Executive Board Officers

President: Mark Thomas   (717-9866)
Vice President: Don Schwab (355-5663)
Sec./Treas.   Dallas Denny (939-2128)

Staff

CUGA Editor: Gene Smith   (636-8598)
Librarian: Issy Weaver   (448-9454)
Ass't Librarian: Marie Thomas (717-9866)
C-128 Librarian: Bob Pitts (636-8003)
Amiga SIG: Bob Padgett (938-2413)

Next Meeting

Thursday, July 25, 1991
Tucker Christain Church
Subject: "Demo on Geos
Geo-Paint" by M Thomas
and any other artists.
ALSO - Plus 4 software
to work on C-64. Wade
and volunteer helpers.
ALSO - Plenty of help in
all aspects of computing
from members standing by
and ready to help!

ALLIANCE, ASSOCIATION, OR WHAT?

At this writing of the newsletter a meeting of interested parties from CUGA, SMUG and MACK is scheduled to take place on July 20, 1991 for the purpose of determining whether the clubs should ally, associate or whatever with the idea of combining our individual clubs in interests, membership, newsletters, and or combined meetings to serve the numbers of Commodore and Amiga users in the Atlanta area at least threee or four times a year. We know there must be hundreds of Commodore 64, 128, and Amiga users in the Metro Area who are not members of any of the clubs who need the support of a user group who are not now participating in any of the three clubs. We need your help and you need the clubs now in existence. This will be a very important meeting and we will give a report in our next newsletter. Meanwhile, if you are not participating in any of CUGA, MACKS, or SMUG activities think of JOINING. You are needed! WHERE ARE YOU?   Editor: Gene Smith

---

C.U.G.A   M.A.C.K   S.M.U.G. 64/128
P. O. Box 2031   P. O. Box 813481   P. O. Box 1762
Tucker, Ga. 30085-2031   Smyrna, Ga. 30081   Lilburn, Ga. 30226

Yes, I am interested in becoming a member of your user group. I have much to learn and much to contribute. Please let me know how I may join and when you meet. Or if I am presently a member in one of the groups how may I become an associate in one of the other two and when they meet.

My name_____

Address_____

City/State_____ ZIP CODE_____

I PRESENTLY OWN _____
COMPUTER   DRIVE   MONITOR

     OTHER_____

CUT -- AND MAIL TO ANY OF THE ABOVE
USER GROUPS.

CLARK: A REMINISCENCE-- PART I
by Dallas Denny

Note: I could not possibly have done my work with Clark without the help of Wendy McAmis and Joyce Moore, who worked with him every day for ten years. Wendy was Clark's case coordinator, and went above and beyond the call of duty to make sure his computer was "on line." Joyce is a speech therapist, and trained Clark not only to use the computer, but in basic language skills as well. They are warm and caring people, and I cannot say enough good about them.

Last month, at the CUGA Executive Committee, we were trying to pick a topic for the upcoming main membership meeting. CUGA having been around for a long time, we've done just about everything at least once. I had what I thought was a not particularly good idea-- Nostalgia and Brag night. Members would bring in obsolete equipment and explain why it was once important, and would show off programs or tell about their peak experiences with Commodore computers. The idea having been thrown out and duly accepted by the board, I hoped that it would work.

Despite my misgivings, the meeting turned out to be one of our better ones. I told the following story, which Newsletter Editor Gene Smith asked me to put onto paper.

All my adult life, I have worked with people with mental retardation, in residential centers. In those centers, there are a few men and women who are not retarded. They are there because their bodies have betrayed them. They cannot control their arms and legs, and in many cases, they do not even have enough motor control to talk, even though they know how, and have much to say.

Clark was such a man. In his early fifties, he had a quiet dignity. Even though his life must have been tremendously frustrating, he bore his physical burden with good humor and resignation. He would help to feed and clothe himself as best he could, and would patiently try to force his mouth to say the things that he wanted to say.

At the time, there were commercially available augmentative speech devices, but they were very expensive, and Clark, with his limited income, could not afford one. As it was 1982 or 1983, and VIC-20s were plentiful and cheap-- and powerful-- it occurred to me that a $49 computer with a tape drive could do just as much as a $1700 dedicated speech device. I set out to write a program to help Clark to speak.

I called the program Six Bits, because it took six presses of a digital switch (six bits of information) to select a single character from a field of 64. Sixty-four characters were enough to give Clark the letters of the alphabet and the numbers, puncuation marks, and even an electronic alarm, which would summon help.

I sacrificed a joystick, cutting off the cord, fitting the ground wire and the wire for the fire button into a Radio Shack jack. Clark used a readily available switch, a secretary's foot-pedal. He would position himself in his wheelchair, and work the switch with his foot. It took all his concentration and control, for he had to make the selection within a window of time (which was adjustable). Six presses, and a letter would appear on the screen. He could erase mistakes, or the whole message (he had to confirm to erase), and could save a message in memory while he worked on a second. When a message was complete, he could route it to the printer, or to a Votrax speech synthesizer, or just leave it on the screen for an attendant to read.

It turned out that Clark had a lot to say.

Next Month: Part II