



SIERRA

NEWS

MAGAZINE



INSIDE

ROBERTA WILLIAMS

The storyteller
who started it all

A Preview of
SIERRA'S
Newest
Games

PRODIGY
Available free
with specially
marked
SIERRA
Games

THE SIERRA NEWS MAGAZINE

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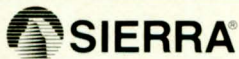
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Roberta Williams

The Storyteller Who Started It All

by Nancy Smithe

Iwish it were possible to translate Roberta Williams' vocal delivery into print, because she peppers her speech with the histrionics of a born storyteller. Whether she is letting her voice drip with suspense, groaning over lack of time, digging into a serious topic, chuckling at a little joke in her game, or laughing outright, she is actively involved in the answer. She has given enough interviews to show signs of being bored with yet another one, but such is not the case. Monotonous is not a word to associate with Roberta Williams' conversational style. If you have the imagination to add some "audio/visual" as you read this interview, visualize her as a petite woman—her teenage son is taller than she is—with easy laughter that suggests habitual use; she speaks rapidly, her words almost tumble over one another, and you must be sure to "hear" her answers delivered with a storyteller's flair.

Your current project—*The Colonel's Bequest*—is a murder mystery. Why did you pick a mystery story line?

I thought it was time. Not just our company, but other companies in our industry are concentrating so much on fantasy stories, fairy tales, dungeons and dragons. Games now are very fantasy oriented, even a lot of the science fiction. There have been a few detective stories here and there. This murder mystery is not a detective story, this is more a suspense story, more in tune with Agatha Christie or even a little bit of Alfred Hitchcock. Nobody has something like this. I always like to look and see what people aren't doing, what needs to be done to be different, unique, plus areas that people obviously have an interest in, and murder mysteries, in my opinion, are very popular. If you go into a book store, you see more mystery books on a shelf than you do science fiction.

Tell me more about *The Colonel's Bequest*.

It is set in 1925, around New Orleans, Louisiana, on an island in the bayou—an isolated island. You are a heroine, Laura Bow, and your father is a detective from New Orleans, so you have been familiar with detecting (kind of like Nancy Drew's father who is a prominent attorney). You have a friend, Lillian, who invited you to spend the weekend at her rich uncle's place



for a family reunion. You accept the invitation and go, and we know that you are just along for the weekend, but are a stranger to these people and the place. You get there and Lillian's uncle is the Colonel—Colonel Henry Dijon. (She chuckled here, then explained herself.) Do you get it? That is a little joke. Remember Colonel Mustard? Well, dijon is a mustard, so ours is Colonel Dijon. And Laura Bow is a play on Clara Bow.

The Colonel tells all the family assembled that his will leaves his wealth to all of them divided equally, and that if anyone of them dies first, that person's share goes into the pot and will be divided among the survivors. So that is how it starts out.

Different individuals start dying, and you start finding bodies, not necessarily in plain sight. Some are hidden, like in a closet. You open a closet and there is a body

hanging there on the rod. Or there is a Murphy bed in the wall, and you pull it down and find a body in it. So one by one the people start dying and you don't know why or who is doing it. The job of the player is to find the clues left behind.

The most interesting part of this game is the characters themselves. We really have a lot of character development. They have names and personalities, and there is a lot of dialogue. You can ask them questions or tell them things, you can give them things, and you can show them things. So there is a lot of interaction. They will tell you things depending on what you ask. You can learn more about the relationships between them and try to figure out who is doing what. If you ask good questions you get good clues, and very seldom any repeat messages. I tried to make the dialogue puzzling, so that you will be suspicious of more than one individual. As you get further into the game, I start narrowing the field of murder suspects. (She pauses a moment, then chuckles before adding another observation.) Plus there aren't very many people left!

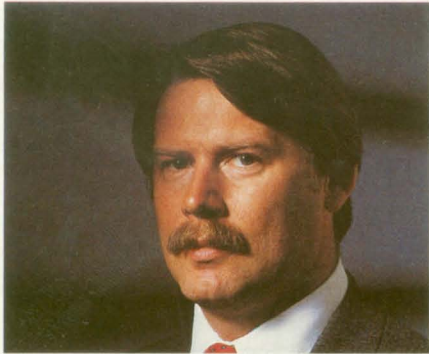
Colonel's Bequest is more like a story than a quest, you want to get to the end, and find out the truth.

What scares me is that I'm not really a mystery reader. I'm not. I like to read more of the true story murders. So I'm afraid the real mystery buffs out there might play the game and wonder who I think I am. But right now I'm the only one we've got who is trying to tackle it. I'm really trying, but I'm not a murder mystery expert (she took on a dramatic tone here) so Who Knows How it is going to be accepted. (She listened to her words, then laughed and went on dramatically.) Only The Shadow Knows.

Do you find it difficult to transfer your vision to the computer screen with so many technical experts involved in

Continued on page 35

President's Corner



Multimedia - An Advance Look

by Ken Williams

In many recent magazine and newspaper articles, a new word has begun to appear, *Multimedia*. Although, in the past this word has been used to apply to any form of presentation which uses multiple media, such as a slide show with accompanying music, it seems to have taken on a new meaning within consumer electronics.

The term *Multimedia*, as it is now being used, means a computer attached to a Compact Disc player. Philips Corporation, the company that brought us the Compact Disc for music listening, will introduce a new electronic device that represents a major milestone for the personal consumer electronics industry next year. This device, called Compact Disc Interactive (CDI), will be marketed as a high-end stereo component with video capabilities; but, it is actually a very powerful microcomputer. It will most likely be just the first of many Multimedia computers to be introduced over the next 18 months.

CDI players will play all your favorite stereo CDs; however, there is much more inside of a CDI player than just a CD player. Hidden away in there is the same powerful 32 bit processor that drives the Macintosh computer, and a full megabyte

of RAM. Attached to the CDI player will be something equivalent to a mouse, except that it works by infrared remote control.

Does this mean that a CDI player, theoretically, has the same computational abilities as a Macintosh? Well, yes and no... First I'll discuss its limitations and then I'll cover its tremendous advantages.

Computers have two important things a CDI player doesn't. Foremost is a keyboard. Philips says that keyboards will be available for a slight extra charge and that a mouse-based, on-screen keyboard will always be available. Obviously, this is not a machine which will see its primary usage as a word processor or for balancing checkbooks. Secondly, CDI players only READ compact discs. They don't have a floppy disk drive, much less a hard disk. If you wanted to keep a mailing list of the six kids in your child's Cub Scout troop, you wouldn't be able to do it. CDI players are *read* only, they have no ability to remember much of anything once you turn them off.

Now for the good news. We are all used to thinking of Compact Discs (CDs) as being a great replacement for cassette tapes or records. Start thinking of them as someday replacing the floppy disk. CDs are tough, accurate and reliable. Even better yet, they hold a remarkable amount of information. One CD holds the same amount of data as 1,500 floppy disks—or over 30 full hard disks! And, even your five-year-old will have to get up especially early to figure out how to destroy one.

You may have noticed a pattern emerging with your Sierra products. *King's Quest I* occupied only one diskette. *King's Quest II* grew to three diskettes. *King's Quest IV* originally shipped with nine diskettes, but was later reduced to only eight diskettes through several layers of very complex compression algorithms. Why have our games been getting so much bigger when they seem to take

just about the same amount of time to play, you might wonder. The answer is that graphics and sound are extremely data intensive. The musical score alone in *King's Quest IV* fills an entire floppy disk. My guess is that just the animation cels used for the character, Rosella, fill another entire disk. *King's Quest I*, on the other hand, had virtually no music and King Graham's animation was very jerky and limited.

At Sierra, our goal is to someday fulfill our dream of making true interactive films. With each game we do, we attempt to come closer to this goal. That's why our games are getting bigger. Of course, as we improve our animation and add more music, there goes another disk in the box.

To some extent, we really can't do a whole lot to make our games more film-like without some major technical advance in the capacity of the media we ship our products on. For those of you without hard disks, having a game span multiple disks can detract from your enjoyment—what with having to swap disks in the middle of play. Our accountants frown when they watch us using shoe horns to pack disks into boxes. Everyone, please don't let them know how many disks are involved when you start buying your *King's Quest V*s next Christmas. I want to keep it our little secret for as long as I possibly can.

And, when I say that someday we want to make *interactive films*, I mean it! Don't be surprised if someday Hollywood's top actors are performing in Sierra products.

CDI brings us very close to having the perfect platform for producing interactive films. We really only need to be able to do two things we can't do now: speech and television-quality graphics. Both of these are currently possible and you may have heard or seen these things already in current computer products. However, they use so much disk space that their use in a product of the breadth of Sierra's just isn't practical. In fact, did you know that just four-and-a-half seconds of CD quality speech would fit on a diskette; or that just one television quality picture would fill a diskette?

At Philips, I was fortunate enough to be given a brief glimpse of what the future will look like. I watched a Philips repre-

Continued on page 30

Sierra's Newest Games

by Bridget McKenna

This year's crop of Sierra games is the biggest, best and most varied yet. Whether your taste runs to a Submarine voyage into a disturbing future, a new adventure with *Leisure Suit Larry*, or something in between, you'll find something to capture your interest in these new offerings: First on the list of new products is this exciting murder mystery from Roberta Williams.

Computer adventure game players the world over know Roberta Williams as the designer of the bestselling *King's Quest* series, but five years before the first *King's Quest* game was published, Roberta Williams was already making computer game history with *Mystery House*, the first computer adventure to combine graphics and text.

A FRESH LOOK AT AN OLD FAVORITE

In 1988, Sierra gave *Mystery House* over into the public domain, but the idea of a murder mystery game — one that was as complex, interesting and sophisticated as the current line of Sierra games — still seemed like a good one. The elements that had made *Mystery House* so intriguing — a spooky old house, suspicious characters, a buried treasure and lots of murders, were good beginning ingredients...



People love murder mysteries, and it's not a genre that's being done much in computer games. We had done one, but it was so long ago, most people probably wouldn't remember. It seemed to me that it was time to expand ourselves in the storytelling area — we don't always want to do the same thing.

ENTER LAURA BOW

It's a dark and stormy night in the spring of 1926. As Laura Bow, college student and amateur detective, you are looking

forward to spending the night in your roommate Lillian's old family mansion, where a gathering of friends and relatives is taking place. A ferry transports you across a dismal swamp and deposits you on the grounds of the dreary and run-down Dijon plantation. It will be back in the morning, but the murders begin at midnight.

I think everybody has a bit of natural detective in them...

Who is killing the relatives and associates of rich and eccentric old Colonel Dijon, one by one? Is it the sneaky lawyer, the drunken doctor, the slick gambler... or did the butler do it? Whoever is responsible, they aren't likely to take kindly to a would-be private eye snooping around, so you'd better be careful as you discover facts (and falsehoods) about your fellow guests and their relationship to the old man whose money will be inherited by whoever survives him.

WHEN IS A QUEST NOT A QUEST?

This game is unusual, I think, compared to what we've done before — it's not quite as 'puzzle oriented'. There are puzzles, — clues, but it's much more story oriented than our previous games, and the characters are much better developed. There's a lot of dialog...you can carry on conversations with them. It's really more of an interactive story.

Will you be able to keep from being the murderer's next victim as you explore the plantation for clues to the killer's identity? Will you know who to believe when you talk with the Colonel's family and friends, each of whom is hoping to inherit the fortune? Danger, adventure, and mystery with a touch of voodoo await you when you attempt to solve the mystery of *The Colonel's Bequest*.

THE COLONEL'S BEQUEST



Designer Roberta Williams



Graphics: Douglas Herring & Jerry Moore



Programmers: Chris Iden & Chris Hoyt

HERO'S QUEST I: SO YOU WANT TO BE A HERO



Designer Lori Cole



Programmers:

Larry Scott, Corey Cole,
Bob Fischbach, and Jerry Shaw



Graphics:

Jerry Moore, Cindy Walker,
Kenn Nishiuye, and Jeff Crowe

The next preview is of a game so different that it takes Sierra's development system in a whole new direction.

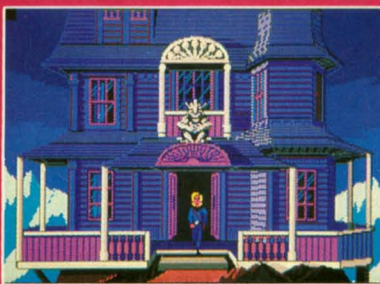
Hero's Quest game designer Lori Cole came to Sierra from a background ideally suited for game design...

My background includes animation, theatrical experience, stage directing, stage designing... I think of my game as a play that's taking place on the computer...

In *Hero's Quest I—So You Want to be a Hero*, players will find themselves facing challenge after challenge, using wits, muscle and skill to accomplish the quest: Save the land and become a Hero.

A CHAMPION FORETOLD

A dozen years ago, the barony of Spielberg was a peaceful land of majestic mountains and sleepy valleys, ruled by a



brave and respected ruler. Then the ogress Baba Yaga arrived with dark magics and evil curses, and a cloud of gloom fell over Spielberg. The baron's children have disappeared and monsters roam the countryside '...until a hero from the east frees the man from the beast, the beauty from the band, and rids evil from the land...'

A DO-IT-YOURSELF HERO

The game has a lot of decision making, right from the start. Whichever character type you choose, you will play the game differently. The skills that work for a fighter won't necessarily work for a magic user. It calls for different kinds of decision-making.

For the first time in any Sierra adventure, players will construct a character from the ground up, combining basic attributes of Strength, Agility, Intelligence, and Charisma into game characters that

gain skills and abilities as the game progresses. Special combat and magic systems, developed specially for *Hero's Quest* enable players to interact with the

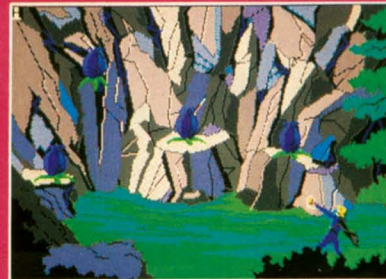


game environment as realistically as possible, while over a dozen 'quick commands' take the place of typing in complex sentences.

A TASK UNDERTAKEN

Your skills increase as you use and practice them, your statistics — your strength, agility etc get better as you play.

You can play *Hero's Quest* again and again, using your enhanced skills to solve difficult game problems, or creating an entirely different kind of character who will approach the problems in a different way.



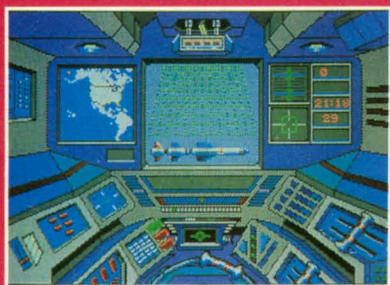
Can you survive combat with dragons, goblins, brigands, and the great bear who guards the kobold's cave? Can you free the land of Spielberg from its curse and earn the title 'Hero'? There's only one way to find out if you've got what it takes, and that's to enter the world of *Hero's Quest*.

From the safety of your living room, Sierra takes you under the ocean for the ride of your life...

TERROR IN THE YEAR 2000

Where in the world do you go to find new horizons when you're the author of two of the most exciting and realistic graphic adventures ever written?

If you're Jim Walls, designer of *Police Quest* and *Police Quest 2*, you go out of this world to an intriguing and sometimes chilling near-future of political terror and high-tech escapades. In *Codename:*



Iceman, Jim has combined the best of the intrigue genre with the newest in simulation technology to create a new kind of computer entertainment.

I wanted to see if I could do something completely different...something besides a police game...so I came up with this story about a secret submarine mission to rescue a kidnapped ambassador...

DIVE INTO DANGER

Codename: ICEMAN takes you from the beaches of Tahiti to the halls of the Pentagon and beyond, as secret agent Johnny Westland attempts to crack the deadly security of a terrorist base and rescue a hostage ambassador in the most critical assignment of his career.



Using a nuclear-powered attack submarine, a one-man diving vehicle and scuba gear, Westland must penetrate the electronic harbor surveillance of a hostile Middle-Eastern nation to reach his goal

— a nest of fanatical terrorists armed with advanced weaponry.

UNDERSEA ACTION

It was hard for me, because it was out of my realm of experience. I had to do a lot of research...I talked to people who had served on nuclear submarines, and did a lot of my own research besides, and I got a lot of information from the Navy...



Codename: ICEMAN includes state-of-the-art submarine navigation simulation to give the player a sense of total control as Johnny Westland navigates the Atlantic and prepares to penetrate a harbor bristling with deadly security devices.

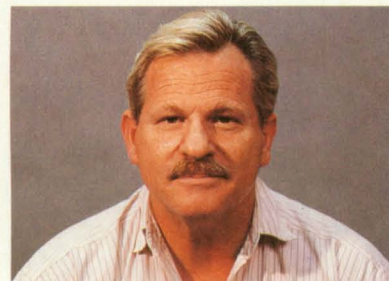
OPERATION: HOSTAGE RECOVERY

There are a lot of layers to this...layers of political intrigue...a global oil shortage, a middle-eastern country with a surplus of high-grade oil, superpowers each trying to get as much of it as they can...The terrorists kidnap a U.S. ambassador, hoping to provoke an incident with the United States.

A hostile nation holds the life of an innocent man in their grasp. A waiting world listens for word of war. A nuclear attack sub runs silently eastward for a rescue operation, or a rendezvous with death.

One man can make the difference — *Codename: ICEMAN*.

CODENAME: ICEMAN

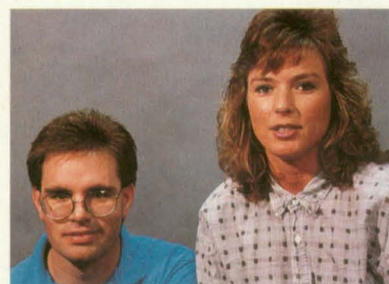


Designer Jim Walls



Programmers:

Pablo Ghenis, Mark Hood,
and Doug Oldfield



Artists:

Jim Larsen and Cheri Loyd

MANHUNTER SAN FRANCISCO



Dave, Barry, & Dee Dee Murry
Not Pictured: Barbara Ward

After we completed the last of our work on *Manhunter: San Francisco*, the Sierra Management decided to reward us with an all-expense-paid vacation to the Sierra Home for the Demented Designers. Naturally, we accepted.

At the home, we got plenty of rest, professional help, and all the cookies we could eat. When our stay was up, we presented Sierra with a synopsis of our next game. To our surprise, after reading it they decided we needed another little vacation.

They say we're doing much better now, and we hope to be back home soon and designing more great (if not necessarily same) games for your enjoyment.

THE MANHUNTER TEAM

If you're interested in the latest in horrifying thrills, you'll be glad to know that those cuddly, flesh-eating Orbs we all know and love so well from *Manhunter: New York* have packed it up and headed for the coast...

WHAT ARE YOU DOING AFTER THE INVASION?

If you're Dave, Barry and DeeDee Murry, you plan the next one!

Dave and Barry Murry got started designing computer games in 1980. When IBM released its first PC, they developed *Sierra Championship Boxing*. After the success of their games 'The Ancient Art of War' and the 'Ancient Art of War at Sea', Ken Williams asked them to do a game using Sierra's Adventure Game Interpreter system.



In 1988, Sierra released the first in the horrific *Manhunter* series, *Manhunter: New York* designed by Dave, Barry, and their sister DeeDee Murry.

I LOVE NY

We picked New York for the first game because we wanted a gritty, bleak futuristic landscape and New York seemed to fit well with that. We like the city real well...

In *Manhunter: New York*, players were treated to an alien invasion of The Big Apple by a swarm of ugly alien eyeballs. At the beginning of the game the player is a manhunter spying for the aliens. Overhead maps of New York and a handy laptop computer aid the manhunter in his search for renegade humans. But sooner or later, a decision must be made. Stay safe as a spy for the invaders, or risk everything by turning against them?

THEY'RE BACK...

Not content to rest on the dubious accomplishment of invading New York,

Dave, Barry, DeeDee, and co-designer Barbara Ward decided it was time to bring their special brand of fun to a city closer to home . . . San Francisco.



For the sequel we picked San Francisco because we wanted it on the west coast, and that city had the most recognizable landmarks. We went down there after we had the story almost done, went to each of the locations and reenacted the game one scene at a time and took pictures to keep it realistic.

In *Manhunter: San Francisco*, the horror is back. It is the year 2004, and San Francisco is under the rule of the aliens we all know so well from *Manhunter: New York*. Aided by their all-seeing orbs and the traitorous humans who work for them, the invaders have transformed the magical city by the bay into a dark nightmare of tyranny and death, where unknown creatures stalk the streets.



One of our goals was to try to push the boundaries of what games have done a little bit, and to surprise the player by trying to do unexpected things. We wanted to have a lot of visual impact. In a few spots, we went for the grossout.

For those who like to stick a little closer to home, Sierra offers another kind of computer game:

A FRIENDLY GAME OF CARDS

Back in the mid-eighteenth century, a fellow named Edmond Hoyle compiled the basic rules of play for card games in one book. Times have changed, the



games have changed, but "according to Hoyle" still means "by the book". Sierra's new card game program for the whole family, *Hoyle's Book of Games, Volume One*, combines 'by the book' rules of play with that special Sierra brand of humor and fun for the friendliest game of cards around.

Hoyle's designer and programmer Warren Schwader has an association with Sierra On-Line that goes back a good many years:

I was living in Wisconsin in 1980, when Ken (Williams) called me up and asked me if I'd like to move to California...As far as I remember, I was the first programmer they hired.

THE PERFECT WAY TO LEARN AND PLAY

Warren and his team of artists have created hours of enjoyment for your entire family as you learn and practice six popular card games, from Gin Rummy, Crazy Eights and Old Maid to Hearts, Cribbage and Klondike Solitaire.



I'm a card player, so I really looked forward to working on this project. I picked the games I liked the

best...well, I had never played Gin Rummy before, but I can play it *now*. I had to develop a system for card games within the Sierra system, that would include not only rules, but the strategies the computer will use against the player.

MATCH WITS WITH YOUR FAVORITE SIERRA CHARACTERS

You play the game against your choice of characters: King Graham, Rosella, Roger Wilco, Larry, Colonel Dijon from *The Colonel's Bequest*, Sonny Bonds...eighteen characters in all. There's a lot of different dialog and different personalities...but the characters don't get in the way of playing the game.



You'll enjoy using your choice of highly detailed and realistic card decks as you test your card-playing skills against opposing players, or challenge yourself with a game of Klondike Solitaire.

It's a point and click interface, or you can play it with arrow keys...a small child can get the hang of it pretty easily. My three-year-old, Christina, plays Old Maid. She's also one of the characters you can play against. You can also play against me, though in actuality you're playing against me all the time.

HOYLE'S BOOK OF GAMES



Designer/Programmer Warren Schwader



Graphics: Jerry Moore



LEISURE SUIT LARRY III



Designer Al Lowe



Programmer:
Carlos Escobar
and Al Lowe (pictured above)



Graphics: William Skirvin & Roger Hardy Jr.

Heroes come in all types, and this one is surely among the most unusual in the realm of computer adventure

Larry Laffer never dreamed he'd turn out to be such a popular man-about-town.

From humble beginnings in 1987 as a laughable loser in Sierra's *Leisure Suit Larry in the Land of the Lounge Lizards*, Larry has gone on to the heights of fame and fortune. From Entertainment Tonight to the Wall Street Journal, Leisure Suit Larry is the man they can't stop talking about.

Al Lowe is best known to computer adventure game players as the designer of the bestselling *Leisure Suit Larry* series, but he got his start designing software for children. Some early games he designed were for the world's largest family entertainment company. (It's the one with a mouse!)



I was a high school band teacher and a school district administrator for 16 years. I got involved with computer programming to help me with my work. After I went to a convention and saw the educational software that was available, I decided I could write better.

When Ken and Roberta Williams saw the programs Al had written, they hired him to work for Sierra designing educational software.

JUST A POLYESTER KIND OF GUY

In *Leisure Suit Larry in the Land of the Lounge Lizards*, players live one night in the life of Larry Laffer, nerd turned adventurer, as he goes in pursuit of action, thrills and excitement. He's searching for the ultimate experience of his sheltered life, but he might not live long enough to enjoy it!

In the sequel, *Leisure Suit Larry Goes Looking for Love*, Al put his hero through

his comic paces as he wins a million dollars and the dream vacation of his life, which turns out to be less than dreamy.

ROLE REVERSAL

With the unqualified success of the first two games, it was natural to suspect that Al Lowe would have more adventures for Larry to experience:



I thought it would be fun to have a female lead character...to play the game from the perspective of a woman. That's how I came up with Passionate Patti.

In the third *Larry* game, *Passionate Patti in Search of the Pulsating Pectorals*, Larry is pursuing Passionate Patti, but his luck with women is running about like usual. Disappointed in love, Larry takes off into the interior of the island to find himself. Patti would like to find him, too, and the game makes the first-ever viewpoint character switch as Patti undertakes her search for the missing Larry.

This is the first Sierra game ever to allow players to switch roles in mid-game and see the story from someone else's point



of view. You'll experience a new dimension in computer adventure as Larry, looking for his missing self-esteem in the perilous interior of a tropical island, and as his newest obsession, the lovely Passionate Patti, who's on a quest for the man that got away.

If you love the action and challenge of role-playing games, imagine fifteen thrilling role-playing scenarios in one sensational game! Sierra On-Line presents *Sorcerian*, from Nihon Falcom, the most varied role-playing arcade type game yet. Action and Quest combined make *Sorcerian* the most exciting Japanese import yet. These fifteen separate games in one give a level of variety never before encountered in role-playing games.



In *Sorcerian*, players use wits, muscle and magic against a wide spectrum of enemies, from fantastic dragons and monsters to evil sorcerors and wicked thieves. *Sorcerian* characters grow and change as they acquire experience, and can move on to new careers that will enable them to bring different abilities into play as they journey through the fifteen different adventures within the game.



Create characters and watch them grow in power and ability as they meet the challenges and brave the perils of the world of *Sorcerian*. As your characters develop, they will even have the chance to change careers and try new ways of playing.

Match your skills against your opponents in adventures like:

- The Cursed Oasis, in which the lifesaving waters of a desert oasis have been magically polluted by a wicked king . . .

- The Dragon of the Dark Marsh, in which a beautiful young girl must be restored to her original form after a dragon transforms her into a monster . . .
- The Mystery Jewel, in which all the creatures in a forest are bewitched by the light of an evil red jewel which must be destroyed to restore peace . . .
- The Thieves' Tower, where a group of kidnapped townspeople must be rescued from the castle stronghold of a gang of bandits . . .
- Medusa's Neck, where the player battles an ancient and evil creature who has turned an entire town to stone . . .
- The Lost Talisman, where a magical item that controls nature must be recovered and restored to its rightful owner. . .

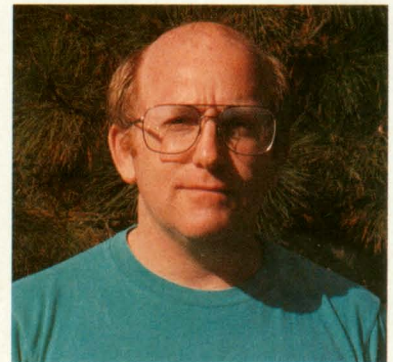
Adjustable ten-speed scrolling, stunning graphics and an original soundtrack from Japan help to make *Sorcerian* one of the best gaming experiences around for role-playing gamers of all ages and levels of ability.

7 magic elements combine to form over 120 magic spells to help gamers defeat enemies.



An original musical score adds new dimension to gaming enjoyment.

Sorcerian



Sierra Programmer: Gary Butts



Sierra's Japanese to English translator:
Akiko Skjellerup

日本のベストセラー
ゲーム「ソーサリーアン」

Conquests of Camelot



Husband and wife team:
Designer Christy Marx and
Illustrator Peter Ledger



Programmers:
David Slayback, Don McGlauffin



Graphics:
Douglas Herring

From a too-plausible future, step into a mythic past of valor and romance with the great ruler of legend...

AN EPIC QUEST

Return to the glory that was Camelot in *Conquests of Camelot* as game designer Christy Marx turns back the hands of time to transport you into a magnificent era of wizardry and enchantment, of valorous knights and daring quests.

I came to game design from a background of writing for animation, live action tv, and comic books...it's very different from game design, which is non-linear...it's very challenging, and I really quite enjoy it.

A LAND AFFLICTED

Camelot is dying. There have been visions of The Holy Grail that will heal the land of its affliction, but three brave knights have gone to search for it and never returned; it falls to Arthur to complete the quest and save his kingdom.

Working with her husband and professional partner Peter Ledger, who designed the graphics for *Camelot*, Christy extensively researched both the mythology and the history of early Britain to give the game as much realism as possible.



The Arthurian legends are a mixture of different mythologies...I took the essence of these mythologies and created a new story to take advantage of those elements, and added new things to make it a whole new adventure.

CHAMPION OF CAMELOT

In his quest for the Grail, Arthur travels to exotic places and faces tests of courage, skill and wisdom — for the Grail is not a prize to be won lightly — only to one truly worthy will it reveal itself.

I wanted to require more than mental deliberation...ethics, sacrifice, the kind of things that were noble and chivalrous, that a character like King Arthur would actually have to do.



THE GREATEST REWARD OF ALL

From the magical kingdom of Camelot to the Holy City of Jerusalem and beyond, players will live the experience of Arthur, as he sets out on a quest that will require more loyalty and more courage than any man has ever been asked to give. If he succeeds, his kingdom will grow strong and joyful once more — if he fails, all is lost.



Conquests of Camelot is a stunning fantasy saga combining traditional adventure gaming with historical storytelling for a kind of computer entertainment you have never experienced before.

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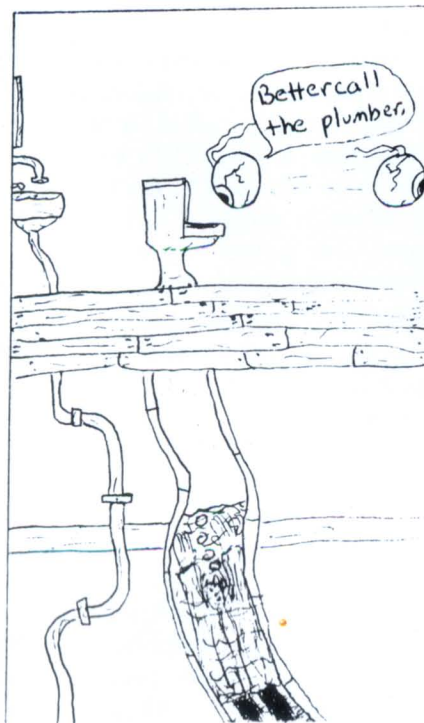
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Jason Smircich, Virginia, submitted this cartoon



Using the information the bartender had given him Manhunter realizes that he's in the wrong bath room.



SIERRA'S TOP TEN BEST SELLERS

April - July 1989*

Space Quest III

Silpheed

Leisure Suit Larry II

King's Quest IV

Police Quest II

HomeWord II

Manhunter San Francisco

Sierra's On-Line

Manhunter New York

Gold Rush

*This season's top ten reflects sales from April 1 to July 31, 1989. In this time, both *Space Quest III* and *Silpheed* have logged impressive numbers, with extra boost from sales to the many new music card owners out there. *Larry II*, *King's Quest IV*, and *Police Quest II* sales remained strong, and *Manhunter: New York* and *Goldrush!* made the charts due to strong sales as these titles migrate to the Apple II, Macintosh and other computers. New products on the list for this season include two new Sierra productivity products: *HomeWord II* and *Sierra's On-Line*.

Customer Service (209) 683-8989 Orders 1-800-326-6654

24 Hour Sierra BBS - (209) 683-4463

“HEARD IT IN THE HALLWAY”

Sierra’s Rumor Mill Section

NOTICE: Sierra management takes no responsibility for the following column or its content. Johnny Magpie’s writings are frequently wrong or wildly exaggerated. His work is only included because our Senior Editor felt the need to have some writer on staff even more obnoxious and outrageous than PC Magazine’s John Dvorak.

By Johnny Magpie

RUMOR MILL IS BACK! The corporate censors tried, but they couldn’t stop the power of the people. Despite the fiendish cries of some members of the Sierra upper management team when the last “Rumor Mill” hit the press (Sierra Newsletter, Winter 88) and the resulting attempts to put the column to rest, Rumor Mill, and me - Johnnie Magpie - once again are to be seen in the pages of the The Sierra Magazine. Who cares that more than half of the projects I discussed in the last rumor mill have been “temporarily shelved” or “permanently cancelled” since the last rumor mill went to press. The column was, according to letters we received, “fun to read,” “a good peek into what REALLY goes on at the company,” and “more interesting than the President’s Corner by a country mile.” [Sorry Ken - you had to know.] So here we go.

Is Sierra about to go mass media? Sierra founders Ken and Roberta Williams have been quoted for years about their intentions to one day take on - and ultimately beat - the powerful television and motion picture industries. Recent rumors around the Sierra hallways leak info of some serious plans afoot by the Williams’ on this front. **Leisure Suit Larry: The Movie?** The hottest rumor around the halls is about plans for a full length movie based on none other than Leisure Suit Larry. While all “official sources” chose to throw this writer out of the office whenever the subject was discussed, rumors of a multi-million dollar production budgeted film, possibly in conjunction with a major studio, have been bandied about. No hint as to a deal signing was present in the Sierra annual report which was released in

late July, but as they say in the spy movies “confidence is high.”

Want more mass media rumors? How about the recent appearance in the Sierra Warehouse of a machine that presses **CD’s**? Not just an average machine, one unnamed source suggested that this new equipment cost in the range of \$100,000 to acquire. **Could it be that Sierra also has its eye on possible audio product in the future?** After all, at \$1.95 apiece, it would take a lot of “Live at the Sierra Lounge” cassettes to make this purchase pay off otherwise. More dirt on this as we find it!

What’s happened to those “Two Guys from Andromeda?” It seems like a scenerio from their recent hit *Space Quest III*. **Scott Murphy** and his design partner **Mark Crowe** (formally known as the “Two Guys from Andromeda”) **have vanished from the offices of Sierra On-Line, Inc.** Although rumors of their occasional appearance has been aluded to, no one here has seen them in months.

The two guys recently managed to set product introduction records with their best selling *Space Quest III*, but their absence from the offices seems of minimal concern to top Sierra management. Questions on their whereabouts are met with blank stares and an occasional smirk in the administration wing. “I thought I saw Scott last week at the candy machine,” said young **Robert Lindsley** (former Sysop of the Sierra Bulletin Board), “but it turned out it was only **Elvis**.” Others, like the musicians that produce Sierra’s hit game music, have been **playing the soundtrack to Space Quest III backwards** to see if they can find any clues. *[Kids - Don’t try this at home. It’ll destroy your disk drive.*

- Ed.] What’s the story behind the disappearing Andromedans? We’ll let you know when we do — More on this in future issues.

Coming Soon - King’s Quest I and a half? On a recent casual walk by this writer through the hollowed halls of the Sierra development building (before my subsequent capture and expulsion) I happened across young **Jeff Crowe** (brother of the missing Mark) huddled over a devastatingly beautiful, full color SCI rendition of the castle of King Graham. I was certain this wasn’t *King’s Quest V* (no news THAT big could escape my attention) but Jeff would tell me little about what it really was. My guess — **Sierra has started development (or is at least researching development) on conversions of its entire AGI catalog to SCI.**

SIERRA PRODUCTS ON GAME MACHINES???? This writer, and other employees at Sierra who lived through the devastating video game crash of ’84 were put into shock with the recent arrival of *King’s Quest* for none other than the Sega Video Game machine. Those of us who remember Sierra’s last venture into video game cartridges about a half decade ago (a business venture that was anything but profitable for Sierra) found ourselves worried about the future of our jobs here in Coarsegold. Could it be that the management hadn’t learned that Sierra’s future was in computers, not toys?

For once, Sierra President Ken Williams was available for comment. “We are in the COMPUTER software business. We haven’t seriously considered making cartridges here, and we won’t till IBM starts

shipping their PS2's with a cartridge slot and a joystick." Williams added, "We're happy, though, to talk to any Nintendo, Sega or other potential licensee willing to do a good job of converting our products to fit on those machines." Williams went on to demonstrate the version of *King's Quest* produced by Sega under license. To this writer's amazement, although the Sega *King's Quest* doesn't have the text input interface, it was both easy and fun to

play. Ken also confirmed rumors that other Sierra titles might be found on other game machines in the future, and pointed out that both *Thexder* and *Silpheed* were big hits in Japan on the Nintendo Game Machine. More on this to follow. Speaking of *Thexder*, **Game Arts (the original producer of the *Thexder* game) just released new FIREHAWK: THEXDER II in Japan.** Is this hot Japanese title in Sierra's future? Watch here for more details. ■

Cartoon/Drawing Contest

Winners in this issue:

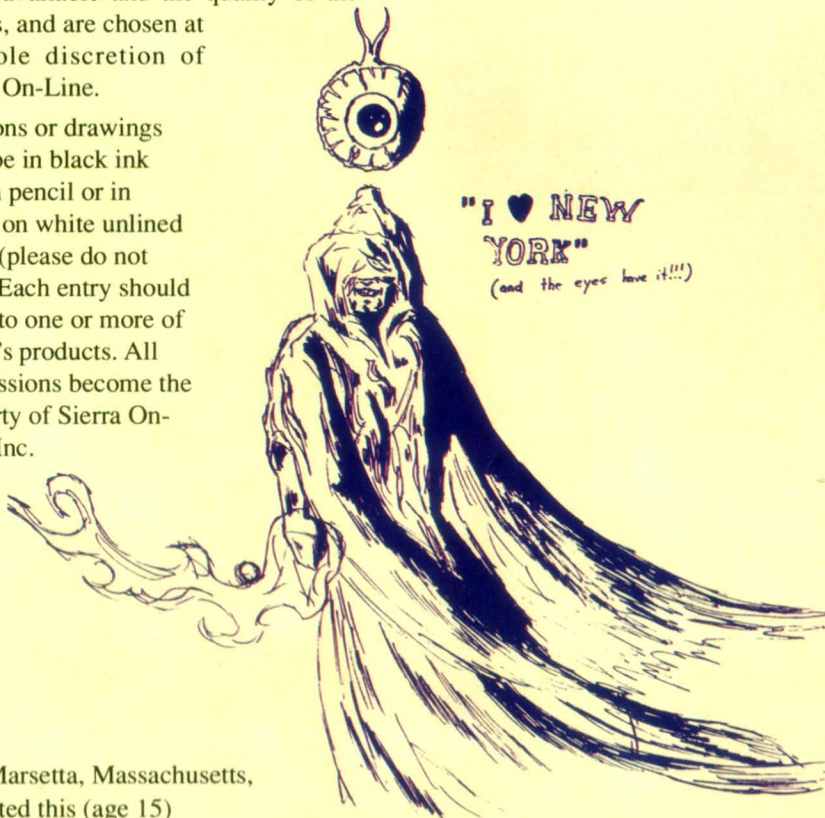
Lashawn Flores, page 61
 Danny Hulleman, page 36
 Merrill Hutchison, page 30
 David Lesser, page 38
 Amy McCamish, page 62

Darby McDevitt, page 30
 John Marsatta, this page
 Kathy Skinner, page 24
 Jason Smircich, page 13
 Scott Wilson, page 21
 Henry Yiu, page 50

Sierra's Cartoon and Drawing Contest is an ongoing event, so send in your submissions now! Winning entries will be published in the Sierra News Magazine, and winners will receive a Sierra software product of their choice. The number of winners will depend on the space available and the quality of the entries, and are chosen at the sole discretion of Sierra On-Line.

Cartoons or drawings must be in black ink (not in pencil or in color) on white unlined paper (please do not fold). Each entry should relate to one or more of Sierra's products. All submissions become the property of Sierra On-Line, Inc.

Submit entries to Sierra On-Line, Box 1103, Oakhurst, CA 93644, Attention: Drawing Contest, and indicate the product desired and type of computer you have in the event you are a winner. Good Luck!



John Marsetta, Massachusetts, submitted this (age 15)

Sizzle'n.

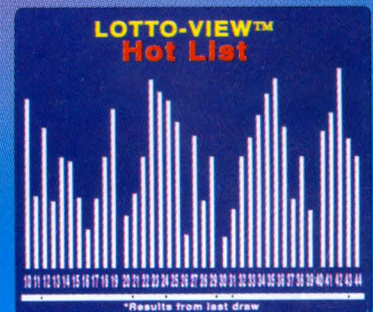
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HOYLE'S BOOK OF GAMES

THE 'INTELLIGENT' ALTERNATIVE

By Marti McKenna

The portion of my life which has taken place in the 'Computer Age,' has been spent in search of the perfect computer card game. By now I've tried nearly every one on the market, and some have briefly held my interest, though most have not. Recently however, I played a game that not only captivated me, but also my seven year old daughter, renowned for the world's shortest attention span. Get ready for *Hoyle's Book of Games*.

Unlike most of its competition, *Hoyle's* offers 6 card games; Cribbage, Gin Rummy, Crazy Eights, Hearts, Old Maid and even Klondike Solitaire. This element of variety is a big plus for me, as it virtually eliminates tedious disk-shuffling between card games.

For the first time in any computer card game, *Hoyle's* allows you to choose from

As Larry dealt the next hand, Roger whispered to Rosella...

18 challengers; many are characters from your favorite Sierra games, some are making their 'screen' debut in *Hoyle's*. Each character has a distinct personality and playing style. Each is more adept at some games than others, offering a choice of skill level from amateur to expert in the game you choose.

I could spend all day telling you how terrific *Hoyle's* is, but I'd rather play. So let me tell you how *Hoyle's* taught me to play Hearts (with help from Princess Rosella, Roger Wilco and Leisure Suit Larry!)

As a beginner at Hearts, I wanted opponents with low skill levels. I selected a young man who introduced himself as 'The Kid', a Hearts expert. I didn't feel up to such a challenge quite yet so I moved on—The Kid was noticeably disappointed. Next I chose Roger, who mumbled something about a Star Generator, asked, "W-where am I?" and announced that he was a Hearts

novice. As I attempted to begin the game Rosella said, "We shall need more players for this game." Silly me. I selected Rosella,

How Hoyle's taught me to play Hearts with help from Princess Rosella, Roger Wilco and Leisure Suit Larry!

also a novice. Just for the heck of it, I asked Larry, a Hearts 'amateur', to join us.

Roger dealt, and I was prompted to choose 3 cards to pass on. As I wondered which cards to pass, my three friends waited, and soon began to look bored. Larry's eyes shifted, and Roger grinned expectantly. Finally, Rosella spoke: "Have I spoken to you of my perilous quest into



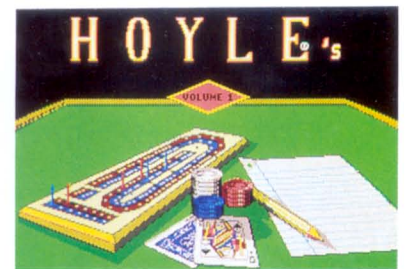
Tamir? 'Tis not a story for the faint-hearted! Questing is a family tradition in Daventry. My brother Alexander once saved me from a foul dragon!"

"I think rescuing a lady from a dragon is a *great* way to make a first impression!" Larry offered.

As the game got moving, Rosella told us of her perils, and Larry made the occasional uncouth comment. Roger seemed preoccupied with one subject in particular, the fact that he seemed to have fallen into the wrong game.

Rosella led the hand with an 8 of diamonds, and it was my turn to play. I was out of diamonds, so I played the 4 of spades. Rosella said kindly, "You must follow with another card in suit." Again I attempted to play the 4 of

spades. Roger remarked impatiently, "You have to follow in suit! Did you swap brains with a defective android this morning, or what?" I sighed, sorted my cards, and voila! There it was, a 6 of diamonds. It had been hiding behind the 9 of hearts! Sheepishly, I played the 6. Boy, were these guys ever sharp!



As Larry dealt the next hand, Roger whispered to Rosella, "Listen, if you get me out of this game, I'll give you an authentic autographed Roger Wilco pulseray! How 'bout it?"

"I'm always interested in that," Rosella giggled, and winked at me.

When I attempted an incorrect play, they rushed to my aid with helpful advice .

Larry, feeling left out of the conversation, said "Did I tell you guys about the gorgeous KGB agent that tried to get me? What a babe!"

"I'm always interested in *that*," joked Roger.

As the game progressed, I was able to learn the rules with the aid of my opponents. When I attempted an incorrect play, they rushed to my aid with helpful advice and comments. I enjoyed sparkling conversation as well as an entertaining soundtrack.

If your family is looking for a computer card game that has variety, great graphics, built-in friends and music, Hoyle has all that, *and brains too!* ■

How to get 16 color EGA graphics on your IBM or compatible, *without* buying a new EGA monitor

(There are two hints in this article—be sure to read both of them)

by Guruka Singh Khalsa

Ever so often our Customer Support Department gets a phone call that says: "Why do the colors in the game look so awful?" All the Sierra 3-D Adventure games are designed in 16 color graphics, plus we use subtle pixel dithering to give additional shades of those 16 basic colors. The colors don't look awful, they look wonderful!

Unfortunately those of you who have a CGA card (standard IBM Color Graphics Adaptor) are not able to see the games in all their wonderful colors since the CGA only supports a maximum of four colors, two of which are white and black and the other two may be either cyan (pale blue) and pink or dark yellow and green.

I know many folks feel that the over \$500 price of an EGA monitor (display) and EGA video card is way beyond their budget. The good news is that you DON'T need a new monitor to see the full color EGA graphics. That's right! You can see all the colors right on the same RGB monitor you have right now. All you need is a new video card.

In order to get the full EGA/VGA 16 color graphics you only need an EGA (Enhanced Graphics Adaptor) card. EGA cards have come down in price quite a bit and are available quite widely these days for under \$150! (Look at the ads in the backs of some computer magazines and you may be able to mail-order one for as little as \$75 or so.) In fact, many people are upgrading their systems to the newer VGA cards and a used EGA card may be available at a very inexpensive price at a swap meet or through your local trading paper or users group. All you need is any type of EGA card. If you have a PC or XT, just set the dip switches on your computer's motherboard to the

EGA setting. If you have an 80286 or 80386 machine, just run the SETUP program and tell the computer that you now have an EGA display. If your new EGA card has dip switches on it, set them to CGA mode so that your on-screen text will be properly readable. (See your EGA card documentation for details.)

You won't have the high resolution 640 x 350 (mode 10) EGA graphics, but you don't need that mode for Sierra Adventure games since they all run in 160 x 200 (AGI) or 320 x 200 (SCI) and you will get both those modes just fine without a new monitor. Later on, if you decide to upgrade your monitor you can do that easily without having to buy a new video card.

Here's another hint for those of you with CGA cards. You can get all 16 colors without even buying an EGA card! How? By playing the games on your television! All of our earlier AGI games (*Kings Quest I, II, and III; Space Quest I and II*, etc.) can

be played in full color on any color television set. The resolution (clarity) of the picture on the TV is not as good as on a computer monitor, but the price is right and the games can be played in full color.

First look at the connector on the back of your video card. If you see a little "phono jack" (like the ones you use to connect up your stereo), just go to your nearest computer store and get an "RF Modulator". This little gizmo is usually only about \$25 or \$30 (\$5 to \$10 at swap meets!). You connect it to the RCA phono jack (composite output) on your CGA video card and then connect the output of the modulator to the antenna terminals of your color TV. Voila! Full 16 color graphics on your television. Of course, no one will be able to watch a TV show while you're playing (hehe).

The games look so beautiful in full color that you'll want to go back and play them all over again to see them in their full glory. Have fun! ■

GOOD NEWS FOR SCREENWRITER USERS!

This powerful word processor for the Apple II family of computers is now distributed and supported by Aspen Data Systems.

Screenwriter II features include:

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- Underlining
- Hyphenation Form letters
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- Joystick/mouse support
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- Page numbering and counting
- ...and more!

Screenwriter II also includes The DIC-TIONARY, a proof reading feature with an expandable 28,000 word dictionary. SCREENWRITER II is compatible with The

GENERAL MANAGER, a flexible, full-featured Hierarchical-relational database manager for the Apple II family of computers, also supported by Aspen. ORGANIZE DATA YOUR WAY With The GENERAL MANAGER from Aspen Data Systems, you can use your Apple II to organize, store, file, find, save, retrieve, interrelate, control and print your data, using your own organizational methods. Construct your data bases to your exact needs. All the power, features and benefits of programs costing hundreds of dollars more. SCREENWRITER II: \$129.95 The GENERAL MANAGER: \$179.95 Please include \$4.00 postage and handling for each program ordered. For more information, call or write: ASPEN DATASYSTEMS P.O. Box 567, Driggs, ID 83422, (208) 354-8185

CUSTOMER SUPPORT FORUM

KING'S QUEST IV — THE REAL PERILS

By Marti McKenna

Do you find yourself wandering around in peasant clothing, carrying in your pockets (or wherever) such objects as worms and dead fish, ducking ogres (and ogresses), avoiding trolls, trees, sharks, and various creatures of the undead persuasion? If you answered yes to one or more of these questions, you may be one of the many stricken with a chronic affliction which is sweeping the known world — THE PERILS OF ROSELLA!

The Perils can strike anyone, young or old, and without warning. But fear not, there is help! The research staff at Sierra On-Line has isolated some of the most common traits of this serious calamity. If you or someone you know is showing symptoms, the following case histories, along with our solutions may benefit you. (For more intensified treatment, 4 out of 5 doctors surveyed recommended the *King's Quest IV* hint book).

CASE #9834.3

—MRS. L. AGE: 34

"They were wheeling my wife out of surgery, and she was mumbling, '...have to kill the troll...'" Mr. L.

This subject was obviously obsessed by a desire to inflict bodily harm on a creature who, much like the common honey-bee, wants only to be left alone. When her husband contacted us, Mrs. L. was in a very agitated state. We instructed Mr. L. to assist

his wife in avoiding the troll by saving her game before entering each room in the troll's cave. As the troll's appearance is random, Mrs. L. was eventually successful in passing through the cave unmolested, and our friend the troll was spared his life.

CASE #3487.8

— ELLEN B. AGE: 47

"Thank heavens you answered, I've been stuck in a whale's mouth for nine hours and his breath is killing me!" Ellen

Ellen's case illustrates one of the most common symptoms of 'The Perils'. Sub-

jects feel compelled to swim back and forth through shark infested waters until they are swallowed by a whale. Subsequently, they will spend long periods of time knee deep in what one can only imagine might exist in a whale's mouth, and much shorter intervals making any progress at all climbing the whale's tongue. When Ellen came to us she was a desperate woman — on the ragged edge. A Sierra representative worked with her until she was finally able to negotiate the climb, taking a diagonal path from the bottom right, to the top center of the tongue. She then tickled the whale's rather large uvula, causing the creature to sneeze, and was immediately expelled

"WELCOME TO SIERRA'S NEW AUTOMATED HINT LINE!"

by Liz Jacobs
Customer Service Manager

I am so happy to be able to announce the opening of the long, long awaited arrival of our new phone system. I had mentioned in the last newsletter that AT&T was working on putting in place a new high tech phone system that could handle virtually unlimited phone lines. The system is in place and we are able to monitor through AT&T how many phone calls get through and how many receive a busy signal. By monitoring this information, we will be able to increase the number of phone lines that are needed to provide the caliber of service that Sierra believes its customers should receive. As many of you have already discovered, the "old" Customer Service/Hint Line (209) 683-6858 is no

longer in service. That number will now redirect your call to a variety of numbers depending on your need and where you are calling from. Our "new" Customer Service number is (209) 683-8989. This number is to be used by all customers who need technical or general customer service help. If you are having trouble getting the game to run or need to find out what status your order is in, or perhaps just need to find out about our upcoming releases, this is the number to call. THIS IS NO LONGER THE HINT LINE. During the time that we were conducting our study to find a solution to our phone troubles, we discovered a very interesting fact—those people who were calling Customer Service for a hint had a much more persistent redial finger!! People who needed technical support were giving up trying to get

from the mouth. Reports say Ellen was found unhurt on a deserted island several miles away.

CASE #8749.9

— NANCY E. AGE: 12

"I'll let you talk to my daughter...she's stuck in the ogre's house with some stupid chicken." Mrs. E.

This case is a prime example of one manifestation of 'The Perils' which many readers may recognize. It preys on those who are so unfortunate as to find themselves in possession of the 512k version of *King's Quest IV*, and a clock speed under 8mhz. Victims will spend countless hours trying to escape the ogre's house, all in vain. No amount of abuse will keep the hen from squawking, and the ogre invariably awakes, but many are able to retreat to the woods and to safety. Alas, our Nancy E. was not among these, and poor Mrs. E. feared that she would have to institutionalize her daughter. Sierra's rescue team intervened not a moment too soon. We replaced Nancy's 512k version with a new set of 256k disks. We are pleased to report that Nancy is responding very well to therapy.

CASE #7460.5

— Myron M. Age: 24

"WILL SOMEBODY PLEASE TELL ME HOW TO SHUT THIS KID UP!!!" Myron

A key indicator of 'The Perils' is the tendency for the victim to become irritated and impatient. When we received Myron's plea, his frustration was evident in his tone. He was immediately diagnosed as a 'Perils' casualty, and a rep was successful in calming him so that treatment could be administered. The 'kid' in question was indeed a baby ghost, and it was clear to the trained ear that he was crying for his rattle. Myron was instructed to search for this toy in the obvious place, the graveyard. He reluctantly took up his shovel and after locating the grave of a six month old infant, dug until the much sought after silver rattle was unearthed. Myron's fits were brought under control, and he is undergoing rehabilitation.

The Perils of Rosella cannot be cured, only treated and allowed to run its course. It is highly contagious, and in some cases whole families have been quarantined. The symptoms can continue for several months, during which those close to the victim report a nearly uncontrollable desire

to throttle him or her. According to our statistics however, no directly related fatalities have occurred. Thanks to the Sierra Team, most patients recover and go on to lead normal, healthy lives. If someone you love is afflicted, call Sierra.

We care! 

King's Quest III BBS Contacts Lead To Weddings

Timothy Hobbs, browsing a BBS one day last Fall, responded to a user's plea for help about *King's Quest III*. A friendship developed on the BBS even though Christine Bodnar lived 2600 miles away, and on May 25, 1989, Timothy and Christine were married.


Last September two other BBS users—their on-line ID's are Debbie and Alarm—also "met" through trading hints on Sierra games. April 15, 1989 was the wedding day for Ron and Debbie Wood.

Congratulations to both couples.

through to Customer Service. In other words, they weren't getting serviced at all! It was this fact that finalized our decision to separate the hint line from Customer Service. For those of you who have not tried our NEW automated hint line....please do!!! I think you will find that it's easy to use, it's fun to use, AND best of all, it will probably cost you LESS to use! You must have a touch tone phone to use this service, and it can only be accessed within the United States, at this time. The system consists of listening to a series of menu selections and making your choice of which game and which hints you would like to hear. You can RELISTEN to the menus and the hints as many times as you care to. You may want to listen to two or three hints in the same area of the game to make sure you get ALL the information that you need to progress in the game! By listening to the hint a second time, you will have the information solidly in your mind. You can stay on the hint line as long as you want, moving from game to game if you choose. So often I have heard a customer say "I listened to the hint on the

hint line and I did what it said, but it did not work." I would say that there are two major reasons for this: 1) you have done all of the things that you THINK you are suppose to, but you are playing from a "saved game" that does not include all of your actions, or 2) you are simply using the wrong words in your commands. If the command that you type is not the response that the game is looking for, just reword your command several different ways. Many times if you keep "playing" with the verbiage, you will find the right command. This hint line is fun!! Wait until you call for a Gold Rush hint and hear our "ole" miner answer your questions, or let our "English knight" help you find your King's Quest hint. I feel confident that these new "Sierra friends" will bring a smile to your face! Since most of you have already experienced our "old" phone system that included sitting "on hold" for five to twenty minutes, I am sure you can believe that the new system could cost you less on your phone bill! The new Hint Line is a "900" number. There is a \$0.75 charge for the 1st minute and a \$0.50

charge for every additional minute. This fee INCLUDES all charges. There will be NO additional long distance charges. Since our records indicate that most calls are averaging 3 minutes, then the average bill per call is \$1.75. Check your old phone bills. I'm sure this is cheaper! The phone number is 1-900-370-KLUE. For California residents only, the phone number is 1-900-370-5113. (Anyone UNDER the age of 18 must have parental permission to call these numbers.) At Sierra, providing all of the tools necessary for our customers to enjoy our software is of primary concern. We feel that we now can service those customers with a technical need and we are still providing hints for everyone. For those customers who do not have a touch tone phone and can not use the new hint line, we still provide hints on our Bulletin Board Service, we do sell the hint books for \$7.95, and we still accept your hint questions by mail. We will make every effort to address this mail quickly.

Happy Adventuring! 

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS IN CUSTOMER SUPPORT

By Larilyn Rowan

:0X80/653 or :0X80/997 NOT FOUND

Q I've been playing the 512K version of *King's Quest IV* on my IBM AT clone. When I tried to enter certain screens I received a message:

:0X80/653 or :0X80/997 NOT FOUND

A 386 and fast 286 (AT) computers require our "Waterfall" patch in order to run *King's Quest IV* on those machines. A disk containing the patch is available free from Sierra's Customer Service Department. The patch is also available on our BBS, and the Sierra Forums on CompuServe, Prodigy, PCLink, and GENie. Full instructions for loading the patch onto your *King's Quest IV* program are on the disk, in a READ.ME file. To see the instructions, place the Patch Diskette into the appropriate diskette drive, type that drive letter followed by a colon, then type:

TYPE READ.ME
and press <ENTER>

You may use CTRL+S to stop scrolling and read the screen, or CTRL+Q to continue scrolling.

DAMAGED DISK

Q My five-old decided to decorate my *Police Quest II* original disks with his crayons. How can I get the disks replaced?

A We will gladly replace your program. Disk replacement is FREE for the first 90 days of product ownership. If you have owned the program for more than 90 days there is a \$5.00 replacement fee per program for 5.25" disks, or a \$10.00 replacement fee per program for 3.5" disks. For the fastest service, simply mail Disk #1 to us in a regular envelope (unprotected), along with either a copy of your dated sales receipt or the handling fee and a note detailing us your computer hardware. We

will get the replacement to you right away. The address is:

Sierra On-Line Inc.
P.O. Box 485
Coarsegold, California 93614
ATTENTION: **Returns**

LOST DOCUMENTATION

Q We've moved, and somehow I lost my *King's Quest III* Spell Book. Can you help me?

A We will gladly replace your *King's Quest III* Spell Book (or any lost or damaged documentation.) We always want to make sure you have everything you need to use and enjoy our software. Just send us your request, original Disk #1 disk as proof of ownership, along with a \$10.00 documentation replacement fee. We will get your disk(s) back to you right away, along with the replacement documentation.

LARRY IN "HEAP" OF TROUBLE

Q I'm playing *Leisure Suit Larry II* on my 640K RAM IBM clone. At various points during play I receive a message "OUT OF HEAP" or the keyboard simply locks-up. In order to restart the game I have to re-boot the computer. What's happening?

A Sierra programs generally perform best as "stand-alone" software. Many of our programs really push MS-DOS compatible computers to the maximum compatibility limits. Our programs utilize specific memory locations in your computer RAM which must be available in order for the program to install and run properly. We have found that memory resident programs which "borrow" these memory locations, such as device drivers, alarm clocks, shell programs, or hotkey programs may interfere with the proper operation of our program, often causing the program to lock-up or giving an OUT OF HEAP or HUNK message. When in doubt,

install and run Sierra programs under "plain vanilla" DOS 2.1 to 3.3.

If you are partial to your current hardware set-up and don't wish to change (which we can certainly understand) we recommend making and using a Sierra Boot Diskette to boot your computer when you wish to play a Sierra game. After booting from the Sierra Boot Disk you may play game from either diskette or hard disk.

TO CREATE A SIERRA BOOT DISK:

1. FORMAT a Blank Disk with MS-DOS System files (using the /s option) to make a 'Bootable' disk.

FORMATTING FROM A HARD DRIVE

- » Put the blank disk into Drive A
- » At C type: **FORMAT A:/S**
- » Respond to DOS prompts

FORMATTING FROM A DISKETTE DRIVE

- » Put DOS System Disk into Drive A
- » At the A: type: **FORMAT A:/S**
- » Switch disks as prompted by Format program
- » Respond to DOS prompts

2. Put the CONFIG.SYS file on the new disk using COPY CON.

HARD DRIVE OR DISKETTE DRIVE

- » Type: A: <ENTER>
- » Type: COPY CON CONFIG.SYS <ENTER>
- » Type: FILES=15 <ENTER>
- » Press the F6 Key then <ENTER>
- » Label disk: SIERRA BOOT DISK

3. Re-boot the computer using the new, Plain Vanilla DOS.

HARD DRIVE OR DISKETTE DRIVE

- » Put the Sierra Boot Disk into Drive A
- » Turn the computer system OFF then ON
OR
- » Press CTRL+ALT+DEL

4. Follow instructions on your MS-DOS Reference Card for running the program.

“OOPS” ERROR IN KING’S QUEST IV

Q Help! I’m playing the 512K version *King’s Quest IV*. Rosella is on Shipwreck Island and tried to talk to the dolphin. The next thing I knew I received an “OOPS” error. What gives?

A An “OOPS” error may occur when you creatively try an action which is unnecessary to the game, but was unforeseen during programming. Our programmers try to allow for most actions you might attempt. In most cases the program responds with a generic message such as “not now” or “you don’t need that.” If your action was not predicted during programming, the program is unsure how to respond, thus, the “OOPS” error. To avoid this inconvenience, simply do not repeat the action which caused it.

DIFFICULTY CONNECTING TO 900 AUTOMATED HINT LINE

Q I love the idea of your 900 automated hint line, however, I’m having difficulty connecting. What should I do?

A Sierra’s new, automated hint service is available only within the United States and does require a touch-tone telephone. If your telephone has a Pulse/Tone switch, make sure the switch is in the Tone position once you connect with our hint service.

If you are unable to reach the Hint Line from work, don’t give up. Most businesses would rather not have you use their telephones to call any 900 number and have blocked 900 service from business telephones. The hint line is available 24 hours, so calling from your home telephone should not be an obstacle.

If you are unable to connect to the line at all, you should contact your local telephone operator to find out if 900 service is blocked on your telephone line. (You may have forgotten that you wanted 976 service blocked.)

Your local telephone company may not have 900 service available yet. If you find this is the case, please let us know. We will work with our 900 service operator to try

and speed up the process and get 900 service to your area.

If you use a long distance carrier other than AT&T you may not have 900 service available unless you contact your carrier and request that service.

If you are unable to reach our Automated Hint Line for any reason, we offer several resources for obtaining game hints.

Specific game hints may be obtained via computer modem from the Sierra Bulletin Board Service, or from Sierra forums on the major computerized Information Services (CompuServe, Prodigy, GENie, PCLink, and AppleLink.)

Other hint resources include the *Questbuster’s Journal* magazine, and Adventure Game Hint Books, available from many local dealers or by direct order from Sierra. You may also write directly to our Customer Service Department with specific questions. Finding the mermaid in *King’s Quest II* can be as simple and inexpensive as dropping us a postcard.

No matter which way you choose to get a hint, we’re sure you’ll find Sierra ready, willing and able to help you along on your quest. ■

SPRING ISSUE CONTEST WINNERS

Heather Barclay
California

Madison Farrell
South Carolina

Tanya Hassler
Alabama

Liz Kuo
Texas

Pablo Manguy
California

Andy Mattingly
Georgia

Tim Miller
Illinois

Aaron Racine
Washington

Daniel Yee
California

Shawn Young
Illinois

Scott Wilson, Alabama, submitted this cartoon

UPGRADE TO HOMEWORD II

Users of Sierra’s *HomeWord* and *HomeWord+* will be happy to learn that they’ll be able to upgrade to new *HomeWord II* for an upgrade charge of \$25.

HomeWord II requires an IBM or compatible computer with 512K of RAM.

To obtain your upgrade, mail your *HomeWord* or *HomeWord+* disks or the title page of your *HomeWord* manual and \$25 to:

Sierra On-Line
P.O. Box 485
Coarsegold CA 93614
Attn: Sales Department

See Page 40 for more information about new *HomeWord II*.



Marketing Computer's Cover Story on Roberta Williams

Girls Just Want to Have Fun

But the majority of PC game publishers are ignoring them. In light of growing competition from systems like Nintendo and the saturation of the male market, that may be a fatal mistake.

This article is reprinted by permission from Ad Week's *Marketing Computers*, June 1989.

by Patricia Cignarella

Think about the last time you entered a software store or peeked into a video arcade. Amidst the computer hobbyists and game players, did you spot any women and girls? Probably few, if any.

That's no surprise to entertainment software marketers—it's common knowledge that most video games and PC software purchases are made by and for males. Although girls are using computers in the classroom and usage among women in the workplace is growing, industry leaders remain pessimistic about the long-term viability of developing products for females.

The history of the computer game market began with flight simulators and hasn't strayed very far in subject matter since—a good many games on the market and in development focus on the traditional male themes of war, sports and competition. After recovering from a major slump earlier this decade, the industry never managed to broaden its appeal beyond teenage boys and adult male enthusiasts.

But before long, industry watchers warn, the market for flight simulators and asteroids could be saturated. With the ever-growing Nintendo threat, software publishers are starting to think seriously about

diversifying their target markets to stress the "other" sex.

Retail sales of personal computer-based games grew only 28.5% between 1987 and 1988, according to Stamford, Conn.-based Software Industry Bulletin, the newsletter of the Digital Information Group. Retail sales of video games such as those used for the Nintendo Entertainment System, on the other hand, grew 100% between 1987 and 1988, partially due to a strong Christmas. To PC games publishers, the disparity is alarming.

Sierra On-Line, Inc., a Coarsegold, Calif.-based publisher of PC games, has done more than think about broadening its market. One of Sierra's founders is a 36-year-old mother of two, and the company prides itself on its success in marketing to families—not just sons and dads, but girls and moms as well.

Roberta Williams and her husband Ken founded the company in 1980 with a story called *Mystery House*. Due in large part to Roberta Williams' interactive, emotional approach to storytelling, the

company grew from a kitchen-table startup in 1980 to the seventh largest computer game publisher, according to the *Software Industry Bulletin*. Sierra just announced a 60% increase in revenues.



Whether the company intended to or not, it has set an example for other, less progressive, PC games publishers. While many companies try to convince themselves otherwise, most of the user bases include only a smattering of women. Sierra, on the other hand, boasts one in

every four as female users. Most of the fan mail the company receives about its games comes from women, says John Williams, director of marketing and Ken Williams' brother.

With a woman as chief developer, many of the games are genderless. Though *The Perils of Rosella* in the *King's Quest* series

Continued on page 24

AN ONLINE INTERVIEW WITH BOB JACK, Creator of *Sierra's On-Line*

In an odd departure from normal Sierra product development, On-Line programmer Bob Jack doesn't work at Sierra's offices, his products are not produced under Sierra's Creative Interpreter, and most important of all, Sierra's On-Line is not a game. Bob Jack is an Ohio programmer with ten years of experience writing telecommunications software — programs that enable computer users to take advantage of the wide range of goods, information and services available online, using their home computer and their telephone.

We made contact with Bob, appropriately enough, on a computer running Sierra's On-Line in Conference mode. The text below was 'captured' during the interview and transcribed 'as-is'.

SIERRA: Hello BobJack! How did you and Sierra get together?

BOBJACK: It was one of those funny things. I wrote this fancy piece of code, and I sent it to a guy I know at Tandy. Tandy sent me to u guys.

SIERRA: Fancy code meaning your telecommunications package.

BOBJACK: Yeah, only my tc package was called DynoCom. Yours [Sierra's] is On-Line. There were a lot of changes before we got through.

SIERRA: Right...So why did Tandy send you to us?

BOBJACK: Well, I wrote it for myself in the first place, and it was good code, but it needed some polish. I spent a total of 8 wks working at Sierra with the Quality Assurance people, kind of fine-tuning the thing, and when it went out the door, it was a saleable product.

SIERRA: But I'll bet you were glad to get back home.

BOBJACK: Yeah. California's all right, but I'm an Ohio boy.

SIERRA: So you have a lot of experience with tc programs — you know how many bad ones are out there and how many good ones. You seemed to think there was a need for yet another modem software package.

BOBJACK: There sure was.

SIERRA: What do you see as the market for it? In other words, who's going to buy On-Line?

BOBJACK: Well if u ask Sierra, it's for 'the new modem user'.

SIERRA: Sounds like you don't agree.

BOBJACK: I think it's for any modem user. I wrote ten other tc programs in the last 5 years. This is the best.

SIERRA: What other tc programs have u used?

BOBJACK: u want me to name names? No plugs for the competition here. I've used em all...mine's different.

SIERRA: Different how...Why will people buy it instead of one of the others?

BOBJACK: Well, I'm just a programmer here, so I don't know what makes people buy things, but I hope they'd buy it for the same reasons I wrote it. I wrote it to do what I wanted a tc program to do, and the others didn't.

SIERRA: Like what, for instance?

BOBJACK: Like I hate having to enter a lot of script language to run a tc program, when it should be simple. Everything you need should just be in there already and you push a couple of buttons and away you go. When I used to use P—M, it took me

something like 6 steps just to get to conference mode. I wrote On-Line to do it in 1 step. Push one button and you're there.

SIERRA: I see what you mean about 'simple'.

And that's only the first thing. So you have a program that gets you online, what the heck do you do after that? With On-Line, you get a step-by-step tour through a BBS, and one through signing on with CompuServe. It's like you had someone looking over your shoulder helping you.

SIERRA: Let's not forget ARC and ZIP.

BOBJACK: Yeah, On-Line's the first program to include them right in the package. The user can get started up-and-downloading stuff as soon as they install it.

SIERRA: Why did you write On-Line to work with Tandy's DeskMate?

BOBJACK: Well it can stand alone, too, but I wrote it for DeskMate because there are something like 22 leading software companies marketing or developing DeskMate applications right now, including Lotus.

SIERRA: Lotus 1-2-3 that runs from DeskMate?

BOBJACK: Right. So On-Line's in pretty good company.

SIERRA: It sure is. Thanks, Bob. Got to go now.

BOBJACK: Anytime. Bye. 

is a fairy tale with a woman as "hero," the story is also an adventure, a format which traditionally appeals to boys. In *Leisure Suit Larry*, men discovered the desperate pursuits of a love-less playboy. Crude Larry also appeals to women because the story pokes fun at sex-starved macho types and the dating scene. *Mother Goose*, a game for five-year-olds, gives players a chance to choose a boy or girl protagonist.

The rest of the industry is hardly as innovative, though some attempts have been made to feature women as protagonists in games. *Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego?* by Broderbund is an example of a game that appeals to both males and females and even manages to educate players about geography. But marketing managers and CEOs abound who acknowledge that most of their development efforts center on male tastes. As profits wane and video's share of the entertainment software market approaches 55%, many PC game publishers may be forced to develop non-traditional products.

"Software publishers are too quick to slap down development dollars on an easy, short-term target. The world is made up of more people than 14-year-old boys. Unless PC game publisher's diversify their target markets, the industry will hit the wall," says Brenda Laurel a San Jose, Calif.-based game design consultant and a self-proclaimed "interactivist."

The root of the problem, some say, is cultural. Until recently, high-technology professions have been dominated by males. Outside of work, men, not women, have traditionally been the ones to tinker with machines. Thus one of the reasons for a lack of diversity in game design is the demographics of the developers themselves. The games they produce are about subjects with which they are fascinated. Many of the games are technical and take hours to learn, let alone win.

"Most of the people who fantasize about flying jets around and commanding submarines are boys and men," says Paul Saffo, research fellow, Institute for the Future, Menlo Park, Calif. "The games give them a chance to indulge in something they could previously only fantasize about."

Even when new games receive an enthusiastic response by women at trade shows, getting the women into retail stores to buy the software is no easy task.

Spectrum Holobyte, an Alameda, Calif.-based division of Sphere Inc., distributes *Tetris*, a puzzle game developed in the Soviet Union. Though the company is confident that 30-55% of *Tetris* players are women, warranty cards indicate that 85% of purchasers are men.

According to Carl Morrishaw, assistant manager at a New York Software Etc. store, most of the women who enter the store purchase productivity software. About four out of 10 game buyers are women, but half of them indicate that they are buying the game for a child or as a gift for someone else. If this is the case in New York, a city where many women use computers at work, the number of women buying games in other regions of the U.S. is probably much lower.

Getting women into software stores to buy games for themselves is feasible, say some publishers.

"Women shop at B. Dalton, Sam Goody and Radio Shack, why not Egghead?" says Jordan Sachs, vice president and general manager of Britannica Software, a San Francisco, Calif.-based subsidiary of Encyclopedia Britannica.

Sachs' opinions are more than just talk—along with Philip Adam, president of Spectrum HoloByte, and other publishers, Sachs hopes to hold a major event that he thinks will help get women into software stores. By organizing a "Women's Day" with a major chain of software stores, the publishers hope to promote their games and improve female computer literacy.

If getting a piece of each woman's discretionary dollar is what some publishers are after, they must first determine the types of games women might find fun. Infocom Inc., a subsidiary of Menlo Park, Calif.-based Mediagenic, tried selling *Plundered Hearts*, a romance novel-type game. When the game flopped, Infocom's

suspicion was that the market for games targeted specifically at women just wasn't there. Other marketers disagree.

"Most women who use computers are not the type of women who read romance novels. Why would they buy romance novel software?" asks Bing Gordon, vp of marketing at San Mateo Calif.-based Electronic Arts, a game company. Women who own and use computers tend to be achievement-oriented, using the machines for work or as an educational tool, according to the company's focus groups. "If they even have time for read-

Kathy Skinner, Maryland, submitted this cartoon.

WELL, THANKS FOR CHANGING ME FROM A FROG. TOO BAD YOU'RE NOTHING BUT A SIMPLE PEASANT GIRL. YOU CAN KEEP THE LITTLE CROWN AS A SOUVENIR.



ing fiction, they don't read cheap novels off the drug store rack."

Gordon has found that many women are opposed to playing games on principle. Women who use computers for productivity see games as a waste of time. Women in the educational segment consider the computer a device for family learning and view games as almost a pernicious influence. Men on the other hand, think of pilot games as educational, says Gordon.

One of the problems with trying to target women is the lack of an affordable media vehicle. Most software game publishers cannot afford to advertise in magazines like *Family Circle* or

Mademoiselle, where there is no guarantee that readers own computers. Since television advertising is out of the question, the only realistic option is direct mail. Here again, finding new users means finding out who owns computers and what they use them for.

If the answer lies in product development for machines with which women feel comfortable, almost no companies have addressed that issue. Nor have they explored the possible benefit women might gain in playing computer games in their spare time, says Ron Kaatz, professor of advertising at Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism.



One thing women want, says Roberta Williams, is creative story-telling games that allow the player to interact with real personalities. Williams, who considers herself more of a screenplay writer than a product developer, is putting the finishing touches on *The Colonel's Bequest*, a mystery game that is a hybrid of an Agatha Christie murder and Nancy Drew mystery story. Set in the 1920s in the mansion of a dying old colonel, Laura Bow, a college girl, sets out to find a criminal. The story is peppered with murders as the colonel's relatives and friends squabble over who will inherit his money. For now, Sierra On-Line is counting on overlap users from

King's Quest. John Williams estimates that about 35-40% of *King's Quest IV* players are female.

The perfect product—one that women will buy exclusively for themselves—has yet to be developed. Sierra On-Line has made strides in that direction. But small companies can't afford to take too many risks in developing products just for women. The lack of good studies on the demographics of female game players makes it all the more difficult.

According to a survey of 170 women conducted at Northwestern University under the supervision of Kaatz, just under

half the women surveyed had not played a video or computer game in the last two years. However, the vast majority said they would play if a game existed that interested them. When asked to comment on what kind of games would appeal to them, the most popular response was games involving simulations of social situations.

The second most popular suggestion was sports games, such as volleyball and scuba diving, crew, bike racing and tennis. Third were games about fashion design and shopping. A close fourth was mystery/adventure games. The big losers: fighter pilot simulations, space battles and exercise games.

In an industry where product development is synonymous with marketing, why bother investing marketing dollars in women and girls when they show little interest in playing the majority of games? The answer, analysts agree, is that somewhere in the 1980s, women and girls have become computer literate through office work and education.

"Computers are a critical tool to the education of every child in this country—not just boys," says Sally Bowman, director

of the Computer Learning Foundation, Palo Alto, Calif. "If it takes games to get girls started, I'm all for it."

Mediagenic, one of the largest entertainment software companies, concedes that the market for computer games is flattening out, though it denies that expanding its market to include women is the answer. The company reported a 60% drop in net income for its fiscal year ending March 31, and Chairman and CEO Bruce Davis says the company is backing off from PC games. Within two years, he plans on refocusing the business to emphasize video games and presentation tools.

"PCs will never have the penetration into homes that video games do," says Davis. Nintendo sets, which sell for \$99.95 with a game pack, are far cheaper and easier to use.

Unlike a number of smaller software publishers, Davis is a firm believer that women, and girls to some extent, are not a viable market for either computer or video games. Yet when asked why, Davis vaguely responds that "profound" differences in the sexes imply an inclination for men to play computers games and for women to shun them.

If Davis' statement were true, women would probably also have an inclination to shun computers, and Apple Computer wouldn't have bothered featuring a pregnant woman in one of its TV ads. According to a nationwide survey conducted by Simmons Market Research Bureau, New York, 45% of adults who use PCs in the home are female. In another survey by San Jose-based Dataquest, researchers found that 29% of the homes with computers had a female as the primary user.

Software publishers who write off the female market as a waste of resources should think twice. If a growing number of women are using PCs at home, innovative product development and aggressive marketing just might convince women users to take a breather from their word processing and household demands to have some fun.

"Game companies are making a big mistake by concluding that women don't like games just because they don't like the games that are available," says Laurel. ■

King's Quest IV Master Adventurer Contest Winners

TRIP FOR TWO TO ENGLAND

Peter Strumolo, New York.

TANDY TL COMPUTERS

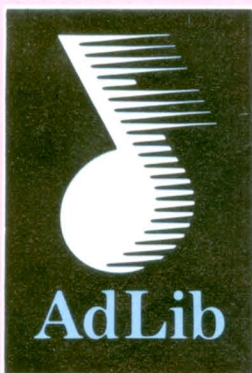
Larry Crimmins, Arizona
Chad Fisher, Pennsylvania
Winnie Larsen, Denmark

2000 others won either a free software product or a free T-Shirt. For a list of winners, write to Master Adventurer Contest, Sierra On-Line, Box 485, Coarsegold, CA 93614.



Peter and his wife, Maribeth, having tea at an English Castle

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AD LIB MUSIC SYNTHESIZER CARD

Take advantage of the sound potential of your personal computer with an AdLib Music Synthesizer card. Powerful, yet affordable, the AdLib card utilizes the same music synthesizer found on many popular electronic keyboards to enrich computer sound and bring your games to life.

Sierra games now feature full stereo soundtracks composed and performed by such professionals as Hollywood composer William Goldstein and



Supertramp's Bob Siebenberg. These games support the AdLib music synthesizer card and other sound cards. You can also use the AdLib Music Synthesizer Card to compose music of your own on your own personal computer.

With enhanced sound, you'll be able to hear the full effect of Sierra's dazzling music soundtracks and dozens of realistic synchronized sound effects.

Find out more about the AdLib Music Synthesizer Card by ordering Sierra's Music Demonstration cassette (\$1.95 for shipping and handling).

Adventure games never sounded like **this**.

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1-800-326-6654**

Outside the U.S. (209) 683-4468
7 a.m. to 9 p.m. (PST)
Monday through Friday

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PRODUCTS FOR YOUR COMPUTER

by John Williams

MS-DOS

GOING ON-LINE (Finally!) WITH SIERRA

Modems—once exotic hardware items that only the wealthy could afford and only the technically minded could use—are now becoming a commonplace sight on desks around the world. If you don't own one yet, chances are you know someone who does.* Everywhere you go these days, people are getting in touch with the many information services that exist to make your home or business telephone a direct pipeline to goods, services and information of all kinds.

Modem programs, the applications needed to make your computer and your telephone able to understand one another, have been around for quite a few years too, but it seemed that if the program was complete enough to be useful, it was too complex and intimidating for the average user to want to tackle; one look at a two- or three-inch thick manual, and most people decided they weren't really all that interested in going online, anyway. On the other hand, programs that attempted to be 'user friendly' were seldom complete enough to be practical.

While software designers were trying (but not succeeding) to find a middle ground, the price of modems was dropping steadily, and the range and quality of software and services available online was growing dramatically. The only thing standing in the way of a real telecommunications revolution was the software.

That's where things stood on telecommunications for the average computer user until about five months ago.

Last April, Sierra president Ken Williams received a phone call from a fellow in Burbank, Ohio by the name of Bob Jack.

Bob was a veteran programmer with an established track record in telecommunications software. He had designed a modem program that included more useful features than any previous application of its type, yet was incredibly easy to use. When we got a copy, we proved to ourselves just how easy it was by sitting down and using it; we were online in minutes, and all we did was push a few onscreen buttons with a mouse pointer!

As you might imagine, On-Line generated quite a bit of excitement around the halls of Sierra. Here was a product that would make the online universe of free software, useful services and shared interests available to a much wider audience than ever before. With a program this easy, convenient, and inexpensive, going online would be within the reach of anyone with a computer and a telephone. Ken knew he wanted Sierra to market this remarkable new program.

Bob flew out from Ohio and worked with Sierra personnel to make Sierra's On-Line the best product of its kind available. We didn't quite succeed in turning him into a Californian, but when he left for Ohio, we had a product we could all be proud of. For the first time in the history of telecommunications software, a modem program had been developed that combined thoroughness with ease of use to bring the world of electronic communications as close to every computer user as his or her telephone.

If you have been curious about electronic communications, but hesitant to invest in the hardware and software needed to take the first steps, there has never been a better time or an easier way to do it. Your computer and telephone, together with a modem and Sierra's On-Line, will open up a whole new world of

information services and new friends at the push of a button.

*If you are not yet familiar with modems and how they work, see the article on page 39: 'What, Exactly, is a Modem, Anyway?'

SIERRA ANNOUNCES SUPPORT FOR NEW MUSIC OUTPUT DEVICE

Game Blaster Card

As regular readers of the Sierra's News Magazine already know, Sierra was a pioneer in the field of music card support, and has already made a commitment to support owners of IBM Music Feature, Roland MT-32, and Adlib Music cards with future SCI based Sierra products. Now Sierra announces support of a new music standard to give you a wide range of music output to choose from.

Silicon Valley based Creative Music Systems has made tremendous strides in making their output device—Game Blaster—a new industry standard. It has already sold in thousands of computer and software stores across the country, and this Christmas it will be carried by most Radio Shack stores (Radio Shack is the largest chain of electronic specialty stores in the Country, if not the world!). With support like this, their music card will be hard to ignore. Music drivers for Game Blaster cards are already available on the Sierra BBS, and future SCI products will also support the cards.



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MACINTOSH

SIERRA SEES DELAYS ON HELICOPTER SIMULATOR FOR MAC

Concentrates Efforts On Moving SCI Development Language to the Macintosh

We are embarrassed to report that *3-D Helicopter Simulator* for Macintosh, which was promised in the last issue of the Sierra Newsletter, has been delayed indefinitely.

As avid Sierra fans know, the 1989 debut of Sierra's SCI development language changed the face of animated adven-

ture games forever. Products written under SCI, including *Leisure Suit Larry II*, *King's Quest IV*, *Police Quest II* and *Space Quest III*, have been megahits on both MS-DOS and Atari ST systems.

Sierra is working hard to move SCI to the Macintosh so that owners of these machines can experience the incredible difference of our new line of adventures. It has become necessary for John Hartin, programmer of the *3-D Helicopter Simulator*, to abandon that project to assist in development of SCI for the machine.

According to Sierra President Ken Williams "...*3-D Helicopter Simulator* could have been a major product for Sierra [and still might be at some later date]....SCI for

Macintosh, and the resulting products that will come when Sierra completes the Macintosh development, will be a cornerstone for Sierra's future. We hope that John [Hartin] will have significant positive impact on SCI so that he can go back and complete the *Helicopter Simulator* project at a later date."

Interested readers can find out more about SCI and how it will impact future Sierra development by reading "The Official Book of King's Quest" by Don Trivette (Compute Books). An excerpt from the book on the importance of SCI was included in the Spring '89 edition of the Sierra Newsletter.

AMIGA

SCI Products Come Through in Spite of Program Delays

In the last issue of the Sierra Newsletter, this column included a bold announcement of the completion of Sierra's Creative Interpreter and imminent release of *Leisure Suit Larry II* and *Space Quest III* for the Amiga.

Like most bold announcements of upcoming product completions and imminent

product releases, this one turned out to be wrong.

Sierra's Amiga SCI project was not complete in May (as originally scheduled), and the products didn't hit the street in June (as previously announced). Both the schedule and the release date were dealt a punishing blow by the departure of one Amiga programmer - Jim Heintz, who left Sierra to complete study requirements for his degree. Sierra pulled in other programming staff to replace Jim, but the project

remained 4 to 6 months behind schedule. As Programming Manager Dale Carlson puts it, "Making software is a lot like making a baby. You can't put nine mothers on the project and have a baby in one month."

Despite the delays, however, the SCI Amiga project is finally showing results. *Space Quest III* is due to ship in November (no, really!), and *Leisure Suit Larry II* in October. Watch this space for further developments and future products.

APPLE IIGS

SIERRA TO RELEASE MANHUNTER: SAN FRANCISCO

Possible End of the Line for IIGS Products?

For the past year, Sierra has made a serious study of the internals of the presently configured Apple IIGS, and has had many meetings to discuss and review the future product enhancements for the machine. After months of study, Sierra has discontinued development efforts to produce its SCI development system for the computer.

This decision puts the possibility of future Sierra game products for the Apple IIGS in doubt. SCI is the platform for the vast majority of Sierra's product line, and

without it future products will not be forthcoming.

"Sierra's last big programming platform, the AGI development system, was converted to the Apple IIGS and made possible products like the *King's Quest* series, *Leisure Suit Larry* and *Mixed-Up Mother Goose*..." explained Sierra President Ken Williams. "The SCI development language, Sierra's new development platform, is just too big and too complex for the relatively slow CPU of the Apple IIGS machine. We don't see a major upgrade coming along soon to solve the problem."

As it stands, *Manhunter: San Francisco*, which is scheduled for release in early fall, could be Sierra's last adventure game product for the IIGS. *Manhunter: San Francisco* was built using the AGI development language, and currently is the

last IIGS project outstanding on the Sierra programming schedule.

In closing Williams noted, "The intent in closing down the IIGS SCI development project is not to discontinue support of the Apple II...I've been an Apple owner myself for well over a decade. I've owned not one, but two Apple I's, I purchased one of the first ever Apple II's.

"The bottom line is that the SCI development system just won't work on the Apple IIGS as it is presently configured. When Apple upgrades the machine, or when there are enough owners of the Applied Engineering Transwarp board to count on it in most machines, Sierra will resume development. It is my hope that Apple will see the consumer need out there and respond."

APPLE II Family of Computers

Screenwriter II, a powerful, multi-featured word processing program for the Apple II family of computers, and *The General Manager*, a fully-customizable Data Base Manager, are now being dis-

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ATARI ST

SIERRA PLANS INTRODUCTION OF 3-D ANIMATED ADVENTURE GAMES IN GERMAN LANGUAGE

It's no secret among owners of Atari's flagship ST line of computers that the big sales of their machine are in Europe. Germany, in particular, has been a big market for Atari, and it has been mainly because of this support that the Atari has continued to be an aggressive player in personal computing.

For a full impact of Europe's importance to Atari, a quick look at the U.S. software shelves shows that a number of the Atari bestsellers in productivity and education originated on the European continent.

Despite the glowing picture of the ST in France, Germany and beyond, to date Sierra has had very little to gain by the burgeoning European market for ST software. Sierra adventure games, with their em-

phasis on text messages and input, have had limited success there.

Looking ahead to the emergence of the united European market and growth of computers overseas, Sierra is looking ahead with plans to introduce its best selling animated adventure games in a number of foreign languages. German language conversions are already underway, with other languages including French and Japanese planned.

According to Sierra customer support manager Liz Jacobs: "The language barrier in Europe has made for some frustrated players. Although many Europeans know enough English to get their point across in a letter or communicate on the telephone, the confines of our parsing system have been a problem. I am, frankly, very surprised with how many Europeans have been able to play our games, but I know the potential market is much larger."

Also cited as a barrier, were the basic differences between U.S. and European culture. "The *Police Quest* games are a great example," states Liz. "When we

Americans need a cop, we dial 911 for emergency. Information is 411 or 555-1212. All of these numbers appear in *Police Quest* games, and to a German or an Australian, they don't mean a thing."

For this reason, Sierra's foreign language development team is made up of not just translators, but consultants that know the countries where the software will be selling. They not only change the text, but sometimes re-arrange puzzle solutions. In perhaps the most difficult translation now underway, jokes and innuendo from *Leisure Suit Larry* games are undergoing rigorous re-write to be properly ribald for the more liberal European audience.

Sierra expects to ship its first German language products sometime after Christmas, with other language versions to be made available based on demand. Information on how schools in the U.S. can get hold of these foreign language versions to supplement class materials will be published in a future issue of the Sierra Magazine.

Product Shipping Schedule

TITLE	October 1989	November 1989	December 1989	January 1990
<i>Codename: Iceman</i>		IBM		
<i>The Colonel's Bequest</i>	IBM			Atari ST
<i>Conquests of Camelot</i>				IBM
<i>Gold Rush!</i>			Apple IIE/IIC	
<i>Helicopter Simulator</i>	IBM 2.0			
<i>Hero's Quest</i>	IBM			
<i>Hoyle's Book of Games</i>	Atari ST			
<i>King's Quest IV</i>		Macintosh	Amiga	
<i>Leisure Suit Larry II</i>		Amiga		
<i>Leisure Suit Larry III</i>		IBM		
<i>Manhunter: San Francisco</i>		Macintosh	Apple IIGS	
<i>Manhunter: New York</i>	Apple IIE/IIC & Macintosh			
<i>Police Quest II</i>				Macintosh
<i>Sorcerian (EGA)</i>				IBM
<i>Space Quest III</i>	Amiga			
<i>Thexder</i>	Macintosh			

PLEASE NOTE: Computer software development is a very inexact science. The projected ship dates above are provided for general information only, and should not be depended on. Sierra On-Line, Inc., and publishers of computer software in general, have a very poor track record of meeting projected shipping schedules.

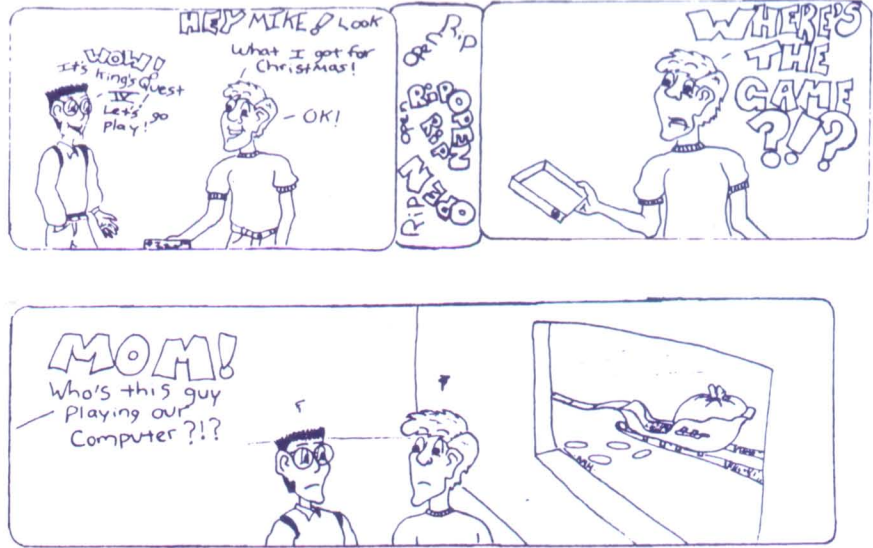
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sentative place an ordinary appearing CD into a device, the CDI player, which looked like a conventional CD player. The CDI player was attached to an ordinary television set and home stereo. But that's where adjectives like *conventional* and *ordinary* dropped completely out of my vocabulary. Because what came on the screen next was something I had never seen before!

The first demonstration was of a golf game. Were I watching a golf tournament on television the screen might have looked typical. But I wasn't. It was a *game*. The golfer I was controlling was a real person; the scenery was an actual photographed golf course; and the surrounding sound came from a real golf course. Once I struck the ball, the camera followed the ball onto the fairway. Had I blown the shot, a golf pro would have come onscreen to give me tips for better play.

The next demonstration was a tour of the Smithsonian Institute in Washington. Using the mouse to guide yourself, you wander through the Smithsonian. Those who have attached video disc players to their TV's are already familiar with the superb visual quality to be had. What makes this disc the next best thing to being at the Smithsonian and light years ahead of a video tape is the feeling of being in control. YOU decide what exhibits you want to look at. YOU decide how long to spend at each exhibit and which buttons you want to press. Accompanying you on your journey is a narrator who, with

Merrill Hutchison, Utah, submitted this cartoon (age 14)



one of those wonderful voices we remember from the documentaries back in grade school, gives us as much, or as little information as we'd like about each exhibit.

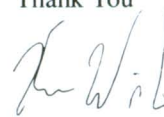
My favorite demonstration of a CDI disc was something they were just tinkering around with and which I'm not even sure was ever meant to be a real product. Do you remember the Fisher-Price crib toys that hang on the side of a crib and are loaded with dozens of things to do: A mirror, something fun to spin, a rattle, etc.? What they had done was to photograph one of these plastic toys and then animate it. In the mirror was a real little girl's reflection. Using the mouse you control a full size little girl's hand which can be used to manipulate

the various playthings. The child's face in the mirror watches the hand as it moves around and giggles as you play. All of the various toys are completely functional.

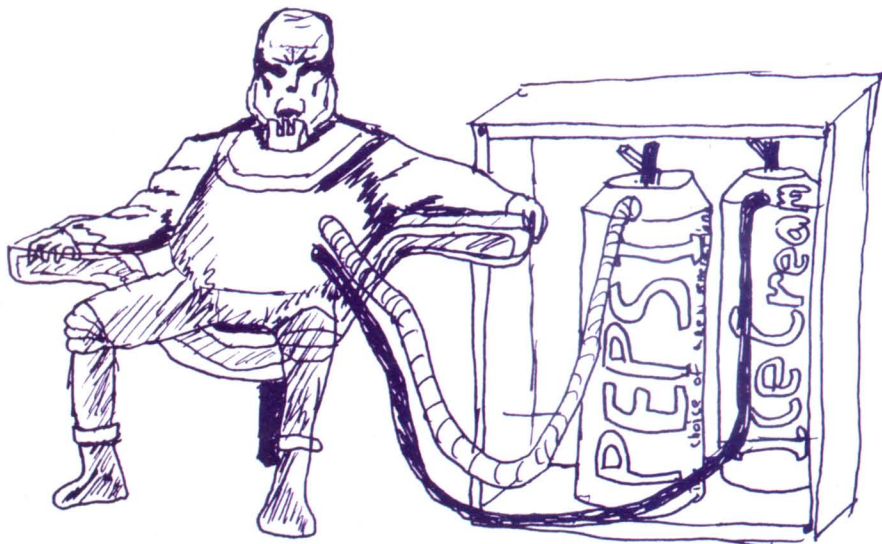
That's the demonstration that really woke me up. Because I was watching one of the first computer games so simple any preschooler could have fun. The great thing about having television quality graphics and sound in computer products is that we can open computer usage to a much broader group of people. To be honest, computers are awfully hard to use for a great many people. In fact, an alarming percentage of our population doesn't read very well. These future products will allow even the confirmed couch potato to use a computer, as never before.

As with any new consumer technology, CDI may or may not be a success. The players are awfully expensive at a projected price of \$1,000, although this can be expected to come down rapidly over time. We believe CDI to be a clear indicator of the direction the wind is blowing.

At Sierra, we have started experimenting with what our games will look like with speech and television quality graphics. We're delighted by this next evolutionary advance for the industry and hope that you will enjoy the experiences it allows us to bring you.

Thank You

 Ken Williams

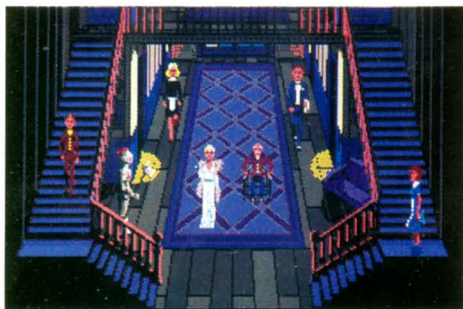
cut-away view of Uohaul's life support system.



Darby McDevitt, Washington, submitted this cartoon

the process? Every level of specialist will have input and an impact on the end result.

That is the job of a director. What I do—and it will probably be differentiated in the future—is probably best compared with a screen writer AND a director. In the movies you don't generally see the screenwriter and director as one. You do occasionally—Steven Spielberg many times writes his own stuff, directs it, and produces it. But usually a screenwriter



The Colonel's Bequest

writes a script and sends it on, and never sees it again. And may not recognize it when it comes out. The director is the person that gets the script, interprets it in his or her own way, casts it according to ideas in his head, and then directs the acting the way the ideal in his head thinks it should be—camera angles, sweeping vistas, whatever he sees in his head. It is up to the director to be sure it comes out, and he works with a lot of technical people—the camera man, the editing department, the actors, the costumers, the set design, everybody. So the job of a director is to take that initial idea from somebody else and to take in the creative ideas from the other people and put it together without getting it jumbled up into a mess. To try to sort of guide it along.

So you function as both writer and director and work with a team of specialists to get your vision onto the computer screen.

Actually, you don't want to be a tyrant and have things just your way. You try to get the most creative people you can to work on your project—your movie or your game—you get the talents you want, and then you draw upon their ideas and talents to enhance your product, hopefully, but you also have the ultimate say so because if you don't, you then get a jumble, a mess, chaos.

It is a talent in itself just working with creative types and getting something out.

Your first game, *Mystery House*, was very much a partnership between you and Ken. There is almost a legend that has grown up about that first one—Ken and Roberta Williams and the kitchen table. Is there still a partnership between the two of you?

Oh, yes. In the first game we did everything. At the time we did not even know what was going to happen. It was sort of a thing we were doing as a hobby almost. But when it looked like it was going to turn into something bigger, possibly a company, we did have to decide who has what role. Because we both wanted to be involved. Right off the bat I knew that I did not want to run the company. Just let me write games, that is what I want to do. When we hired our first employees, I pretty much butted right out of the management. I didn't want in it at all, *at all*. I like to write the games. I like to work with the people that are working with me on the games. That's what I like to do and that's *all* I want to do. However, I do keep up on what's happening. I think I am a lot more involved in the company than people think. I don't know people individually, but Ken keeps me in touch with what is going on. We talk about it all the time. So I have advice but I try to keep it within the Board of Directors framework. As a member of the board, my opinion is...

It probably goes the other way too, when you and your team are working on the games.

Yes, sometimes he will suggest that I do this or that. And I might...or I might not.

Do you plan to re-release any of those early games you did? That would probably involve a total rewrite to do so.

Oh it would. It would be not just adding pictures and messages, but the designs would have to be updated. They are pretty simplistic. Our designs are a lot more complicated now, the plots are better and longer, the characters are more developed and have more personalities, and have more dialog. The stories have more climatic endings. The older designs were "you go from here to there, and along the way you gather some treasure."

The only one I have really considered ever bringing back, and I've talked to Ken about it, is *Time Zone*. That was the first game where we actually used outside artists, that I didn't do the art, because I'm *not* an artist.

I didn't realize you did the art on the first one.

Oh yes, (*chuckles*) I did the art. Ken and I did everything. *Time Zone* was the first with outside art, so in that way it looks a little better than the first ones. The design on *Time Zone* was good and up-to-date. In fact, if anything, instead of upgrading that design, it would almost have to be downgraded because it was so intricate and difficult and long. That game had 1400 rooms, and the average game now has maybe 90. So it was huge, huge, huge.



The Colonel's Bequest

But the story was interesting, too. It fit together real well. To redo *Time Zone* would be a big job.

You are always going to be in some way associated with *King's Quest*.

Well, the real truth is that I've not done only *King's Quest*. I've gotten typecast with that genre—fairy tales, *Mother Goose*. I've done 14 games, and not all of them have been *King's Quest*. In fact my first game was a murder mystery. The first game that the company started with was called *Mystery House*, and that was a murder mystery. *The Colonel's Bequest* is a lot like mystery house. If you look at just the basic facts of the two stories they are very similar. So I obviously had the story in my head, and it is just coming out a second time. I've done science fiction—*Time Zone* was a time travel game. I've done more than just *King's Quest*, but I'm known best for *King's Quest*, I guess.

Now I'm going to try to get a hint from you: can we expect another King's Quest?

Yes, you can expect another one.

Many of your fans seem to feel a personal relationship to King Graham in particular. Do you have that kind of relationship with him.

Oh, actually, it's funny, but personally I think I feel more of a relationship with Rosella. I feel more in tune with her.

Editor's Note: Both Rosella and King Graham are partners to play against in the Hoyles Game coming out soon. I've seen a preview of King Graham, in his familiar cap and feather, smiling or frowning over the cards dealt to him.

Recently you were on the cover of Ad Week's Marketing Computers. The article was about women as a specific audience for computer games. I wondered what type of games you think are specifically for women. (Editor's note: This article is reprinted on page 22)

That's a tough one.

Yes, I know it is.

Women as a target audience...if someone really wanted to think about.... (She stopped and pondered a moment, then was back with a rush of words.) This is where it gets really tough: what is a computer game,



The Colonel's Bequest

first of all? Is it an arcade game, or an adventure game like ours, or simulation, or a board game? What is a game? What is it we are talking about if we say computer software game or entertainment? You have to break it down into different groups. If you say a game is a strategy game like cards or chess or checkers—not the war strategy games, but the board game or card strategy type—women enjoy that type just as much as men. But of course you are not targeting women specifically. Now, say you are a

company that does simulations. If they want to target women, they would have a lot harder time finding a simulation that women would enjoy. I don't think that most women enjoy trying to fly an airplane and blow people up, or to guide submarines. Some do, of course, but as a general rule I don't think women enjoy doing that any more than most men enjoy reading romance novels.

In that article I said "Women want creative storytelling games and interaction with personalities." However, I've never subscribed necessarily to the theory of trying to find a game or software or entertainment that appeals only to women. I think that is kind of degrading, personally. If someone were to say "Let's do a romance, and get the women to buy it," I wouldn't subscribe to that. I just would say, "For-get it." What I like to do with our company is to think of products, at least the ones that I do, that would appeal to everybody. Some of our games appeal to families—King's Quest IV and Goldrush are two games that families might work on together. But not all of the games are geared for families. Colonel's Bequest I don't think of as a family game, I think of that as an adult game. I don't think of it as men or women. I'm hoping it is a good murder mystery and it doesn't matter if you are a man or a woman.

From the mail I've seen I notice that some families do work on games together.

Yes, and that is good, but we do not want to do everything that way. I like our company to do a little bit of everything. Mother Goose, for example, is for the younger set. It is not meant for older brother and sisters or parents, unless they want to sit down with them. It is mainly for the little kid. And I designed it so that a little boy or a little girl would enjoy it equally as well. Now Police Quest, on the other hand, is pretty strongly for male, teens on up. And that is fine. We don't want to forget them, either. And King's Quest and probably Space Quest and Goldrush are more family oriented. Leisure Suit Larry is for both men and women, but not necessarily for kids. The Colonel's Bequest is for men and women and not necessarily for kids. Hoyle again is for the whole family. So we don't like to do just one thing for the same group of people over and over and over again. You want to branch off and

do different things and catch different audiences. As long as the unifying thing is that it is all of high quality. There is a certain standard that we must meet.

Danny Hulleman, Canada,
submitted this cartoon (age 13)

The Making of King's Quest IV



I wondered if you had gotten very much feedback about King's Quest IV, specifically about Rosella as the main character?

You know what's funny about that is that I really thought I would. I thought there would be some controversy with it, that maybe guys or boys would write in and say, "I don't want to be a girl," or that maybe critics, reviewers, might say something about it, either pro or con. But the truth of the matter is, and this is what really surprised me, is that I personally have not heard much about it. It's like it hasn't really been an issue, and I worried about it while I was designing the game. I wondered if it was going to be accepted. I thought it might be controversial. It hadn't been done in our industry to have a girl heroine, and I thought it would get a lot of attention. It has gotten some, but nothing really dramatic. People responded to King's Quest IV, but very few of them made mention of a woman heroine. They liked that it was still Graham's family, but it was as if they didn't care or didn't notice specifically a woman.

Do you have time to play any computer games yourself.

Nooo. I *look* at them, I look at them all the time, studying them, trying to learn from them. I don't sit down and play. I'll go through a few screens, or watch Ken play or watch the kids play. I like to see what they are doing, to see if there are new techniques, or something that I'm not doing. But I never sit down to play, and I *never* get so far in as to remotely solve something or win or anything like that. Because I don't have the time.

Many youngsters reading this I'm sure are longing to design computer games themselves. Do you have any advice for them?

Yes, I do, actually. It is beginning to be a viable profession, I think. A few years ago I would not have said that. However, it is beginning, and it will be a profession that is going to require a lot of knowledge in specific areas, not only computers, they are just part of it. In fact, to do what I do you don't need to know how to program. You need to understand the computer, how it works, how to interface with the computer, and maybe just the rudimentary basics of

how programming works and how the computer understands, and what a program may look like. But to do what I'm doing, you don't need to major in computer science.

But you definitely need to go to college. And when you go to college you should probably major in cinematography or film—I would say they would be the closest thing—with a strong emphasis on computer science, writing, art, history.

Many of your fans dream of achieving what you have already achieved. Do you have any dreams of your own.

(She laughed and promptly responded.) I have dreams of retiring, going off in a sailboat around the world for about two years. *(Then she laughed again and went on.)* No, no, not really. I could never not do what I am doing, because I really enjoy it. This is me. This is something that I have always been doing. From the time I was a little kid, I've been doing this, I just didn't know I was doing it. I've always been constructing stories. Even as a little kid I was constructing stories, I was drawing pictures, I was telling stories around my pictures to my friends, and organizing kids

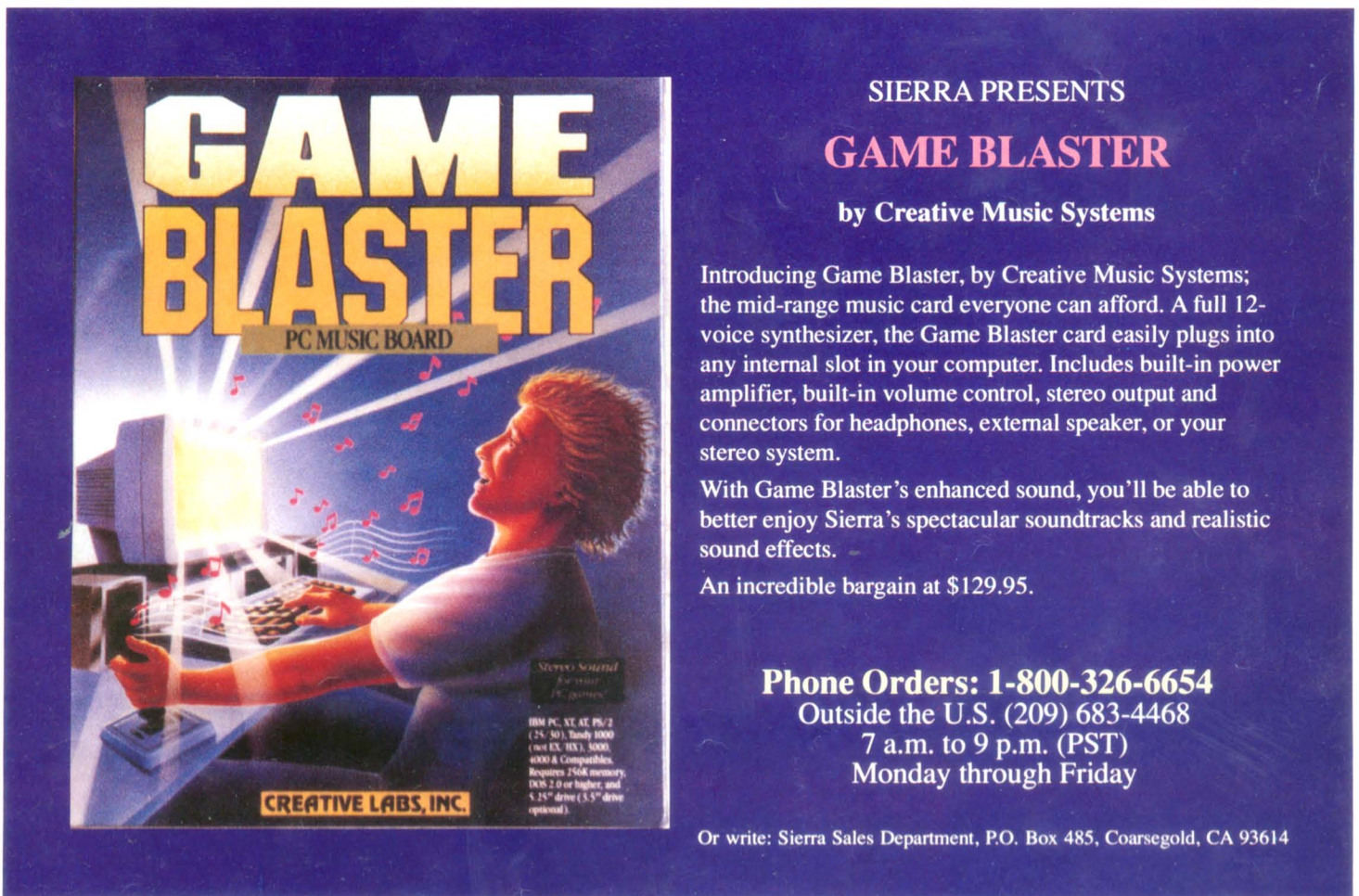
to do my little plays. I was always doing that, and I can't imagine that I won't al-



The Colonel's Bequest

ways do it in some form or another. Maybe I'll go on to writing something else besides computer games, maybe I will keep doing this. Who knows.

I do think it would be nice one day to not have to come out with a new game every year. I would like it when the company got to the point where other people were taking up the slack, and I could do a game every two years or so. So that I could kick back, and if my game didn't ship for three years, so what. ■



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Excellence in Software Awards—1989

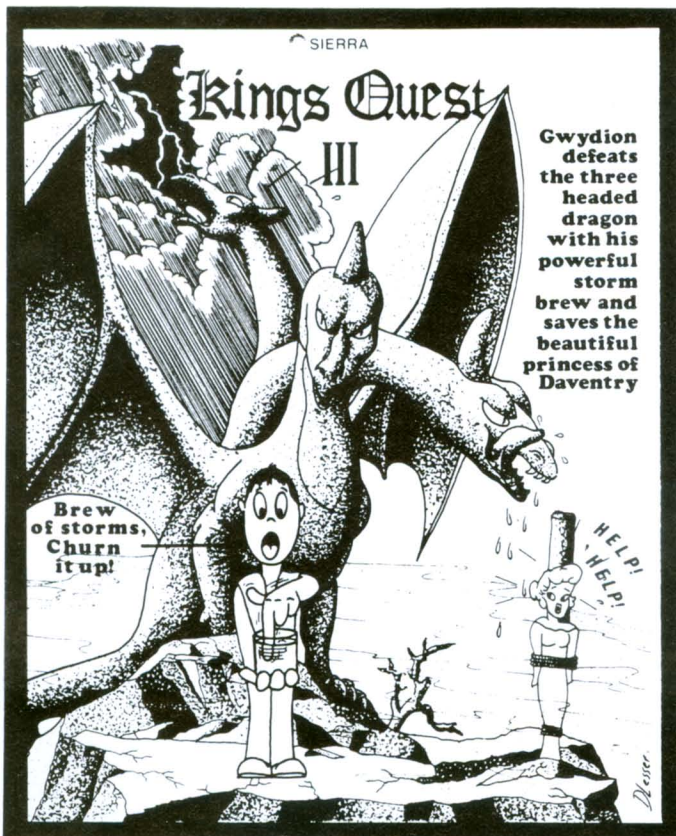
King's Quest IV won the "1989 Best Adventure or Fantasy Role-Playing Game" award at the SPA Excellence in Software Awards ceremony in May. The SPA—Software Publishers Association—includes virtually all the major publishers and developers in business, consumer, and education software. Nominees for the award, which is the software industry's version of the Oscar, are submitted by members of SPA, and winners are chosen by a vote of the membership.

The 1987 winner in this category was also a Sierra game—*Leisure Suit Larry in the Land of the Lounge Lizards*. The awards were announced at a black-tie gala held in the Grand Ballroom at the Hotel del Coronado in San Diego. The Master of Ceremonies was Harry Anderson, star of television's *Night Court*, and an avid computer enthusiast.



Ken and Roberta Williams were among those in attendance at the SPA awards ceremony.

David Lesser, New York, submitted this cartoon



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WHAT, EXACTLY, IS A MODEM, ANYWAY?

A Brief Introduction to Telecommunications

By Bridget McKenna

Your computer and your telephone don't speak the same language.

A telephone carries signals in analog form, in a continuous wave of rising and falling frequencies which form the sounds we hear. Computer signals, on the other hand, are digital. Computer information is contained in discrete on/off, yes/no combinations that contain instructions to operate the system.

A modem is needed to translate computer and telephone languages to make communication between the two possible. A modem, short for 'modulator / demodulator', works by changing the telephone's analog signal to digital data that can be understood by a computer, and vice versa. With the addition of a modem, your telephone and computer work

together to make it possible to contact other computers directly, and transfer information from one computer to another.

Information is 'uploaded' (transferred from your computer to another) or 'downloaded' (transferred to your computer from another) using transfer methods, called 'protocols' that 'package' the information in various ways to send it from one place to another. Programs are available also to compress computer information on the sending end and decompress it on the receiving end, thereby saving time and transmission costs.

Information Services, such as CompuServe, GENie, and Prodigy, provide access to goods, services and information around the world to computer users in home, school and business environments. They also provide a forum for the exchange of

ideas on almost any subject you can imagine. These services are available on a subscription basis, and charge 'connect time fees' in addition to the fees paid to your telephone company for making the call that connects you to the service (large information services can be accessed by a local call in most areas).

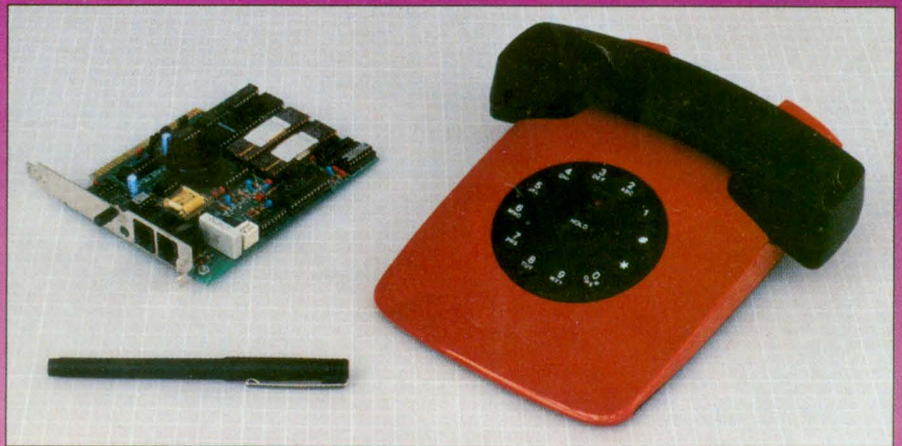
There are also a growing number of 'free' services (no charge for connect time), called Bulletin Board Services, or BBS for short. One or more of these is usually a local phone call away from any city in any industrialized nation in the world.

Modems are becoming a necessary accessory to computer users everywhere, as more and more people discover the wealth of free software, important information, and valuable services that are available online. ■

HINTS ANY TIME

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Applauded by users and reviewers alike, CompuCom modems are renowned for superior performance where others have failed. **PERFORMANCE...** "I have recently had a lot of trouble getting 2400 BAUD MODEMS to work...this one is working perfectly." R.T., Moreno Valley CA. **SUPPORT...** "I get the impression that your company indeed, bends over backwards to provide service to its customer ." M.F., Selma CA. **SUPERIOR TECHNOLOGY...**The phone connection is the main source of data errors. **DYNAMIC IMPEDANCE STABILIZATION_{tm}**, **DIS_{tm}**, (invented by CompuCom) improves the signal quality, assures maximum speed, and reduces errors by up to 95% compared to a standard modem. Model 2400 (without DIS) at \$95 outperforms the low cost alternatives. The 24DIS at \$119 outperforms the challengers, regardless of cost. IBM internal, Hayes compatible. *If you aren't totally satisfied, return within 30 days for a full refund !*



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Dennis Allen, March '89 p102

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HOMEWORD II

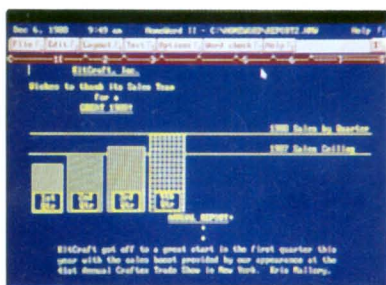
A Word Processor for Today

Only the name is the same . . .

by Bridget McKenna

In 1986, Sierra introduced *HomeWord*, a word processor for the rest of us. *HomeWord* was so simple to learn and use, even for the novice computer user, that it soon had a large and enthusiastic body of supporters. It is still the word processor of choice for many satisfied owners, with tens of thousands of copies in place.

So why did we need *HomeWord II*? Well, suppose you could buy a word processing program that had all *HomeWord's* great features and more besides. Suppose it was just as easy to learn, and even *easier* to use, could create outlines, integrate graphics into your text files, and would not only stand alone, but run from Tandy's popular *DeskMate*. Suppose it also cost less - a lot less - than just about any full-featured



Use graphics and text together to create truly professional-looking documents, or just have some fun!

word processor on the market today. If such a product were available, it would very likely be something you wanted to own; so we decided to develop it.

The program writers began with the features that were already so useful to *HomeWord* owners: Cut and Paste, Find & Replace, Headers and Footers, and so on. For openers, they improved the existing features to bring them up to date with

newer word processing standards; for instance, the new Search and Replace option features *seven* combinable functions, while the Cut and Paste now manipulates



Outline feature helps you organize thoughts and ideas into useful order

graphics as well as text, and includes an editable paste buffer.

There are new features as well, such as an online Thesaurus, an updatable spelling dictionary, six-level outline function, graphics integration using Tandy's **DRAW** and other programs, and the ability to change text alignments any number of times on the same page.

A Logo feature allows the user to save files consisting of any combination of text and graphics, and merge them into other files. It's useful for letterheads, commonly used graphics and text blocks, and merging often-used addresses into letters. *HomeWord* files never looked like *this*.

Compatible with existing HomeWord documents

One new feature that's *really* different from not only the old *HomeWord*, but from anything Sierra has ever done before, is the extensive on-screen Tutorial that takes the user through every phase of creating, modifying and print-

ing *HomeWord II* files. With the *HomeWord II* Tutorial, even the novice computer user will be creating and printing documents soon after installing the program. Detailed Help screens can be called up from anyplace in the program, including the Tutorial.

Contains the same Microlytics, Spellchecker, and Thesaurus as are used in many high priced business word processors.

Whether you're new to word processing, or an experienced user, you'll find the features you need for home, school and office applications in Sierra's new *HomeWord II*.

HOMEWORD II FEATURES

HomeWord II offers users a wide range of word processing functions and capabilities, including:

- » Footnotes
- » Outlining
- » 7 Combinable Search and Replace functions
- » Full Cut & Paste capabilities including Undelete
- » Normal, Bold, Underlined, and Bold Underlined Text
- » Thesaurus
- » Two-mode Spellchecker
- » Expandable Spelling Dictionary
- » Graphics Integration
- » Headers and Footers
- » Page Numbering
- » Custom Margins and Alignments
- » Detailed Help Screens
- » Online Tutorial

If you've been looking for a word processing package that meets all your home, school and office needs for under \$100, you'll find *HomeWord II* an unbelievable bargain at only \$69.95.

See page 21 for information on how to upgrade from *HomeWord* or *HomeWord +*.

ORDERING INFORMATION

SIERRA PRODUCT OUTLETS

Sierra products are available in over 10,000 retail outlets in the U.S. and Canada, and are distributed internationally in over 20 countries. Your local software retailer is the quickest and most convenient way to find the Sierra products you want.

If you can't find the Sierra software product you're looking for at your local software store, you can order it directly by mail or by phone:

TO ORDER BY MAIL

Please fill out all information on the order form completely. Include your check or money order (payable in U.S. funds only), or credit card information. Please do not send cash. No COD orders are accepted. Those ordering from outside the Continental U.S. and Canada, and those wishing to receive their products by a priority shipping method, should note the special instructions below.

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Please call (800) 326-6654 (United States) or (209) 683-4468 (outside U.S.) between 7 a.m. and 9 p.m. Pacific Standard Time. To order by phone, please have your credit card (Visa, Mastercard or American Express) and order information ready. We cannot accept COD or other forms of payment.

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	\$20—2nd Day Air
AdLib Music Card	
and	\$ 6—UPS Ground
Game Blaster Card:	\$10—2nd Day Air

These charges include insurance and reasonable packing materials for shipments of fragile components. On music card orders, checks must clear before order is shipped, therefore in order to expedite shipping you may wish to consider purchase by credit card.

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Those purchasing through the Sierra catalog should circle the total purchase price and indicate the correct size in the box that reads FREE T-SHIRT.

Those purchasing Sierra products from a retail store should send in the ORIGINAL sales receipts with their completed warranty cards. Be sure to include your name, return address and T-Shirt size (SM, M, L, XL). Please include one sales receipt per order.

This promotion good only for those products purchased between September 1, 1989 and December 31, 1990, and must be postmarked no later than January 31, 1991. Additional charge of \$3 for overseas and APO shipments. Void where prohibited.

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To entice you to make the the ultimate step into stereo music, Sierra is offering not one BUT TWO free Sierra games (a total value of over \$120) when you buy a Roland MT-32 music synthesizer direct from Sierra. Select any two products from Sierra's product line when you make your purchase. Please specify the product you choose to receive in the area marked FREE MS-DOS SOFTWARE. Offer good through March 31, 1991.

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Our International Shipping Policy applies to hardware items to be shipped outside the continental U.S. Please see INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING for more details.

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Due to the large variations in shipping cost for various international destinations, and the fluctuating cost of delivery to some locations, all international orders will be by credit card only. Actual shipping and handling charges, including a small fee for customs stickers and insurance (when necessary) will be added to the credit card total on sendout. Most orders are delivered by air mail/parcel post.

DISK UPDATES AND REPLACEMENT

Sierra currently has three full-time people working in its returns department. They are responsible for helping customers update and replace their Sierra software products. If your Sierra software products should stop working for any reason, Sierra will replace it. Just send your Disk #1 along with \$5 for the 5.25 disks or \$10 for the 3.5 disks.

If we upgrade or otherwise alter a program which you own, we will send you the upgrade for a \$10.00 fee. (Watch the Sierra News Magazine for information on software upgrades.)

If you update or replace a program within 90 days of the purchase date, you pay nothing at all.

DISCLAIMER

Please allow up to four weeks for delivery. Some items may be out of stock or not available for shipment at the time of this publication. Sierra may refuse any order for any reason. Prices, including stated shipping charges, may change without notice. All checks and credit cards are subject to verification before order can be processed. All charges to be paid in U.S. funds only.

SPECIAL OFFERS

See details
on page 41

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MS DOS (256K required unless noted). All products are shipped with both 3.5" and 5.25" disks enclosed, supports EGA, CGA, VGA, Hercules Monochrome, MCGA (PS2) and Tandy Graphics modes, unless noted.. All 512K games support music cards.

MS DOS	Price	Quantity	Total
King's Quest I	49.95		
King's Quest II	49.95		
King's Quest III	49.95		
King's Quest IV	49.95		
King's Quest IV (512K)	59.95		
Hero's Quest (512K)	59.95		
The Black Cauldron	39.95		
Space Quest I	49.95		
Space Quest II	49.95		
Space Quest III (512K)	59.95		
Colonel's Bequest (512K) - 4th qtr.	59.95		
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Police Quest II (512K)	59.95		
Code Name: Iceman (512K)- 4th qtr.	59.95		
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Leisure Suit Larry I	39.95		
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Mixed-up Mother Goose	29.95		
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Silpheed (512K)**	34.95		
Hoyle's Book of Games (512K)	34.95		
Championship Boxing* (128K)	14.95		
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HomeWord II (512K)	69.95		
Sierra's On-Line (512K)	69.95		
Smart Money	79.95		
Sorcerian (512K) 1st qtr '90***	59.95		

*3.5" not supported and not hard disk installable.

**Hercules not supported.

***only EGA/VGA/MCGA supported;
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& 5.25" (1.2 meg only)

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King's Quest IV	69.95		
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Conquests of Camelot - 1st qtr. '90	59.95		
Manhunter-San Francisco	49.95		
Space Quest III	59.95		
Police Quest II	59.95		
Code Name: Iceman - 1st qtr. '90	59.95		
Leisure Suit Larry II	59.95		
Leisure Suit Larry III - 4th qtr.	59.95		
Hoyle's Book of Games - 4th qtr.	34.95		

MACINTOSH. 512K and dual-sided disk drive required unless noted. All products work in color on Mac II unless noted with an *

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King's Quest II	49.95		
King's Quest III	49.95		
King's Quest IV - 1st qtr. '90	59.95		
Space Quest I	49.95		
Space Quest II	49.95		
SpaceQuest III - 4th qtr.	59.95		
Police Quest I	49.95		
Police Quest II - 1st qtr. '90	59.95		
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Leisure Suit Larry I	39.95		
Leisure Suit Larry II - 1st qtr. '90	59.95		
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Manhunter - San Francisco- 4th qtr.	49.95		
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Manhunter-San Francisco-4th qtr.	49.95		
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Manhunter - New York	49.95		
Manhunter - San Francisco-4th qtr.	49.95		
Thexder	34.95		
Hoyle's Book of Games-1st qtr. '90	34.95		
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Space Quest I	7.95		
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Leisure Suit Larry II	7.95		
Leisure Suit Larry III - 4th qtr.	7.95		
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Manhunter-San Francisco-4th qtr.	7.95		
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The Official Book of King's Quest	10.95		
Sierra Music Demo Cassette	1.95*		
Sierra Video Cassette Catalog	4.95*		
<i>*Includes shipping & handling charges.</i>			
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Sierra Adventure (S M L XL)	7.95		
Helicopter Simulator (S M L XL)	7.95		
Colonel's Bequest (S M L XL)	7.95		
King's Quest IV (S M L XL)	7.95		
Police Quest II (S M L XL)	7.95		
Music Cards - IBM & compatibles	Price	Quantity	Total
Ad Lib Music Synthesizer Card**	175.00		
Ad Lib Music Synthesizer card with Visual Composer**	245.00		
Game Blaster**	129.95		
Roland MT-32 Sound Module**	550.00		
Roland MT-32 (Micro Channel)**	650.00		
NOTE: We recommend that all MT-32 orders be placed by phone to insure the proper model for your computer is shipped. At minimum, please call 800-326-6654 prior to ordering to verify the order information.			
<i>**See next page for shipping details.</i>			

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If you are not completely satisfied with any product you purchase from our catalog, for any reason, return it within 10 days and we will promptly exchange the item or refund your purchase price. A software product is only as good as the company behind it. For more than nine years Sierra has been making quality software for use in homes, schools and businesses. We stand behind our software with product warranties and customer support which exceed normal industry standards, to maximize your utility and enjoyment of your microcomputer. We thank you for your support. Hardware items like the Roland MT-32, the AdLib Music Card, and the Game Blaster are provided to Sierra for resale by other companies. While Sierra attempts to insure the value of these items, it makes no warranties or claims for them above those of the original manufacturer. Sierra will refund or exchange any hardware item provided it is returned within 10 days in its original packaging.

SIERRA TELEPHONE SUPPORT

Sierra currently employs 11 representatives who work full-time answering incoming calls for customer support. They can be reached any time during regular West Coast business hours by calling (209) 683-8989.

CUSTOMER SUPPORT

Sierra customer service representatives answer technical questions on Smart Money and HomeWord productivity products, and will handle any questions you may have about other Sierra products. Should you have any questions regarding an order you have placed directly with us, the Customer Support Department will be happy to help you.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

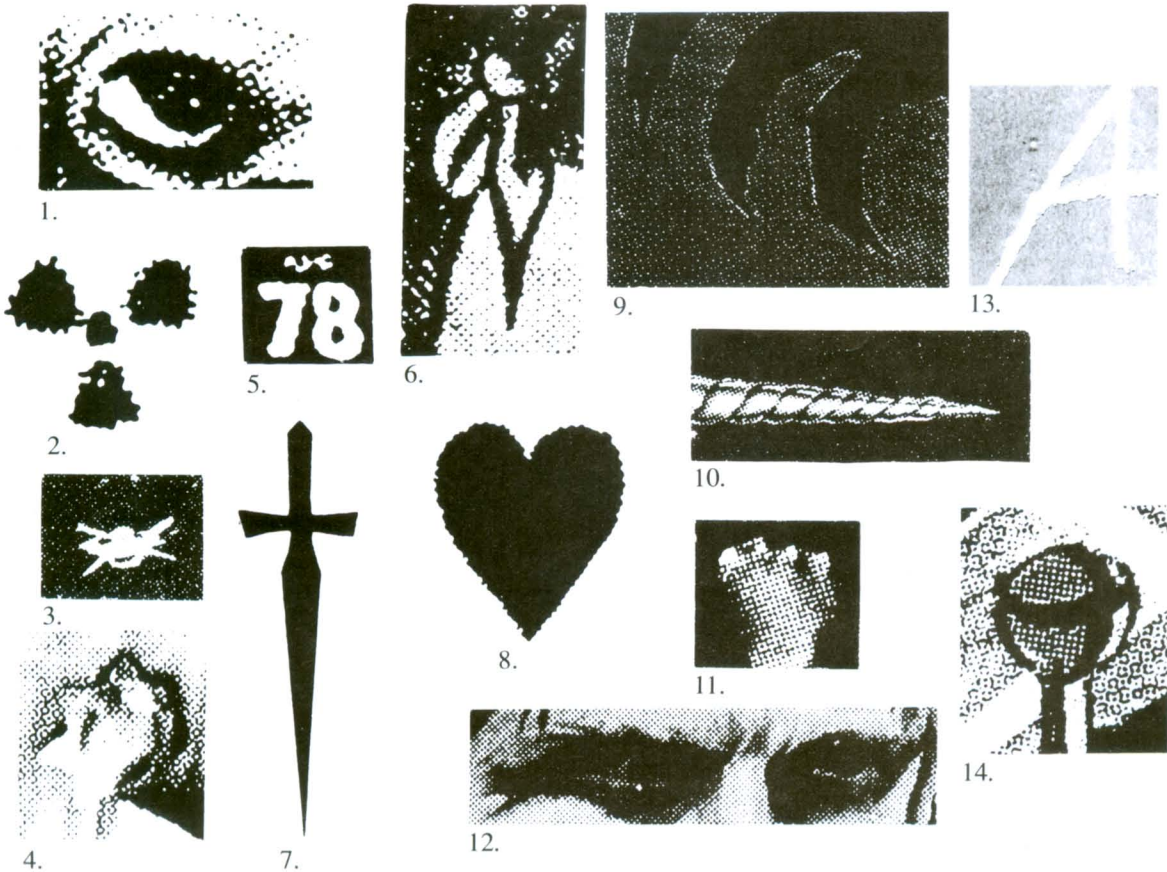
Technical support is also contacted through the (209) 683-8989 telephone number. Technical support people will work with you to solve problems with hardware compatibility or disk problems. If our software doesn't work with your hardware for any reason, our technical support staff will solve the problem, or your money back.

We guarantee it.

SPECIAL OFFERS

See details on page 41

Do you recognize these?



Each of these fragments is from a Sierra Adventure Game Box Cover, front or back (and not necessarily right side up).

To enter, send us a numbered list of all 14 items, identifying each of the items by the name of the game and stating specifically what each fragment is. For example, if we had shown the beak of the goose from the *Mixed-Up Mother Goose* game box, you would identify it as such:

#. *Mixed-Up Mother Goose*, beak of the goose.

Mail your entry to:

Sierra News Magazine Contest
Sierra On-Line
P.O. Box 1103
Oakhurst, CA 93644

Deadline: entries must be postmarked no later than December 31, 1989.

Ten correct winning entries will be randomly drawn from a pool, and these winners will each receive a free Sierra software product of their choice. Winners are chosen at the sole discretion of Sierra On-Line.

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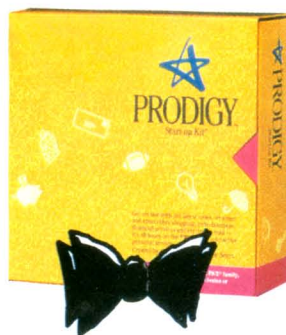
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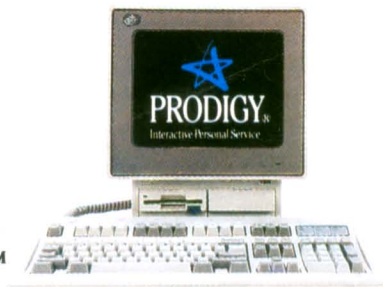
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SIERRA'S MUSIC MEN

An interview with the men who took music from single voice to stereo synthesizer sound tracks in a matter of months

by Nancy Smithe

Music in Sierra's games in the last year and a half has taken a quantum leap forward from the single voice that is standard equipment in most computers (the one that "beeps" at you) to beautiful stereophonic music played through a synthesizer, the most complex of which has 32 voices. The two men primarily responsible for this technological advance are Stuart Goldstein and Mark Siebert, Sierra's in-house team of professionals in computer programming and music. They are two quiet men who do not look like revolutionaries, but who together have, in the last 18 months, literally revolutionized music in 3D Animated Adventure games. During our recent interview we laughed about the fact that when they started at Sierra their location was called the music room as an indentifying nomenclature. Now we refer to it as The Music Department and it is a full-fledged unit that has just expanded from a staff of two to a staff of four.

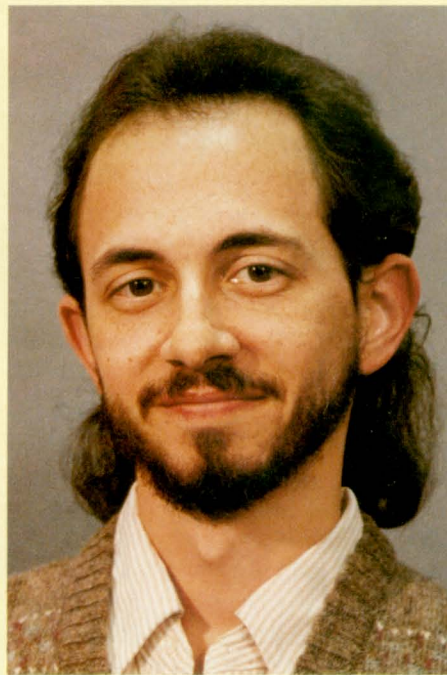
I interviewed them to find out where they came from, what they are doing, and where they are going.

First of all, let me ask each of you for a brief resume of your background.

Stuart: My background is computer programming, as far as my college major goes. I'm also a part-time musician and have played in several bands. I do a lot of home composing, and I have a small MIDI-studio. I came to Sierra as a programmer to program the software drivers needed to do the types of music that Sierra releases.

Mark: My background is music. I majored in music, toured on the road with a professional band for about five years, cut a couple of albums with them, and had a couple of localized hit songs. I work with

a club band now. I was going back to school to study math and computer science when I saw Sierra's job advertisement for a MIDI-musician. That was what I had been doing—working with MIDI—so I came here.



Stuart Goldstein

Do you want to mention the albums you recorded?

Mark: I worked on two "Omega Sunrise" albums. I worked on Bob Siebenberg's recent album doing computer sequencing with the band called "Head's Up" on Polydor records, and I worked with a guy named Kim Hutchcroft who was a saxophonist and arranger for "Seawind" on A&M Records.

For this job do you need to be a computer programmer and a professional musician?

Stuart: Not both, but elements of both. My background is programming but the musical experience certainly helped.

Mark: Same thing with me. I had some programming, but I had more music than Stuart and he's had more programming.

Stuart: There's this overlap in the middle where we both compliment each other's individual skills.

As a team how do you work together.

Stuart: It starts with Mark, basically.

Mark: You start with an idea for music. For example, we are working on a new game right now, and I had an idea for a song. I started working with it and I found some problems that the system couldn't handle. It couldn't do some things that I wanted to do musically. So I went to Stuart and outlined my problem, which was to have such and such done to the driver in order to be able to handle the job.

Stuart: Right. And then we hash it out together and decide if it is feasible to add a new capability to our system. If it is, we do it. We try to push the limits of what we can do always. Occasionally it does work the other way. I'll get an idea that might allow a new capability and I'll brainstorm with Mark.

That gives you both real creative opportunities here. Tell me how that works.

Mark: It is basically doing things to the MT-32 and some of the other cards that aren't user accessible and that aren't accessible through standard MIDI manipulation from a sequencer.

Stuart: We are creating effects on the MT-32 that the average person could not do.

Let me ask each of you in turn what your area of responsibility is at Sierra?

Stuart: Developing and maintaining our current systems—our support for a number of the sound options. Also figuring out how to take MIDI data and translate it to whatever device we decide to support.

We evaluate a lot of the new cards coming in, to determine if we want to support them. I'm involved in that to some degree. On the horizon there are going to be some really new and exciting systems to be developed in the music department. We are just scratching the surface in music so far, a lot more is coming. When we start getting into CD quality recording on home computer games, that will be exciting.

Are we on the edge of that?

Stuart: Most certainly.

Mark, what is it that you do?

Mark: I do writing and arranging, and a lot of synchronization work—making sure that the music synchronizes with what's happening on the screen. For example in *Space Quest III* when the guy falls off of the rail, making sure you get the falling sound, or when the spaceship flies across the screen and the music is playing and is supposed to be at a certain place when the spaceship is at a certain spot on the screen, making sure that it happens all at the right time. Also, we do a lot of creating our own sounds here from scratch. They are not samples. When the MT-32 can't do what we want, we have to create from scratch by "twisting the knobs" inside the MT-32 to make it sound the way we want it to sound. And we do conversions, taking the older games that already have music, and converting the music to make it work with a new system such as the Amiga or the Apple IIGS. We add to the music or take away—strip it down—to make it work with that system.

Stuart: We also try to take full advantage of whatever system we are porting to. For example, the Amiga can play back four digital sound samples simultaneously, so we try to make the best of that.

In other words, you create the music first on the IBM, and then as each roll-over to another machine comes along, you convert the music.

Mark: Even each IBM game has conversions within itself. We write for the MT-32, the AdLib, the IMF, the Tandy machine, the IBM single voice speaker, the Casio portable keyboards, all for the IBM.

Do you do a different music track for each one?

Stuart: Sometimes. We try to combine as much as possible, but sometimes a nice piece on the MT-32—a real mood piece—

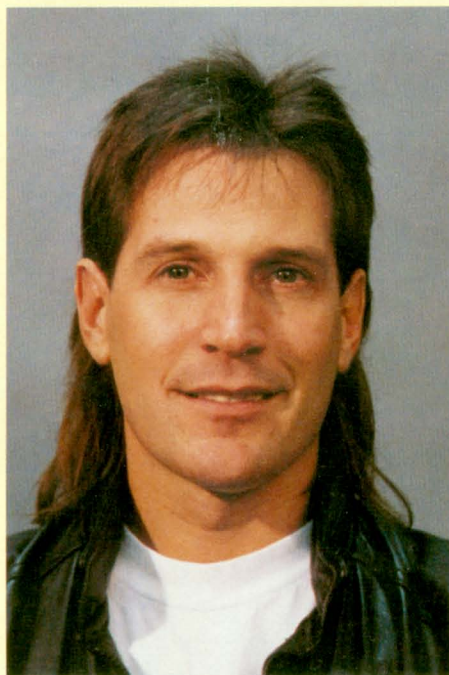
may not translate at all to a single speaker on the IBM.

So then what do you do?

Mark: Well, you either write another completely different piece, or throw it out.

Tell me how a typical music project on a game develops? Does the programmer of the game come to you and say here is what I want?

Stuart: Sometimes it takes a lot of prompting and prodding!



Mark Siebert

Mark: It really kind of depends on who you are working with as far as the programmers. They are all different. One programmer comes in and says, "This is exactly what I want." Another one comes in and says "I don't have any idea what I want." Sometimes you get a full outline of every detail of the game and other times you don't get anything.

Stuart: You start by trying to get a feel for what the designer wants for a particular scene and score it accordingly.

Mark: For example, one of the games I'm working on right now started with one of the artists saying "The opening of *The Three Musketeers* is the kind of feeling that I want." So we rented *The Three Musketeers* and the whole staff working on the game—the programmers and artists—came in here and we sat down and watched the opening together then talked about it and discussed the things that we liked and didn't like.

Stuart: When you see the game you will hear that represented in the music.

Mark: You won't see the exact scene or the exact music. We try to write something that portrays that emotional image in the music.

Another new game is Roberta's murder mystery set in the old south. What did you do with that?

Mark: That one included a lot of research which Ken Allen did at the Fresno State Library.

Ken, I'll visit with you later about your background, but just now tell me how you went about that research?

Ken: First I found out as much as I could about the setting of the game from the author, in this case it was Roberta Williams. After that I went to the library and looked up the contemporary artists of the time: Gershwin, George M. Cohan, Stravinsky. Then I listened to a lot of the music. The music that accompanies silent films was part of that time, and the music of silent films gave me a lot of background. I got a real good feel from that and I decided I would write music along the same lines.

Would it be accurate to say a goal is to be as historically accurate as possible, really try to fit in with the time musically?

Stuart: Absolutely. Mark, you might want to talk about Camelot.

Mark: Camelot is set in the 9th Century so it is a very pre-renaissance type of music. The way we tune our instruments now is completely different from the way they used to tune them back then, so we are actually using the old authentic tuning styles of the 9th century. That requires another whole big technological project, including creating new instruments to try to sound as close to those early instruments as possible, but it actually lends a little more authenticity to what you are doing.

You have projects with others and your own creative ideas all going along at the time. How do you keep so many games straight, from a creative point of view.

Mark: Most of us have two or three projects going at the same time, if not more—music, software and conversions. Management will come in and tell us a certain project has priority, and of course that is the one you work on for a while.

Stuart: You focus yourself to whatever you have to be doing. Don't worry about the 1920's music if you are doing medieval music. You have to block it out or it will start to drift in.

Mark: You have to, lest you hear Gershwin in the Renaissance period. It wouldn't quite work, you know.

This is one of my favorite rooms to walk past. Sometimes the sounds—I should say music—that come out of here are fascinating. How do you decide whose work is played?

Mark: It hasn't been a problem yet. Now that there are more of us, we will be working more with headphones.

Stuart: There is a lot of feedback that goes on in our group here. Whoever happens to be working with it audible on our speakers will have two other people in the room listening. The response may be "That's really good, I like that." So there is a lot of immediate feedback. In fact, if you don't hear a response, you know you still have work to do.

Your recent increase in personnel—from two people to four—is an example

of how the music is going in the games, isn't it?

Mark: Yes. *King's Quest IV* was the first big SCI game. A lot of the games now are getting that big.

Stuart: Also the sheer number of projects and the fact that all the projects require extensive sound tracks. People come to expect it.

Do you get frustrated with technology?

Stuart: Well, I see Mark once in a while throw up his hands. He really wants to express an idea but there are some basic limitations you have to realize.

Mark: No matter what system you work on there is always going to be limitation.

Stuart: Yes, until we are actually recording audio signals on a media like CD.

Mark: And even at that then the big frustration is going to be which piece do I play, how do I layer them, how do I make it more like a real movie. Really, that's what we want to do, we want to create a sound track for a movie, and you don't go to a movie and all of a sudden the sound

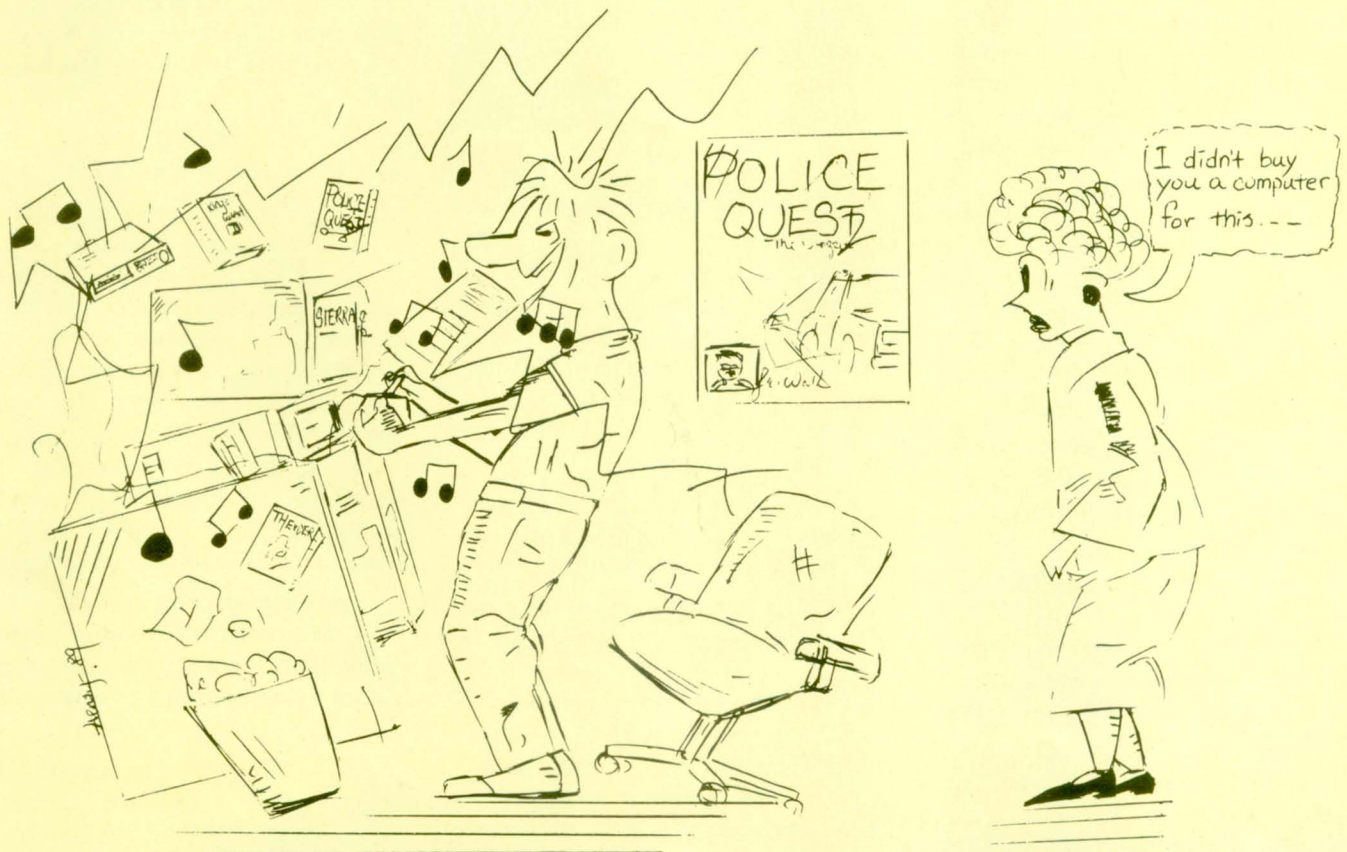
shuts off for twenty minutes and there is absolutely no sound. That is what we are trying to get away from in the games. So there will be a sound track going on.

Stuart: Another good analogy is silent movies. People would go to a silent movie and there was no sound track, so you had a piano player sitting there doing his best to play something that went along with the visuals. That is similar to where we are right now with the industry. We are trying to make do adding audio to the visual, but there are certain advances that we can see that will really sync it—synchronize it—and really make it more like a movie.

As a comparison, the movie *Singing in the Rain* is all about that. One moment silent movies were all the rage. Then all of a sudden talkies were IN. The movie industry stopped production and converted. They never looked back.

Mark: That is where we are right now. Sierra has advanced into music. The ball is really rolling.

We have kind of laughed about going from the music room to a department, but really the music room itself is fairly



Henry Yiu, California, submitted this cartoon

recent. You two guys were the beginning of the music room about a year ago.

Stuart: Right. Before that there was the basic one voice melody, nothing like what we are providing now. Granted, people who still have a basic machine will still get those basic melodies. There is not too



Ken Allen

much further we can push that and still do the type of graphics that we do. We could do a little better music on the PC, but it would be at the sacrifice of continuous animation. To divide its time between music and graphics is pushing it as it is.

What do you dream about technology doing next?

Mark: We have some things we are working on right now that are going to be quite an advancement in the sound if they work out.

So the whole industry is going to have to keep moving, but it is, isn't it.

Stuart: Yes. Already there are about a dozen add-on interface cards that allow better music.

I don't even remember hearing about interface cards before the last year or so. Was I just slow, or are they that recent?

Mark: They are that recent. The MPU401 itself is about 5-6 years old. Once that came out, it seemed to me, all the computer hardware people began seeing possibilities in putting a card inside a machine.

Sierra is going to have some music software of its own, I understand.

Stuart: Right. Pablo Ghenis, another Sierra programmer, and I are writing a sequencer program for Sierra to market.

How would you explain a sequencer program to someone who doesn't know the terminology?

Stuart: Basically, a sequencer allows you to write and edit music—to build songs—and then play them back through a synthesizer, or even just through the voices on your computer, although a single voice computer naturally has limitations.

Tell me about your particular sequencer.

Stuart: We have designed it for both the novice musician just starting out and for the more advanced sequencer user. It has pull-down menus and pop-up windows, and allows point and click with the mouse, although a mouse is not required. You can start by playing from a keyboard or by using the graphic on-screen interface, and then can edit any note or any chord. You can also change tempo, transpose, and quantize your music.

When you say novice, do you mean that literally? Can someone who doesn't know how to read music, but who has always wanted to write songs, use this?

Stuart: Yes. A beginner new to music can learn by using this program. The more experienced user will also find features to appreciate, like the quantize function.

When can we expect to see it?

We are working on the MS-DOS version now, and expect it in the first quarter of 1990. Then it will be rolled-over to the Atari, Amiga, and Macintosh computers.

Sounds exciting.

Stuart: Well, we are pleased with it.

Let's get back to the Music Department and talk about the recent expansion.

Stuart: We added two new composer/arranger/midi musicians—Ken Allen and Rob Atesalp.

Rob, tell me something about your background and why you applied for this job.

Rob: I've always been a musician, as far back as I can remember; I've grown up using keyboards and computers. I didn't know a job like this existed, until I saw the ad. I was doing this same sort of thing at

home with my own personal music—contemporary pop—creating mood and special effects like movie soundtracks. I used to get my keyboard, put my headphones on, turn on the TV but leave the sound off, and create music to match the picture on the screen.



Rob Atesalp

Ken, when you saw the advertisement Sierra placed for this job, what attracted you?

Ken: The ad said "Attention skilled musicians; if you have computer background in sequencing, position available, send resume and tape." So I gathered up a few things that I had done in the past, prepared something just for the tape, and sent it in with a resume. At first I thought there is no such thing as a job that would be full-time writing music for video games. Then, when I got here I found there really is, and it is very exciting to find that there is work like this available. I had no idea. It's the perfect marriage of all my skills, interests, and training. And these games surpass anything that an arcade has to offer. I found that it's not just writing music for games, but more like synchronizing a music score for a motion picture. That's the way most of our games play.

It sounds to me to a certain extent you two with your combined skills influenced the games here and had a lot to do with bringing music in the Sierra games to the level it is now.

Stuart: Right. We also came in with no illusions of where the limitations were. I don't play a lot of other computer games. I've played some, but I don't try to compare what we are doing here in music to what they are doing or impose any limitations on what could be done.

Mark: I've never been one to play computer games much at all. The only thing I was told was that it is like a movie. The first few games that we did really weren't like a movie, they were still really like computer games. The character came out and his little theme played and that was it.

Stuart: I wouldn't say exactly that we have been shut in this room and the rest of the world was going about its business and we were developing in the dark. But certainly there were some elements of that. And when we came out of the room we found Sierra in the forefront of music in software.

Sierra was nominated by the SPA (Software Publishers Association) for best achievement in sound for *King's Quest IV*, and also nominated overall in technical achievement for SCI. SPA has a big Excellence in Software Awards each year. Even the nomination is an honor. ■

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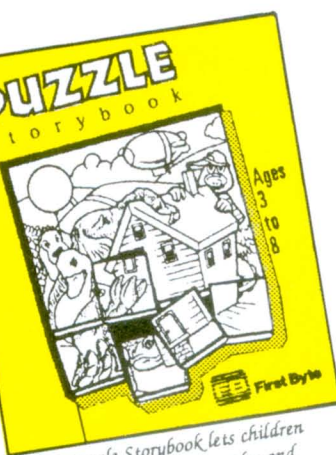
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ROLAND PRESIDENT TOM BECKMEN TALKS ABOUT THE MT-32

By Kirk Green

If you've been dazzled by Sierra's new double resolution graphics, but haven't heard the new music soundtracks, well there is more than meets the eye. In fact if you choose the Roland MT-32 Multi-Timbrel Sound Module there is a whole world of music that only begins with your favorite Sierra 3-D Animated Adventure Game.

Recently we sat down with the man behind Roland, Tom Beckmen, Roland's President and CEO, to find the roots of this fabulous new addition to Sierra's games. Beckmen, who also serves on Sierra's Board of Directors, has spent over thirty years in the music industry and in 1972 he formed Roland Corporation US.

This new technology, which incorporates these spectacular soundtracks, has added a great deal to the feel and emotion of Sierra's games. How did you and Roland become involved in the process?

Thinking back, this all had its genesis when Sierra contacted Bill Goldstein to write the soundtrack for *King's Quest IV*. We've had a long term relationship with

Many individuals and companies use the MT-32 to add music and audio background to their multi-media presentations

Bill and after he saw what Ken & Roberta were working toward, he brought them to us. At that point we had not done much in terms of the computer games business, but we had worked extensively with multi-media presentations and we could see the possibilities. Ken and Roberta were looking for a multi-timbrel sound module to supply music for the games—and from there it just took off. Roland's relationship

with Sierra has benefited both our companies and the consumer.

Roland has some new products coming out that are using the MT-32 Sound Module as a base and then expanding on what is already a great product. Could you tell us about these new products?

Roland will be shipping two new multi-timbrel peripherals that take the basic MT-32 sound format and quality while making them much more integrated with the buyer's basic computer set up. The first is for IBM's and clones and is called the LAPC-1. This new product reduces the MT-32 and the MPU interface to a long

If you own a video camera, you can synchronize the sound and create a soundtrack for your home videos

card and adds 33 more sound effects and expanded memory. The price will also reflect considerable savings to the user. Now for people who own Macintosh, Amiga or Atari ST computers we will be producing the CM-32L, which is the same product as the LAPC-1, but housed in a computer component-like structure. Both of these new products, the LAPC-1 and CM-32L, are the MT-32 taken to a higher level and at a lower price without any compromise in sound quality and performance.

This whole system, either the LAPC-1 or CM-32L, has many more uses than providing great sound with Sierra's games.

That's very true. You can add a piano-type keyboard to your system and teach your family music, compose music, or just enjoy playing your favorite song. Another very popular aspect with many people today owning a video camera is to

synchronize the sound and create a soundtrack for home videos. Also, many individuals and companies use the set-up to add music and audio background to their

By adding a mixer and one or two other components you can have the equivalent of a 16 track MIDI recording studio in your home

multi-media presentations. It is something anybody can use—for multi media presentations, music education, for the music hobbyist and for music entertainment. The limit is only bounded by your imagination on what you can do with the LAPC-1 and the CM-32L sound modules.

It sounds as if you could almost build your own home recording studio around these sound modules.

Definitely. By adding a mixer and one or two other components you can have the equivalent of a 16 track MIDI recording studio in your home.

When Sierra first introduced support of the sound modules there were very few, if any, other companies supporting the high end music that Roland components can produce. What do you think the future holds?

Well, we are finding many more entertainment software developers are using and/or are planning to use the Roland sound modules and I think this trend will grow. I think it is all a direct result of Sierra setting a high musical standard for the game industry. This has forced every one else to follow suit because users want maximum performance. ■

MUSIC IN THE SIERRA GAMES AND YOU

by Nancy Smith

If you have been reading about all the enhanced music capabilities of the Sierra games and are not quite sure what it means, or how to do it (or even whether you can afford to do it), this article is designed to help you understand what is involved.

To enjoy the Sierra games with expanded music capabilities you need two items:

- » a **synthesizer** that is MIDI compatible, and supported in our SCI games.
- » a **MIDI interface card** (Atari ST owners should be aware that all Atari computers have the MIDI interface built in).

(To use an analogy that might help explain the situation, think of a printer connected to your computer—to print output from your computer you need a printer that is compatible, a printer cable, and a serial or parallel card.)

A **synthesizer** plays electronic music, and there are many kinds of synthesizers available. The power and prices of synthesizers vary, with more capabilities (such as the number of different “voices” or sounds) available in the more expensive models. Some synthesizers have a keyboard, and sounds are produced using the keys. Some synthesizers do not have a keyboard, and are played from another device via MIDI. Some are programmable (meaning you can build your own songs or create new sounds beyond those that are built into the synthesizer) and some are not (meaning you work with the built-in sounds to play music).

A **MIDI interface card** is installed into your computer in the same way a mouse card or a printer card is installed, and provides a MIDI port. A MIDI cable is connected to the MIDI port of the computer on one side and to the synthesizer on the other side. **MIDI** (Musical Instrument Digital Interface) sends information from your computer (or your keyboard or guitar controller) to the synthesizer, and tells the

synthesizer which sounds to play. The MIDI is, in a sense, a set of rules about how musical information can be transferred from one place to another. There are many kinds of MIDI interface devices available.

TYPES OF SYNTHESIZERS SUPPORTED IN SIERRA GAMES

Sierra currently supports the following synthesizers, which means the music in the games is designed to play properly when routed to any of them. See the chart on the following page for a brief comparison of synthesizer features and to determine which synthesizers are supported for your computer.

During the INSTALL process for the game, you are asked which computer you have, which monitor you have, whether you have a mouse or joystick, and which sound package you have. These choices are recorded in your computer, and the proper drivers from the game disk are accessed. You must install the correct choice. If, for example, you have an MT-32 and during INSTALL you inadvertently selected the built-in single voice, you would hear only the single voice music because the computer would load only that driver. Solve this by running the INSTALL again.

Roland MT-32

Available from Sierra On-Line, with IBM interface card, \$550. Micro Channel for \$650—this card is designed for PS2 series with micro channel architecture. (Atari owners should purchase elsewhere, since this package includes an IBM interface and software.)

Any MIDI keyboard or MIDI guitar controller can be connected to the MT-32.

AdLib

Available from Sierra On-Line, \$175 alone/\$245 for the “bundle.” This card is only available for IBM and compatibles.

Game Blaster

Available from Sierra On-Line, \$129.95.

IMF (IBM Music Feature)

A card available for IBM and compatible computers from IBM dealers. (approximately \$500).

Any MIDI keyboard or MIDI guitar controller can be connected to the IMF.

Casio CSM-1, Casio CT-460, and Casio MT-540

Available from Casio dealers (approximate price range \$125-\$200).

CT-460 and MT-540 are keyboards, and can be connected to play other MIDI compatible synthesizers (such as the Roland MT-32 or the IMF). CSM-1 is the MT-540 without a keyboard.

YOUR COMPUTER AND THE SYNTHESIZERS

As of October 1989, the synthesizers described above are supported for specific computer systems as follows:

IBM & Compatibles

All of the above synthesizers are supported for IBM & compatibles.

There is a special sound driver with some products for the Tandy TL and SL with three voices which takes full advantage of the built-in three voices plus sampled sound playback.

Atari ST

SCI games are designed to take full advantage of the built-in three voice sound of the Atari ST.

There is full support for the Roland MT-32. All Atari ST computers already have a MIDI interface built-in; if you plan to buy an MT-32 you need the unit and the cable, but be sure you do not go to the expense of purchasing an interface.

We also provide support for a generic MIDI driver which works for just about any

four voice synthesizer such as Casio CZ101, CZ230S, and Yamaha DX7-2. This generic driver has the same voices that are internal but provides the advantage of playing through a stereo and/or customizing the voices on your synthesizer.

Amiga

Amiga owners will be pleased to know that the built-in sound on the Amiga machines is so superior that Sierra has decided there is little point, at this time, in supporting synthesizers for enhanced sound.

Macintosh

Macintosh owners will be pleased to know that the built-in sound on the Mac machines is so superior that Sierra has decided there is little point, at this time, in supporting synthesizers for enhanced sound.

Apple IIe/IIc, IIGS

Not currently supported.

OTHER USES FOR THE SYNTHESIZER

You should be aware that enhanced music in the Sierra games is not the only advantage for the synthesizer you purchase.

PLAY YOUR MIDI-KEYBOARD OR MIDI-GUITAR THROUGH THE SYNTHESIZER

If you enjoy playing a guitar or keyboard, read on to find the options available.

If, for example, you want to have the complexity of the MT-32 (eight synthesizers with 128 preset sounds plus percussion module with 30 preset drum and percussion sounds) as well as a keyboard you can acquire both, hook them together, then play independently through the MT-32, or play along **with** the games. You must be sure that the keyboard you purchase is MIDI-compatible; costs start at around \$120.00 for MIDI keyboards. You can also connect your midi-guitar to the MT-32 synthesizer, play independently or even play along **with** the games. The MT-32 weighs only 3-1/2 lbs. so it is easily transportable, if you want to take your keyboard or guitar and synthesizer with you. (All the other synthesizers sold by Sierra On-Line are cards that fit into your computer, and are therefore not portable.)

WRITE YOUR OWN SONGS

There is a whole array of software available to allow you to interact with the synthesizer. You could acquire a SEQUENCER program, which allows you to build and save your own songs. These sequencer programs are available from an average of \$50 to \$500, and basic ones are sometimes found in the public domain over a BBS.

Sierra On-Line is in the final stages of developing its own sequencer program. This will be a very moderately priced package designed specifically with you—the user—in mind.

When you purchase the Roland MT-32 package from Sierra, you get a sequencer program for MS-DOS called *Ease*. When Sierra On-Line's sequencer is completed, it will be packaged with each Roland MT-32 purchased from Sierra On-Line.

The AdLib "bundle" from Sierra contains a sequencer program called *Visual Composer*.

Creative Music Systems sells sequencer programs for the Game Blaster card.

CREATE NEW SOUNDS

You can also acquire a sound editing software package which allows you to create new instrument sounds beyond those programmed into your synthesizer. These software packages average \$50 to \$150.

PREVIEW THE SYNTHESIZER SOUNDS

You can send for a music cassette (\$1.95 for postage and handling) and listen to music from several of the games played on the MT-32 or AdLib. This tape gives you a good idea of the differences, and of the sounds available to you if you were to use the synthesizer to play your own MIDI-instrument.



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BBS MUSIC DOWNLOADS

by Robert Linsley

"Help! I have a synthesizer and I can't make any of Sierra's new games work on it."

This problem happens not only among the "oddball" synths, but also among very common ones. The problem is that we only have so much memory for a game, and if we were to fill up three disks with drivers, how could we have enough memory for the actual game? Which leads into the question, what good are drivers without a game that uses them?

But, there is hope. Many Bulletin Board Systems (including the Sierra BBS, and CompuServe) have music drivers. The most popular ones on the marketplace at this time are the CMS and Roland music drivers. You may want to check the Sierra BBS for drivers to see if we may have one for your particular synth. If we do, get it and use it! Also, many private BBSs create their own drivers by patching the original Sierra drivers to allow support of even more synths!

To utilize your synthesizer (if you have the correct driver) you will have to copy it into the same directory as your Sierra game and re-run the INSTALL program. You should then see a selection that was not there previously. Select it, and you will hear wonderfully orchestrated music.

Among the drivers that are available now are the CMS driver, the Yamaha FB01, the Roland D-10, D-110, and D-20, plus there is a Sierra Generic driver file. It may work for your synth, and it only takes a minute or two to download, and the benefits could be tremendous. Also, we are making new drivers periodically to support new music cards and synths. So, if we don't support you at this time, then check back every now and again. You may be pleasantly surprised!

If you have any problems either INSTALLING the driver or making it work on your synthesizer, then Sierra Customer Support is here to help you. We want you to get the best possible quality and have the most fun playing our games. So we will go the extra mile for you by providing you with both the drivers and the support that you may need to get you up and running! ■

MUSIC HARDWARE SUPPORTED (in alphabetical order)

Synthesizer features	AdLib	Casio CSM-1	Casio CT-460	Casio MT-540	Game Blaster	IBM Music Feature Card (IMF)	Roland MT-32*
Number of voices	11	16	16	16	12	8	32
MIDI compatibility	optional	yes	yes	yes	optional	yes	yes
MIDI interface required?	no ¹	yes	yes	yes	no	no ¹	yes
Internal card or stand alone	internal	stand alone	stand alone	stand alone	internal	internal	stand alone
Keyboard	no	no	yes 49 piano size keys	yes 49 mid size keys	no	no	no
Programmable sounds	yes ²	no	no	no	yes ²	yes ²	yes ²
Number of preset sounds	unlimited ³	30	30	20	unlimited ³	240	128
Power supply	internal	6 AA-size cells or AC adaptor	6 D-size cells or AC adaptor	6 D-size cells or AC adaptor	internal	internal	AC adaptor
Weight	NA	3.7 lbs.	15.4 lbs	6.8 lbs	NA	NA	3.5 lbs
Computer specific support							
IBM & compatibles**	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Atari ST	no	no ⁴	no ⁴	no ⁴	no	no	yes
Amiga	SCI games support internal sound capabilities of this computer.						
Macintosh	SCI games support internal sound capabilities of this computer.						
Apple IIc/IIe Apple IIGS	SCI games (with enhanced sound) are not supported. See <i>Products for your Computer</i> article in this issue for information about SCI and the IIGS.						
Hardware available through Sierra							
IBM & compatibles	\$175, card only	no	no	no	\$129.95	no	\$550 or \$650 for Micro Channel Interface card included
Software included in Sierra's package	\$245, card with <i>Visual Composer</i> software	NA	NA	NA	none (available separately from Creative Music Systems)	(available separately from other software developers)	<i>Ease</i> software.
Atari	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	No. MT-32 without interface card and IBM software not sold by Sierra

1. Optional MIDI interface available to allow playing the AdLib card from an external keyboard via MIDI.

2. Programming of sounds requires additional editing software.

3. Sounds defined by software

4. Generic driver supported for four voice synthesizers, such as Casio CZ101, CZ230S and Yamaha DX7-2.

NA = not applicable

* The following devices may be used in place of an MT-32, requiring no modification to computer or software:

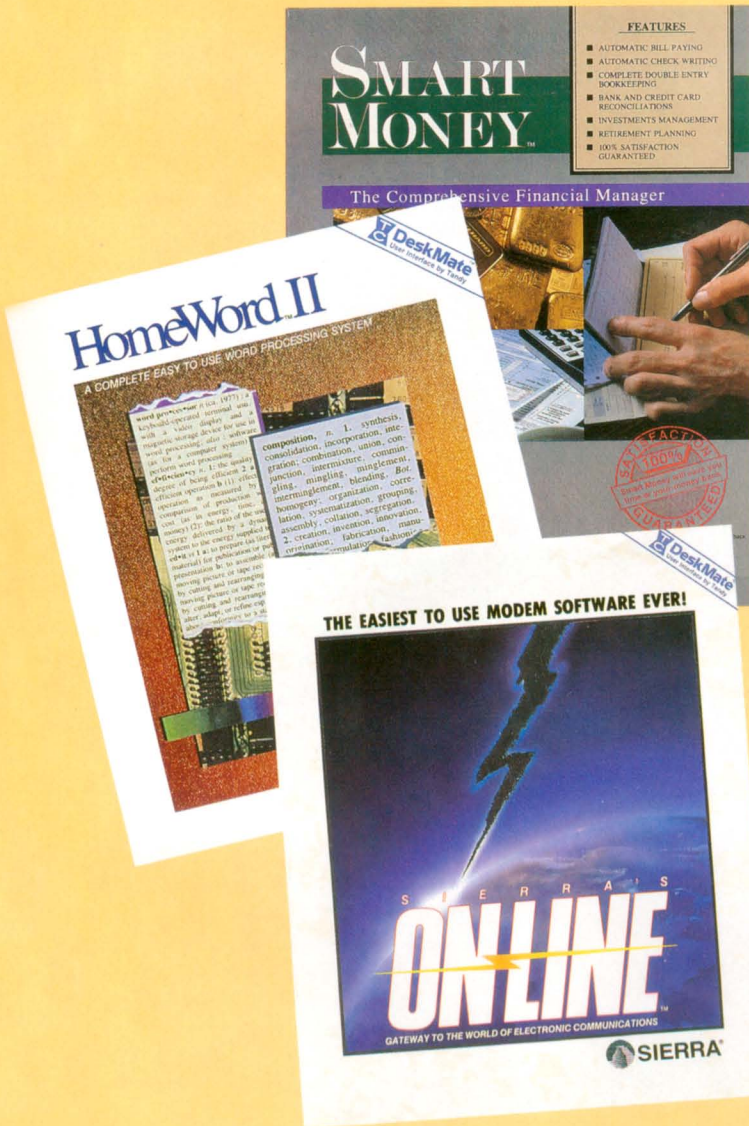
External device, MIDI interface required: Roland MT-100, Roland CM-32L, and Roland CM-64

Internal card, MIDI interface built in: Roland LAPC-1 (Optional MIDI connector box available to allow playing from an external keyboard via MIDI.)

** Tandy 1000 and PC Jr owners have 3-voice internal sound with no extra device required.

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AN AUDIOPHILE'S VIEW ON MUSIC IN SIERRA GAMES

The following article is reprinted with permission from H-SCOOP, December 1988, edited by Henry E. Fale. His article offers information on music in the Sierra games from a genuine audiophile viewpoint.

“NEW BREED OF ADVENTURE”

by Henry E. Fale

I had just heard that Sierra had some new adventure games available so I ordered *Leisure Suit Larry goes Looking for Love* (in *Several Wrong places*.) I already had the first adult game, *Leisure Suit Larry in the Land of the Lounge Lizards*. My kids have most of their other adventure games like *King's Quest I, II, and III*, *Space Quest*, *Police Quest*—all part of their high resolution 3-D animated adventure series. On an EGA monitor, they are really something to see—excellent video quality.

Enter the new breed. Just a day before this had to go to press (so it's kind of a real rush review—sorry—thought you may want to know before the Christmas season) I received my *Leisure Suit Larry II*. Since my first *Larry Leisure Suit* came on one disk, I was mildly surprised to find six 5" disks (three 3.5" disks) in the box. All the Sierra games, by the way, come on both 5" and 3.5" disks in the same package. Very convenient and very thoughtful. Anyway, after reading the additional material in the package, I realized why there were six disks. If one had the proper equipment, he no longer had to settle for the “beeps” and simple one note “music” that came from the computer speaker. This new software has an install option that lets you choose between the computer speaker, a Roland MT-32 synthesizer module (with computer interface card), the Ad Lib Music Synthesizer Card (ALMSC), or the IBM PC Music Feature card (must be ordered directly from IBM).

Jump for joy! Since I play keyboards and have a few racks of synthesizer and audio processing equipment complete with three keyboards and yes, an MT-32 32-voice 8-channel synthesizer module, I was set to have some fun. I didn't have to run out and spend an extra \$600.

A bit on my MIDI synthesizer system. I have a music stand with a Roland Super JX mother synthesizer keyboard which basically controls everything else. This is a digital synthesizer connected to a PG-800 programmer. Above that is a Korg DSS-1 sampling synthesizer keyboard, and above that a Roland JX-10 keyboard/synthesizer. Below that, an octave of foot pedals. Other neat things like electronic drum machines are also in the system. The MT-32 is my latest addition (had that for about a year).

As soon as I got the program going this loud stereo full accompaniment started playing.

Very impressive.

The MT-32 panel showed 6 channels were being accessed plus the drum section. There was a bass, piano, flute, drums and all kinds of other sounds.

All this is tied via MIDI interface to MIDI switcher boxes, mergers, etc., and then to a PC computer which serves as a sequencer, arranger, music scoring system, etc. The audio from all this goes to a keyboard sub-mixer, then to a console 8 channel 8 X 4 X 2 professional mixer complete with sub effects sends and receives, etc., which goes to a rack of MIDI-controlled audio effects (digital reverb units, voice processors, compressors, limiters, patch bays, equalizers, tape decks, etc. The main output

is fed to a 600 watt stereo amplifier feeding a sub-woofer, two near-field studio monitors and two large studio monitors. The computer sequencer is “synced” to the 8-track recorder. The main keyboard can control practically the whole works, as can the sequencer computer.

The first thing I had to do was remove the interface card from my sequencer PC and install it in my modified Z248, and then to connect this to the MT-32. As soon as I loaded the *Looking for Love* program the front LCD panel of the MT-32 said “Hi, I'm Larry,” so I knew even before I heard the sound that the computer and software had found and communicated with the MT-32. As soon as I got the program going (you have to enter the phone number of a girl from a picture that matches one in the book—almost impossible; prevents youngsters from playing your adult games) this loud stereo full accompaniment started playing. Very impressive. The MT-32 panel showed 6 channels were being accessed plus the drum section. There was a bass, piano, flute, drums and all kinds of other sounds.

To understand what's going on, we have to look at the MT-32. It's known as a multi-timbral synthesizer module. It doesn't have it's own keyboard. You can either connect a keyboard to it and play one channel at a time, or play a sequencer into it. It synthesizes such sounds as acoustic and electric piano, organ and pipe organs, synth base, synth brass, synth strings, guitar, bass, winds and special effects, in 128 preset sounds. The rhythm section contains 30 different preset PCM drum and percussion sounds.

The *Looking for Love* software is basically the output of a sequencer. Someone had to sit down and play the piano part on a keyboard, and store that part on one track

of a sequencer. They then go back, play the piano part back through the MT-32 while using the keyboard to add, say the bass part, then storing that. The next "record" you hear the piano and bass and lay down the flute track and store that. You can even "record" the drums using the keyboard. Point is, when you're finished, you have this small box, the MT-32, being fed the electronic information you stored in the sequencer, each different part on one channel (MT-32 uses MIDI channels 2-9 for voices, and 10 for rhythm—thus you can have up to 9 different sounds happening simultaneously. End result is the sound of an entire band or orchestra coming from the amplified system.

Evidently what Sierra had done was to take this "sequenced" information and put it on disk which is the way my PC sequencer computer also stores what I have done). Then by some very clever programming and timing with the game, the right sounds and music come at the right time, depending on the scene of the game and the choice you made. Besides music you can have the "horn" sound, for instance for the sound of a car or train horn, a "snare-drum" for the sound of lightning striking, etc. Keep in mind that the interface is not sending music,

it is sending MIDI events, which the MT-32 translates to music. It is simply amazing to have full EGA video and stereo sound, not just those little "beeps" that come out of the computer speaker. Makes the games much more exciting and real-life. I was very fortunate to have the stuff already, and the software contained this sequenced data "just by luck."

It is simply amazing to have full EGA video and stereo sound, not just those little "beeps" that come out of the computer speaker.

Makes the games much more exciting and real-life.

The best thing is, despite the probably thousands of extra man hours to program this software and getting 6 disks instead of one, the price of looking for Love (retail \$49) is only \$10 more than the first Land of

the Lounge Lizards. You have to hand it to the Sierra folks. Also, where most of Sierra's earlier software was copy protected, this was not. I believe all their new titles have this new music feature, and this I think includes the new *Police Quest II*, *Space Quest III*, and *King's Quest IV*.

So how do you get into all of this? First off, if you don't have an EGA or better color monitor, don't. I'd suggest for their high-graphics games you should have that first to get the most out of your enjoyment. IBM is the only source for the PC Music Feature. Probably most any keyboard/MIDI type music store can sell you the MT-32 with interface or the AD Lib Music Synthesizer Card. However, Sierra is also selling them, and it looks like, at a decent discount. They sell the MT-32 with the interface and Ease software (allows you to do other fun things with the MT-32 when you're not playing games) for \$550. The Ad Lib card they are selling for \$175 alone or \$245 with Visual Composer software.



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The King's Quest Companion

Compiled from Messages to this World from the World of Daventry, as sent by Derek Karlevaegen. Mr Karlaveagen is apparently a journalist, traveler, and magician in that universe.

Excerpt from Chapter 3, "The Eye Between the Worlds."

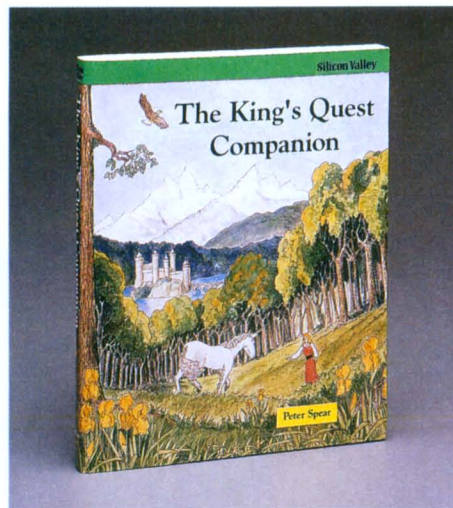
I am an investigator and writer of contemporary events, who hobbies in magic and travels much. Some time ago, after having talked to and written at length about Prince Alexander of Daventry's escape from lifelong captivity and his subsequent rescue of his sister and kingdom from the breath of a fire-breathing dragon (that was a lot, wasn't it?), I decided to visit the scenes of the prince's adventures in order to better understand what the brave youth had been through. It was for this reason that I, at length, arrived at the house of the wizard Manannan, whom Alexander had turned into a cat. No cat was to be found anywhere there. The house was in good repair, but no person or animal was anywhere near. I resolved to spend some days there, using it as a base for my explorations around Llewddor. At night I took advantage of Manannan's large library, looking closely through his books on magic and magical lore. The days stretched into weeks, and still no one came to claim the large house with its well-stocked underground laboratory.

It was during this time that I discovered the Eye Between the Worlds.

There is a lever set into one of the library's bookcases that opens the trap door into the secret lab. On a shelf nearby I saw a most curious object. It looked much like a metal head, with only one very large glass eye and an open jaw containing near one hundred teeth. Each of those teeth has a letter, number, or symbol inscribed upon it. This thing must have been made by Manannan or some other very great sorcerer, for when I pressed a certain tooth, a light appeared to fill the eye. Moreover, when I touched on certain other teeth,

words would magically appear on the eye's glass surface. Wonderous indeed was this thing that I soon came to think of as a talking head.

Yes it did talk, and it still does; not with sounds, but with words that crawl across it and with pictures that draw themselves before my very eyes. After much experimentation, I found that I could make my thoughts and words appear on the eye's surface. The thing is a machine, to be sure, although how it works I do not know, for it has no parts which move.



I have said before that our universes—our worlds—are so far apart that we can never touch, and so close that we sometimes can even dream of each other. We know a little about your world because folk still *withdraw* from there to here, although not very often. They bring us stories and histories and descriptions, which we record for all who might be interested to read. Not many do; the Other World holds no charms for us. You, on the other hand, know nothing of us except what your dreamers dream, and that you dismiss as fantasy. The fact remains, however, that the walls between the worlds are thin enough to let folk pass through them in one direction, and

thoughts and dreams to sometimes pass in both. The eye in Manannan's study is a hole in the wall.

I am a curious soul; I have read the records concerning your world and know as much about it as any here in Daventry. Because of this, I soon came to realize that much of what appeared in the eye of that mechanical head came from the Other World. Somehow in this strangest of multiverses, our worlds touch together in a place shared by the head in this study and some of your machines.

My story might have ended there, except for that curiosity of mine. One night, tapping upon the teeth with no particular purpose in mind, I was astounded to find mention of Daventry and King Graham's adventures. Apparently they exist in your world as a sort of fantasy adventure—a made-up story intended as an entertainment for people.

Again, our worlds are so very close that we can sometimes dream each other, and even turn those dreams into stories. This must be true, for I have seen the evidence with my own eyes, transmitted back from the Other World. Who the dreamer is that could learn enough to concoct a story is unknown to me, although the person must be a very great dreamer.

I have experimented for much time now with the device, and I am convinced that I can send messages directly to you through it. Perhaps that is why Manannan contrived it—to talk to your world, or perhaps to recruit allies whom he could help withdraw here so that he might rule cruelly over our entire universe. On the other hand, he might just have been as curious as I am.

I do not know if what I write here will ever arrive in the Other World, but I think I have figured out what to do to send the words on their way. I have nothing to lose, of course, and for you who discover this,

perhaps I will have provided you with some wonder, knowledge, and enjoyment. To that end I will continue my solitary experiments and copy for you some of the histories and narratives of my time. Since there are those in your world who are somewhat familiar with King Graham, I shall send you, on this night and other, some of the chronicles of his court—stories of the adventures of the King and his family. You might compare them to the stories that have been written. Perhaps I will write of other

things as the mood strikes me, or perhaps I will just copy some interesting words of others.

I will do all of this over some time, and more than once. Your world could learn much from us of the wonder, mystery, and magic of the multiverse. Maybe you could learn again that anything is possible and everything could be true.

Perhaps you will learn to believe your dreams.

"The King's Quest Companion" is a new book published by Silicon Valley Books, available the 1st of October at bookstores and computer stores near you (\$14.95). Or order direct 1-800-262-4729, 2600 Tenth Street, Sixth Floor, Berkeley, CA 94710.

Peter Spear, author of the book, is an Emmy Award winning television producer whose latest project is "The Computer Show," a syndicated TV program.

Lashawn Flores, New York, submitted this cartoon



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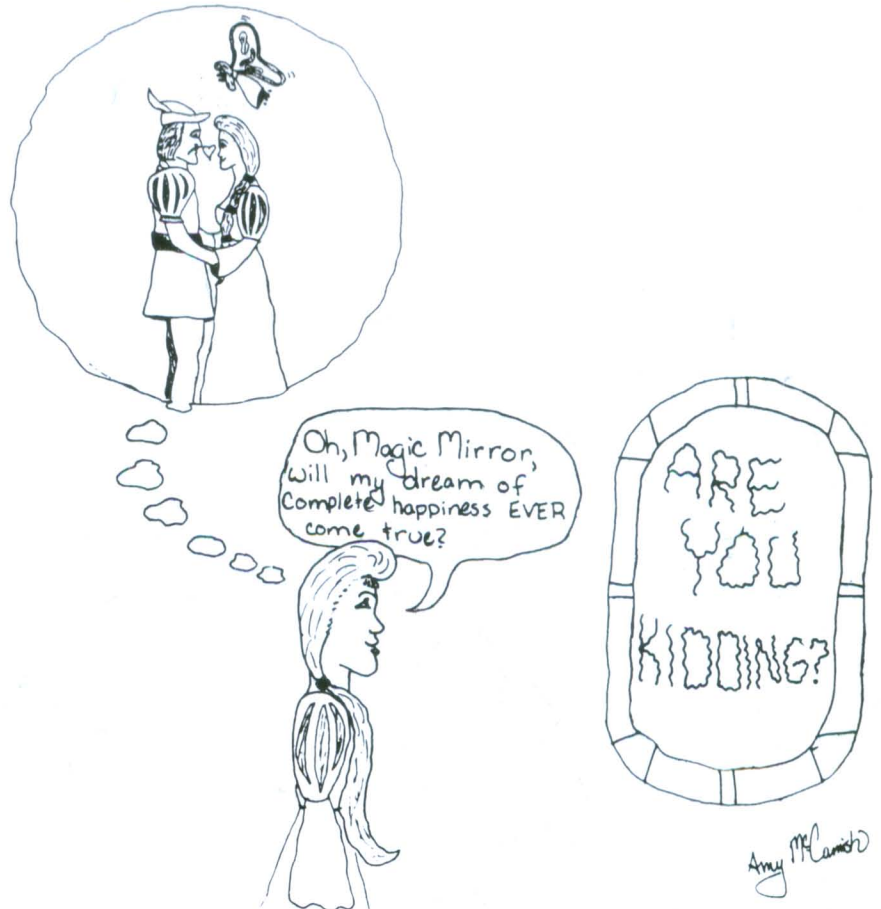
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Amy McCamish, Alaska, submitted this cartoon



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