# NEWSLETTER

Suggestions for a name for the Data Domain Newsletter continue to come in and we have decided to extend the contest for one more month. Please suggest a name. Don't forget the prize of either a year's subscription to the magazine of your choice or a $25 gift certificate for Data Domain merchandise.

Due to popular demand we have decided to continue the Space Eggs contest for another month. Come in and try your skills. Those who played last month can come in again this month and try to improve their score. Remember, there is a free game disk for the winner.

This issue features Apple news. Subsequent issues will focus on CP/M microcomputers.

John V. Lombardi, editor

## THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO RAY BORRILL

The world of small computers is governed by many rules and axioms. This month, I will give you three of Borrill's rules and Axioms to be read at your own risk.

Axiom: The scientist or researcher who uses personal computers is usually a slave to a budget and therefore is most concerned with the cost of a computer. The business executive is most concerned with the cost of doing business as expressed in the profit and loss statements and is thus more interested in how much a computer can save.

Customer Service Creed: Never clean, adjust, calibrate, or test anything that has not failed since the last time you did not clean, adjust, calibrate, or test it.

Borrill's Simple Explanation for Computerholism: Computers are addictive because they are the nearest thing man has created, or ever will create, to a machine with an infinite number of possibilities.

Personal Revelations: People often wonder why I seem to smile a lot, even when under a good deal of pressure. I've concluded, after five and a half years as an independent retailer, that it is because I'm usually too busy to know when I'm in trouble.

Ray Borrill

## FROM THE APPLE-PIT

The new publication schedule for the Data Domain Newsletter is going to force me to really learn all the command syntax for my word processor in order to meet all the deadlines. My previous efforts have been done with Magic Window which is handy for allowing a forty column display to show the eighty column printed format. If the program is being used in the presence of any distractions that could cause monentary loss of a train of thought, the requirement for horizontal scrolling to review text on the other half of the page will drive you bananas. I am now experimenting with Letter Perfect, which will operate in either a forty or eighty column environment.

The local Apple user group, IndianAPPLEus, has now applied for formal membership in the International Apple Core. We also have had membership cards printed which are good for a 5% discount at the Data Domain. If you missed the last meeting be sure to attend the next meeting to pick up your card. Meetings are the second Wednesday of each month at 7:30 PM at the Data Domain store. We hope to see you there.

I have recently had an opportunity to try one of the current 1981 FCC type approved APPLE-II+'s at home (serial no. 212,000+); Wow, there are getting to be a lot of Apple users out there! In comparison to my regular (serial no. 80,000+) Apple, the radio frequency interference (RFI) has been reduced significantly. The unshielded Apple interferes quite dramatically with a Radio Telephone which uses a frequency near 50 mhz. Whenever disk accesses occur, the Radio Telephone attempts to place trans-Atlantic calls by interpreting the RFI as a phone number from the portable phone if the Apple is located within approximately 40 feet of the Radio Telephone base unit. The newer Apple operated within 5 feet of the unit without the first chatter from the phone dialing relay. Those short, stiff, ground-plane disk drive cables are a pain however. A great deal of the flexibility in drive placement is gone and the stiffness of the cables could be hazardous to the health of your Apple. Several integrated circuits in the Apple and in the Disk Drive can be sent to the big Apple in the sky by improper connection of the drive cables with power applied. If you are prone to shifting positions of your Apple and disk drives, it would be very easy for those new cables to work loose from the controller card, creating circumstances I'd rather not even contemplate. In other words, USE THE STRAIN RELIEF CLAMPS that come in the box with the drive.

Eight inch disk drives have been available for the Apple for some time. Sorrento Valley Associates have been marketing a single density controller card for more than two years. The double density controller cards are starting to hit the market in quantity now. Attendees of the August IndianAPPLEus meeting had an opportunity to see Vista's entry in this area. I have been working with an Apple system utilizing dual, double-sided, double-density Lobo eight inch drives for a few months now. The Vista drives claim compatibility with Apple DOS, Pascal, and CP/M. We'll let Roy Robinson and Jon Meek elaborate on the validity of that claim in a later article. Suffice it to say that for Pascal and CP/M the documentation was sparse and implementation came with great difficulty.

The Lobo drives avoid this pitfall quite nicely, they don't claim any compatibility with anything other than Apple DOS. The Lobo drives have performed reliably for nearly six months now. One quirk worth noting for Apple users is perhaps as much a factor of Apple DOS as it is of the Lobo drives. There is a limit on the maximum number of file names on the disk. This would almost never be noticed with the 5 inch disks before all the available disk space had been used. However, on an 8 inch disk with 1.1 megabytes of space, I have created data disks containing short data files that have reached the DOS limit while still indicating 800 kilobytes of free space on the disk. Incidently, 1.1 megabytes of information on one disk makes the phrase back it up take on a whole new level of significance. If you shudder at the thought of losing one 5 inch floppy worth of data, think about those 1.1 megabytes disappearing into space...

John Prather


## A NEW APPLE JOYSTICK

For the uninitiated into the incredible addiction of Apple arcade games, a joystick is a device that combines the functions of two paddles into a single unit managed by a lever. The joystick is most often used and is essential for a wide variety of exciting Apple arcade games such as ABM. But the joystick also has some serious uses in graphics packages. In these applications the joystick can function like a drawing pencil to create high-resolution images on the screen.

Given the usefulness of this device, it is no surprise that there are many joysticks on the market. One reliable device is the Joystick II from The Keyboard Company.

In addition to having the usual features combining the functions of paddles 0 and 1, this joystick also has one regular pushbutton and a unique three-position switch for the other pushbutton. The three-position switch can either be set to on, off, or momentary on-off. In this last position, the

switch is spring loaded much like a pushbutton, and can be used that way. In the off, of course, the switch is off. In the on, the switch is put on and stays on until you put it in the off position. The Joystick II has a nice looking case and a long cord.

## TALKING TO OTHER COMPUTERS WITH THE APPLE

One of the interesting things that can be done with personal computers is talk to other computers, either small machines or large ones. The Apple, as is the case with other microcomputers, can communicate succesfully with mainframe machines or micros. The communication is accomplished through a combination of hardware and software that connects your computer to the telephone line and converts your computer into a terminal hooked into the other computer. The connection to the telephone line is done with a modem, a device to convert computer talk to telephone talk and back again. The conversion of your machine to a terminal is done with a software terminal program which may come on disk or may be part of the hardware package that comes with the modem.

The Apple-Cat II is a popular new modem composed of a large accessory card that fits into any slot (except 0) of the Apple. It then can be connected to practically any telephone line. It comes with a disk containing a sophisticated terminal program and some utilities for transfering Basic and Applesoft programs at high speed between two Apples.

In addition to the standard features of modems of this kind, the Apple-Cat II has some special capabilities. The standard package permits a regular telephone handset to be connected to the modem. You can then use the modem as a phone to talk to computer operators and the like before initiating data transfers. The device will also permit 1200 baud operation under certain conditions. The modem comes with a standard serial printer port to which you can attach a printer without having to purchase a separate printer card.

The Apple-Cat II will accept an optional accessory with a host of features. For example, it can have touch tone reception, voice telephone, voice recording, BSR X-10 control, and an EIA RS232 full duplex port. Priced competitively with the Hayes Micromodem II, the Novation Apple-Cat II is likely to be the modem of choice in many applications.

## THE DATA DOMAIN MAGAZINE RACK

One of the benefits of a full service computer store such as The Data Domain is a availability of an extensive collection of magazines. The Data Domain maintains current issues of many of the most interesting and important small computer journals published today. Some of them are general interest magazines, covering a wide range of topics and small computers. Others focus of specific machines such as the TRS-80, the Apple II, or other similar machines.

### The Data Domain Magazine Rack

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|---|---|
| The Apple Orchard | Byte |
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| Interface Age | Kilobaud Microcomputing |
| Micro 6502/6809 Journal | Nibble |
| On Computing | Personal Computing |
| S-100 Microsystems | Softside |
| 80 US Journal | 80 Microcomputing |
| Peelings II | The Apple Pickers Newsletter |

## THE TYPE AHEAD BUFFER

The Vista Computer Company has a useful device called the Type Ahead Buffer. This is a hardware gadget that lets you type characters from the keyboard faster than the program can receive them. For example, in some wordprocessing programs this usually occurs when the program is busy doing something like moving the screen, or putting an unfinished word on the next line. When this happens, some of the characters typed in are lost. One of the most versatile word processing programs for the Apple II computer, Super Text II, suffers from this malady, especially when inserting text into the middle of a reasonably long file.

However, with the Type Ahead Buffer you can stop worrying. The buffer stores up to 40 characters and then releases them to the program when the program is ready. Because most programs work much faster than anyone can type most of the time, the program can easily catch up with you if a momentary slow spot can be overcome through the use of a buffer of this kind. Indeed, some programs have written software buffers into their operations to resolve such momentary speed problems.

The Type Ahead Buffer is a hardware, permanent solution. It is composed of a small printed circuit board that plugs into one of the sockets on the main Apple II board. The keyboard is then plugged into the Type Ahead Buffer, and that's all there is to it. Under practically all normal conditions, this unit is invisible to the user. Moreover, it works with all varieties of Apples, including old Apples (pre-revision 7 boards) and Apples equipped with the Paymar lower case adapter. This device is highly recommended, and it is essential for the effective use of Super Text II.

### CP/M
#### THE DATA DOMAIN SOFTWARE SALE

The Data Domain stocks a wide variety of CP/M software. Although the Apple II receives major attention in this Newsletter, in part because the editor uses an Apple, The Data Domain has a strong interest in CP/M based microcomputers such as the Vector, Cromemco, Alpha Micro, NEC, Osborne I, and others. From time to time we accumulate an overstock of CP/M software, excellent packages with wide applications especially in business. To clear this overstock we are having a CP/M software sale for 15% off list price. If you are interested, come in soon and look over the items for sale. When we sell out the inventory, the sale will be over.

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