheck. In this program you enter the data from your checkbook and/or statements. Each file may contain around 150 records, meaning recorded transactions. While entering the information, the program keeps track of the account balance as you go. It allows you to describe in your own terms what each item was for. It keeps track of bank charges and ATM withdrawals. It also allows you to flag items for income tax purposes. The three checkbook programs as mentioned are a complete package that is absolutely the best such program on the market for ADAM. Also included in the SoftPack 1 package is SoftMailer, a complete mailing label printing facility. You imbed your address, in the program using DATA statements, then save the modified form under a new name. Using the NEW program, you can print mailing labels, post cards, envelopes or what have you, with or without your return address. You can rig your paper ( or envelopes or labels ) on your tractor-feeder and walk away. This also has to be the best program of this type available.

All the programs in this package use color effectively, making for a real nice-looking program. In addition they all work well, having been debugged thoroughly. The author continues to support this program and updates are available from this group for shipping cost. My suggestion is to try this set of programs. Other programs of this type have been boring and difficult to use, but this one is very different. And at the special price of \$14.95 (for a short time only), you can't go wrong.

SoftPack 1 now available in an Eve SP-1 compatible version.

## BASIC Color Tips:

### High-Resolution...

To change screen color:  
POKE 25431,x  
background color:  
POKE 25471,x  
foreground color:  
POKE 25568,x

### Low-Resolution...

To change screen color:  
POKE 18711,x  
background color:  
POKE 18607,x  
foreground color:  
POKE 18633,x

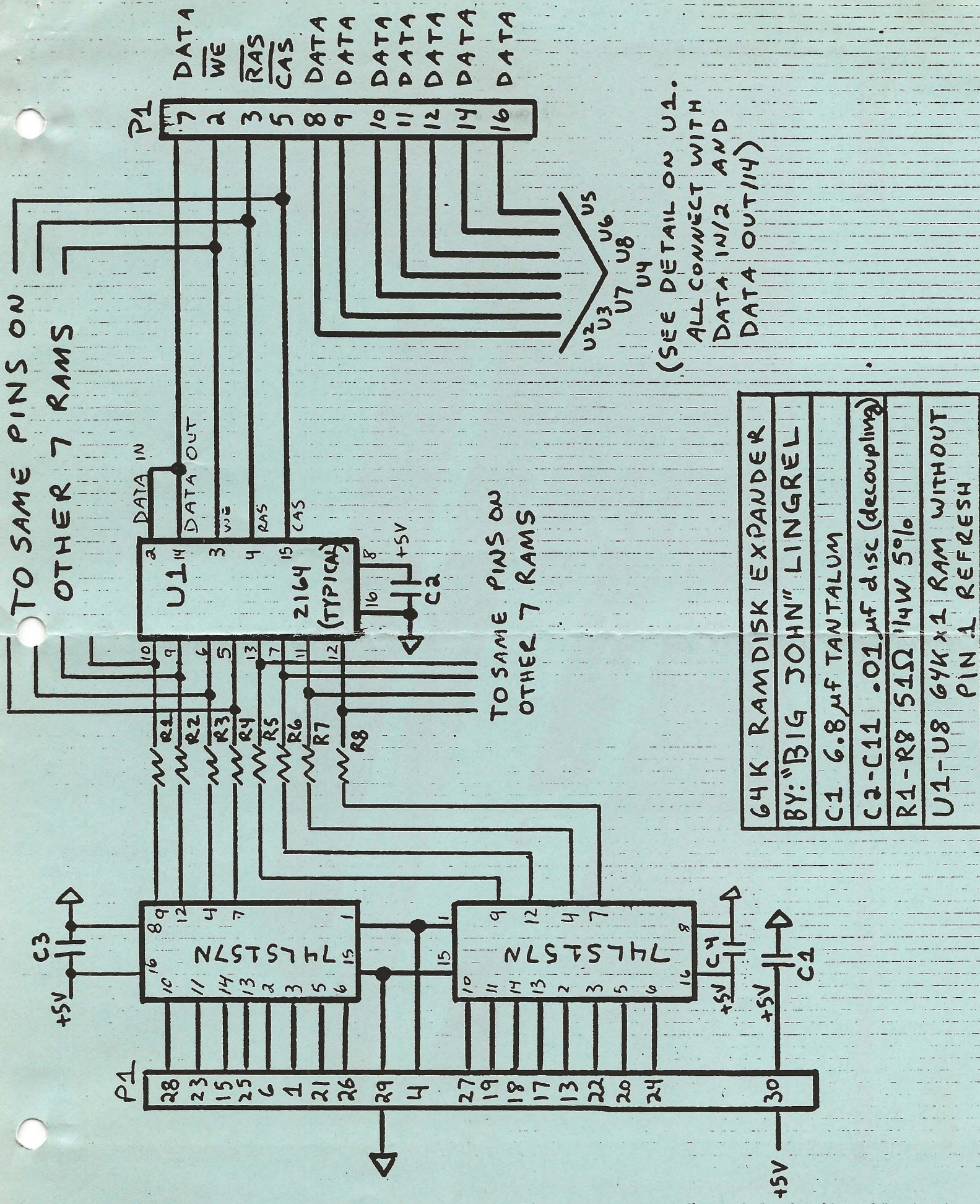
Note: In lo-res mode the foreground color is drawn in vertical lines which allow viewing of the background color through them. To get a solid foreground color, the numbers at 18607 and 18633 must match.

Contributed by Gregg Noblett

## Home-Brew 64K RAMDisk

The biggest obstacle in making the 64K RAMDisk is how to connect it to ADAM's expansion slot #3. We have used a cut-off edge-card connector salvaged from a ColecoVision cartridge which has all thirty pins etched, such as the Spectravideo line of games. You can either connect this plug with ribbon cable, or you can use it as an example to etch your own pc board. Please note that the 2164 RAM's have power on pin 8 and ground on pin 16, as opposed to the 74LS154's which have power on pin 16, and ground on pin 8. Pin 30 of the RAMDisk should be towards the back of your ADAM.

This schematic contributed by Big John Lingrel, of Akron, Ohio. No warranty, express or implied, is given the user by Mr. Lingrel or by ADAMNet for using this drawing.



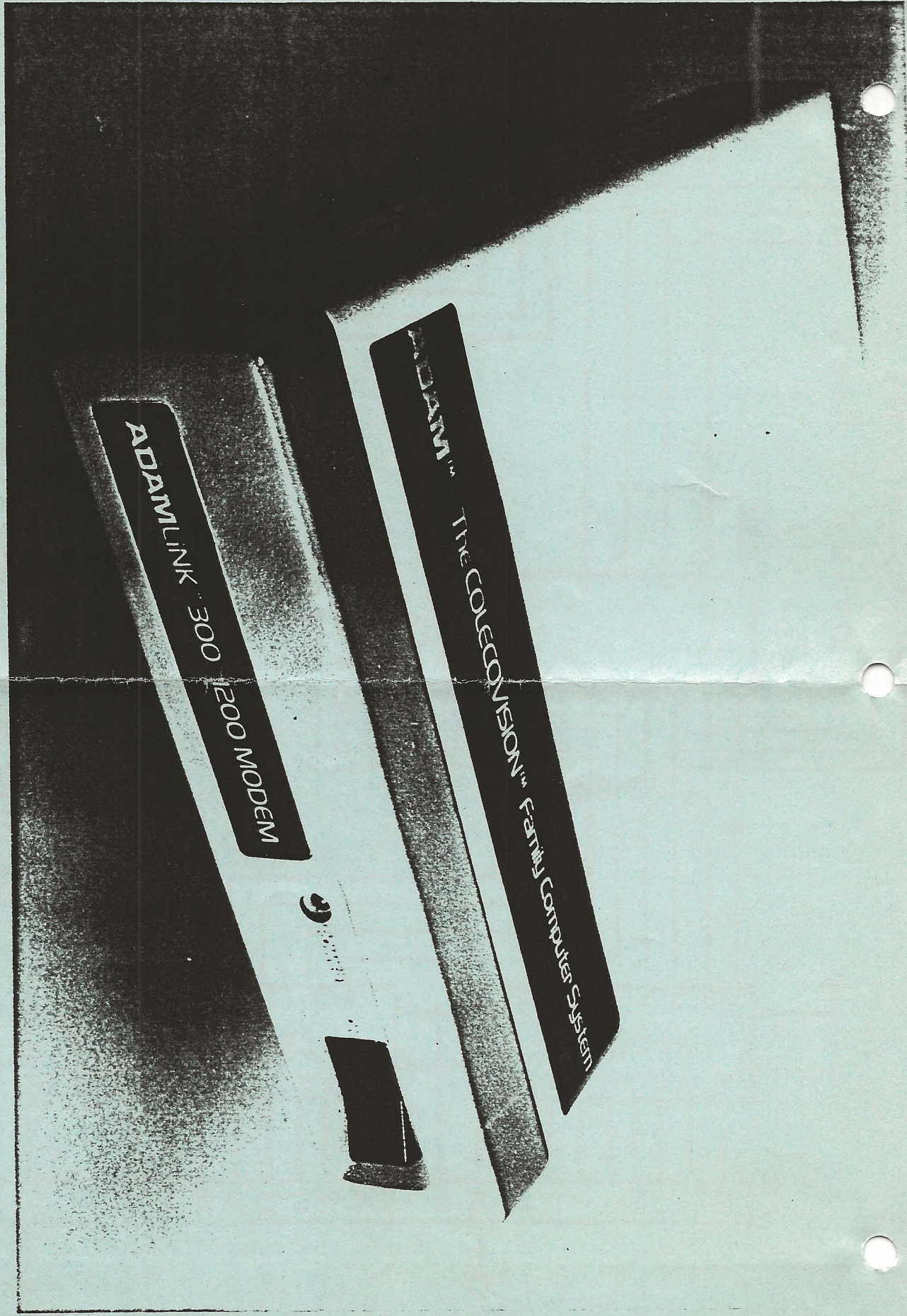
TO SAME PINS ON  
OTHER 7 RAMS

TO SAME PINS ON  
OTHER 7 RAMS

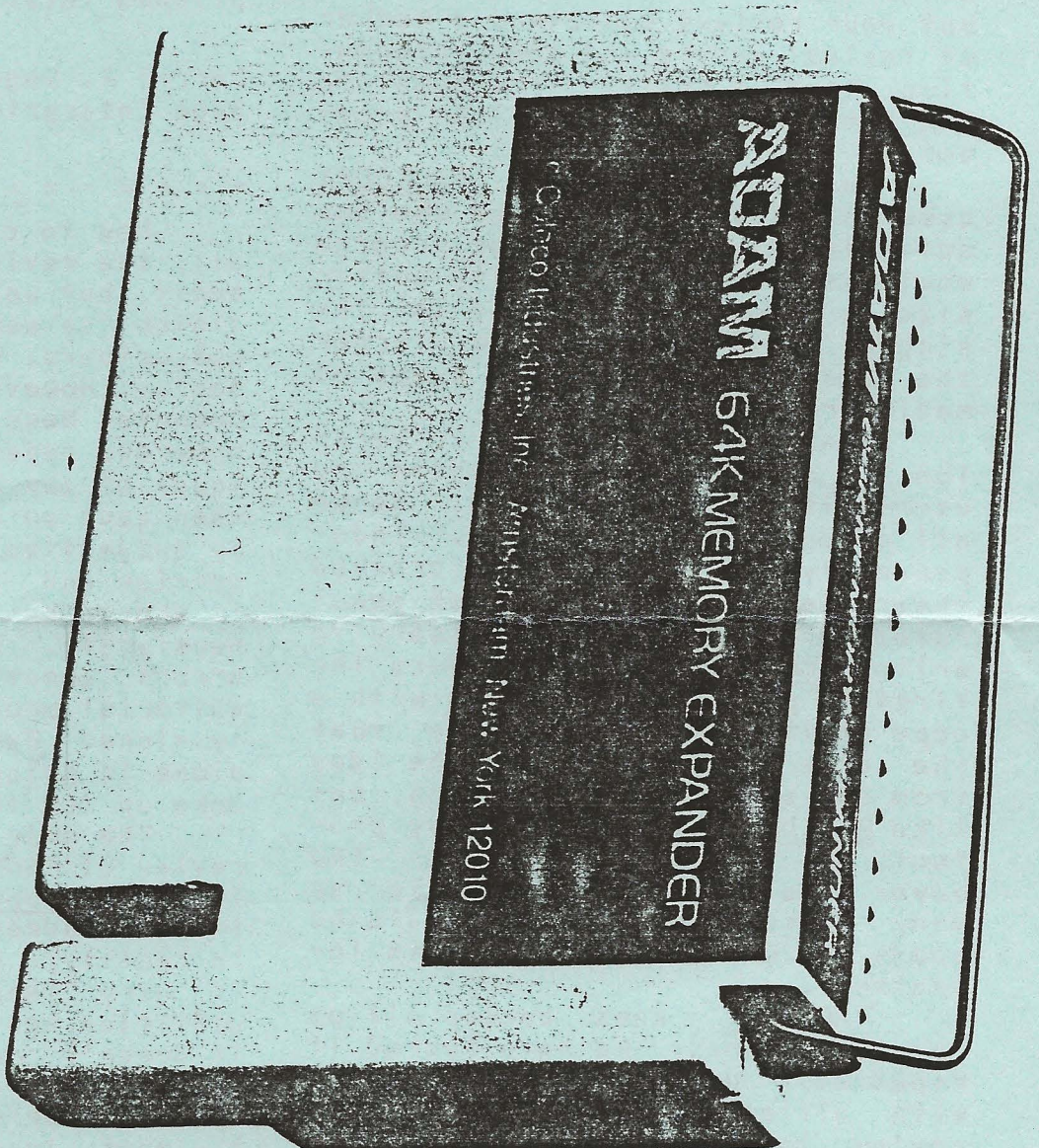
(SEE DETAIL ON U1.  
ALL CONNECT WITH  
DATA IN/2 AND  
DATA OUT/14)

64K RAMDISK EXPANDER
BY: "BIG JOHN" LINGREL
C1 6.8µf TANTALUM
C2-C11 .01µf disc (decoupling)
R1-R8 51Ω 1/4W 5%
U1-U8 64Kx1 RAM WITHOUT PIN 1 REFRESH

**COLECO**



7818 ADAM LINK™ 1200 DIRECT CONNECT MODEM



2502 ADAM™ 64K MEMORY EXPANDER



The following is a letter from the well-known Darrel Sage, author of Packcopy and Convert.

Dear Mr. Reese:

I was somewhat disappointed by your "review" of the various copy utilities. I don't mind criticism, but your reviews contained a number of factual errors and some information that is really irrelevant to the functioning of any of the products.

In the first place, PACKCOPY uses a 16K buffer. Anyone who has actually run and tested our program would know that. In reality buffer size is important primarily in the single drive copies. The larger the buffer size, the fewer swaps of media are required.

None of the features in version 1.1 utilized in any fashion any user-written modifications. We do all of our own programming. Independently of Coleco we cracked their operating system, which generated the information necessary to write PACKCOPY. Since we were the first to provide ADAM owners with a copy utility, I must assume that the other companies got the idea from our efforts. In addition, unlike BACKUP+, we do not copy protect any of our software. The buyer should be able to make as many backup copies as he feels he needs in order to protect his investment.

PACKCOPY does backup all of the Super Games. We have tested it repeatedly using different ADAMs with different data drives. Your review indicates that our program does not efficiently copy Super Games. The issue is one of reliability. Version 1.1 included enhancements to specifically increase the reliability of the copy process.

Both PACKCOPY and Uncle Ernie's Toolkit use light blue backgrounds with white lettering, although I can't imagine how this could be that important to a pro-

gram's usefulness.

A product review should be thorough and accurate as well as fair. Beyond that a review should be critical and point out a particular product's shortcomings as well as its advantages. I simply do not feel that your reviews have accomplished this.

Darrel R. Sage, President  
Sage Enterprises

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Now to clear the air. First of all, the review was done hastily, I admit, but was done so in order to finish the newsletter and get it to subscribers. For that, we must apologize. However, unlike 'Expandable Computer News', we don't believe in numerous repetitive personal critiques of any ADAM product, more so when each so-called review is hardly subjective. Our reviews are kept concise and to the point, much as it should be in a true User Group newsletter. While at times factual errors sometimes creep into the editorial process, we are not nearly alone. But I do believe we are alone in going to these lengths to make up for that.

The only error contained our review of PACKCOPY was stating that it had an approximately 8K buffer. It does indeed have a 16K buffer. In reality, Mr. Sage, buffer size is very important in judging copy utilities against each other, and it doesn't matter whether your using a single drive or fifteen, either. Buffer size is perhaps one of the most important factors because of its relation to the speed of the utility in copying your source media. It is true that in single drive copying the problem with buffer size is most evident.

When we said that some of the features of PACKCOPY version 1.1 got their idea from some user-written modifications, we meant that some users had incorporated some of these improvements into their own

copies of version 1.0, well before the 1.1 revision was released. And we find it hard to believe that some of these ideas didn't reach you by way of users letters or phone calls to you about possible improvements. I'm sure you do your own programming Darrel, and you are quite good at it. I never implied or meant to imply that you are any code pirate. But look at any type of program ever made, and you'll see parts of someone else's idea in it. As far as the other companies stealing your idea of a copy utility, I'm surprised you would stoop as low as to suggest they would do so. I seem to recall that PROCOPY was announced about a month before PACKCOPY, and that PACKCOPY and Uncle Ernie's Toolkit came out at almost the exact time, suggesting they were quite independent projects. In conversations as early as last November, Steve Simpson at Futurevision and I discussed several programs, including a cart copier that was working then! There are also ways to copy ANY of the copy utilities now on the market.

NONE of the copy programs will copy Super Games in toto. Not PACKCOPY or anyone else's. The mere fact that PACKCOPY has a special provision to allow the user to copy most of the Super Game data pack is not enough. All of the copy utilities we have tested will backup Super Games TO A POINT. None of them do it efficiently. All of them copy reliably, but not a darn one of them can copy a Super Game where it will operate as it should. In our opinion, a special Super Game copy utility should be written to enable the user to satisfactorily migrate his programs to tape or disk, and have them run as well as originals.

We also never stated that your PACKCOPY did not have a light blue background. We neglected to specify how PACKCOPY looked. What we did say was that Uncle Ernie's Toolkit looked much nicer due to the extensive use of a light blue background with white lettering. Much time and effort was spent by Ernie Hanks to develop a professional-looking program that the purchaser would enjoy using. Appearance means a great deal to the novice computer owner.

If programmers would spend more time improving the appearance of their program, consumers would not spend as much time complaining they were ripped-off. Let's face it, Mr. Sage, \$41.50 is ridiculous in comparison to the \$9.95 PROCOPY, when they are as alike in function, and so different in appearance (PROCOPY has a much neater organization AND appearance, in the opinion of the editor).

We agree that a product review should be thorough and accurate. Fairness is a relative term, since more often than not we purchase rather than receive gratis our reviewed products (or reviews). We try to point out the advantages and shortcomings of each product subjectively, with no consideration as to how we obtained it. We look at ourselves as more of a Consumer's Union type of establishment in contrast to Sage Enterprise's Expandable Computer News. We feel only ADAMNet achieves this. By the way, ADAMNet and REE deal ONLY with the Coleco ADAM computer, unlike M. W. Ruth Company, unlike Video Take-Out and unlike Sage Enterprises.

Donald Reese, Editor

#### COLECO STOCK...

The price of Coleco common jumped over three dollars higher over the October 11th weekend. Analysts contribute the rise to a short-term buy recommendation by a Donaldson Lufkin & Jenrette associate. Traders buying the stock to cover short positions also may have accounted for the increase in price.

FOR SALE: IBM PCjr, 512K, 2 Disk drives, DOS 2.1, BASIC, IBM RGB Monitor, 2 Joysticks, Mouse Systems mouse, PC Keyboard and adapter. Software includes King's Quest I and II, and games galore! Asking \$1650. Gary, (501)443-2543

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## Volume One:

Decision Maker  
 Crossing Paths  
 Personal Valentine  
 Ski Trek  
 True Love  
 Kids Allowance Planner  
 Mystery Manor  
 Egg Hunt  
 Top Secret  
 Phone Cost Monitor  
 Mothers Day Card  
 Mystery Gadget  
 Disk Label Maker  
 Fathers Day Card  
 Recipe for Disaster  
 Liberty Bell  
 Portrait  
 Ice Cream Cone  
 Renegade Robot  
 Brain Terrain  
 Hangman  
 Dial-A-Word  
 Falling Again  
 Mummy Maneuvers  
 The Black Mask

## Volume Two:

Name That Monster  
 Holiday Update  
 Cornucopia  
 The Missing Lapis Lazuli  
 Santa Claus  
 New Years Eve  
 By Invitation Only  
 Fireplace  
 Perpetual Calendar  
 Supermarket Sweethearts  
 Tune Generator  
 Computer Valentine  
 A Musical Departure  
 3-D Surface Plotter  
 Zodiac  
 Crossed Words  
 Optical Illusion  
 Kite  
 Banner  
 Backward Speller  
 Magical Messages  
 Patterns  
 Scrambled Eggs  
 Age Splitter  
 Renegade Robot II

This is the latest program package from E & T Software. It includes three BASIC programs, titled SoftFiler, SoftStock, and SoftMailer II. As in SoftPack 1, the instructions are included on the data pack or disk for the user to print out himself or review electronically. This is a total Inventory Control System for a small business or a large household. The user can manipulate up to 200 records in each file, with the number of files being limited only by tape or disk space. You can print out the entire inventory or just those items it's time to reorder. SoftFiler can be used much as SmartFiler, in that you can construct data bases to be able to search on any of the fields such as Bobs, area codes, or zips. Of course, all Softfiler records are compatible with the all-new SoftMailer II. SoftMailer works much like the original, only better. Much like similar programs, you can print your records in almost any format you can think of. It also has a screen/printer toggle. A new feature is the addition of the capability to start from any record number by entering the number with an asterick. SoftStock is one of the most interesting programs we've seen thus far. You can create up to 200 records per file consisting of stock number, vendor, product name, quantity on hand, reorder point, quantity reordered, total sold, cost, and retail price. With the reorder point filled in, the computer will tell you when its time to reorder that particular product. REE will soon be converting to use this program. This is a must-have for all small-businesses, especially ADAM-related businesses, such as user groups and retailers. To be available soon from REE.

Due to space limitations, the directory listings for the next two volumes will be found in issue 7.



# Retrospective

In last month's editorial, we explored the realm of emulation, and the possibility of expanding the ADAM System to increase the amount of software available to us, and hence, breathe a little longer life into our orphan.

We here at ADAMNet have explored it further. The easy way to give an MSX capability to ADAM would be to rewrite the operating system controlling ADAM. It is our idea that no additional hardware would be required, other than an interface to connect external MSX peripherals. Why not the external emulator? It's not needed. ADAM and the group of MSX computers are so close in design and specifications, a program could actually be written to handle the whole works. Think of this scenario: you go to any computer store in town and purchase an MSX program, go home, slip the MSX DOS disk into your ADAM ADAM disk drive, and boot the program. Maybe it would require a few slight modifications to allow for ADAM's screen display, but then you can imagine the possibilities!

Now, very few computer stores handle MSX software, but then the MSX companies haven't yet hit the U.S. in force, other than the Spectravideo models 328 and Express and only those in limited quantities. But this scenario very well could happen, and soon.

As mentioned in the last editorial, the MSX group companies are finishing up the latest in MSX technology in the form of 64K machines designed especially for the United States computer market, and unofficially dubbed 'MSX II'. They've added many new features and have improved upon others. MSX is coming. Rumors persist that it won't happen very soon, but it will become a major factor in America's computer industry. We feel it may be shortly after the next Winter Consumer Electronics Show.

Darrel Sage, of Packcopy fame, has developed a program to 'read' three other computer system's CP/M formats. That is a technological wonder of it's own. We had never considered the possibility of reprogramming ADAM's disk drive.

Now that the secrets ADAM holds deep inside are coming out with the progress of hackers, soon there will be no limit to what we can achieve. We need to keep the ball rolling along these lines and hope for a bright person out there goes to work on such an MSX DOS program for our little orphan. This, and CP/M, will save the best damn computer on the market.

Have you written MicroSoft and the MSX companies yet? If not, be looking for our next issue, when we'll have some addresses for you.

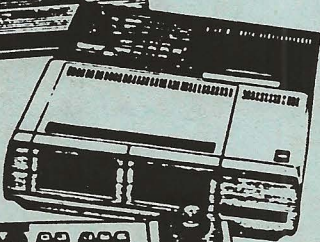
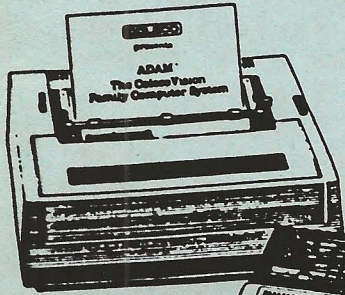
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# GREETINGS

# FROM

# ADAMNet



# ADAM™

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