

NASHVILLE

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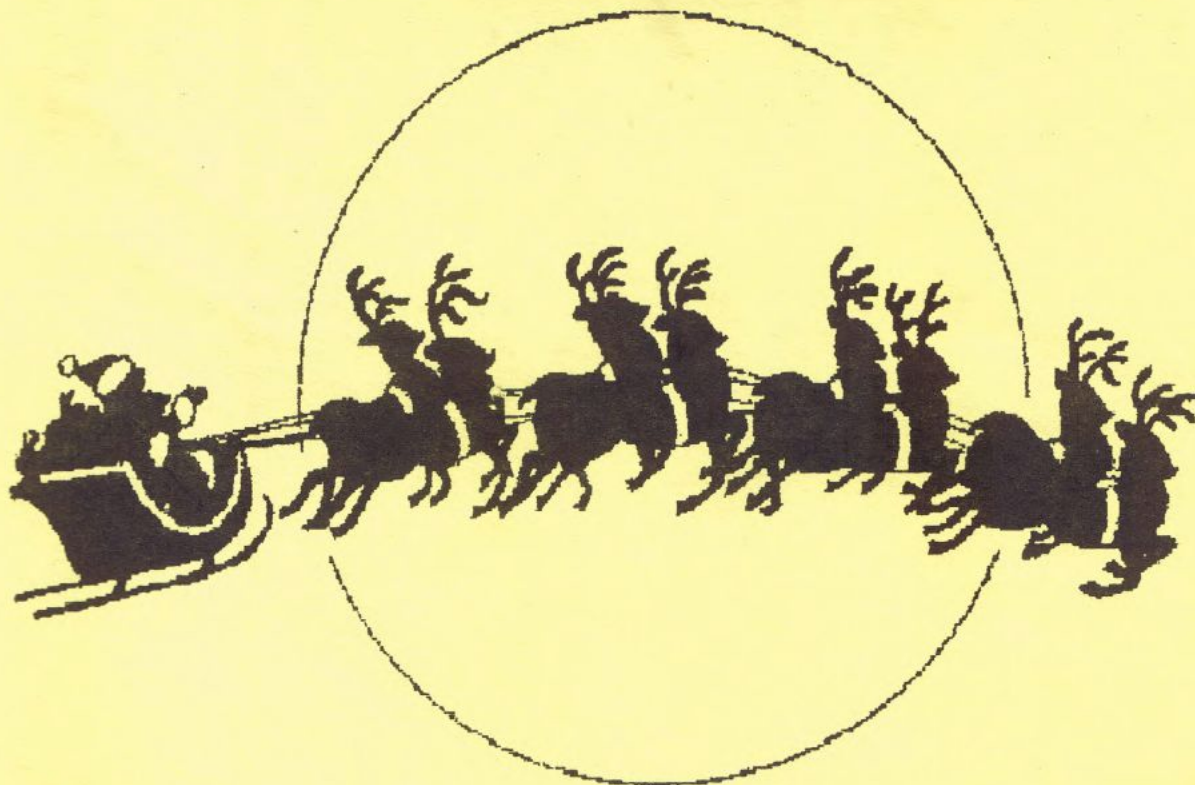
COMMODORE

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*Season's
Greetings!*



Graphics in this issue courtesy John Lyda, Joe Fetherling, and Amiga.

"CHARACTER" PEEKS

Public Domain... (continued from page 5)

"really encourage the use of public domain software an awful lot in our system." However, that doesn't address the charge, to which the answer is: of course they are! CompuServe both encourages the use and expansion of the public domain libraries on their network and, via the user agreement copyrights, works to limit the distribution of public domain software through other channels. Guilty as charged.

It's unlikely that CompuServe will drop the "Albert Schweitzer of public domain software" act or their "customer protection" racket in the near future. Feathers have been ruffled, and smoothing them will take time. While CompuServe is morally out of bounds in more ways than one, given the vacuous state of copyright laws concerning electronic information, they are legally within the field of play and that's where the game will be played. They'll fight in court, if need be, for their Play Doh-nic rights.

The death of "True-ware" public domain doesn't have to be the end of it. The copyright laws can protect free distribution as well as control it, while at the same time reserving the commercial rights of the original author. Just specify that the re-copyrighting of the software for any purpose violates the author's expressed wishes, or words to that effect.

CompuServe and other likeminded networks could refuse to post such software in their libraries. The remaining services would like that. Or, CompuServe can back up their talk and join in the spirit of sharing public domain as it was intended. Not to worry; they'll still make their money.

(Reprint courtesy WICU.)

Clone Wars...

Reggie Ramloose

If it walks like a duck, talks like a duck, and quacks like a duck, what is it? A duck, you say? How perceptive! OK then, if it walks like an IBM-PC, talks like an IBM-PC, balks like an IBM-PC, what is it? Yes, it may be an IBM-PC. But more likely, it's a Campy Compaq, Zany Zenith, Handy Tandy, Sappy Sanyo, or any of a host of other (increasingly inexpensive) compatibles. Now, is it an Apple or is it a Franklin or is it an Orange Micro? Only the Shadow knows. But does the Shadow know that there is now a C-64 clone? Yes, Virginia, it's true!

Recently, mysteriously, a machine (cleverly) called the C-64C began to appear on the shelves of your local Target store. The imposter almost fooled yours truly. But then I thought "Wait a minute! What's going on here!" Close inspection revealed the following: Gone was the sleek and sensually rounded front of the C-64! Gone was the familiar row of four function keys! Even the color was different. Gone was the familiar coffee-with-cream hue! And then I saw something which made me KNOW it was an imitation! How? Elementary, my dear Watson. The price tag was higher than that of

a REAL C-64! COMMODORE WOULD NEVER DO THAT! Not the Commodore I know and love! The folks in West Chester would never raise the price without adding features. Never! And this machine had no numeric keypad. Had no extra memory. Had no reset button. It couldn't be a Commodore!

There is only one logical conclusion: We are dealing with a fake. Cheap, shoddy goods. So beware! Don't settle for the cheap imitation, even if they are giving away "free" software with it. Insist upon the genuine Commodore trademark.

Which Computer (if any) Should I Buy?...

Dallas Denny

It's 68000 wars out there. There are a bunch of 32-bit machines vying for my computer bucks: the Apple Macintosh, Macintosh XL and GS, the Atari 512K and 1024K STs, and the Amiga (with two more models reportedly waiting in the wings). And there are, of course, the eight (Commodore 128) and 8/16 bit (IBM PC and its army of clones and compatibles) machines. Many of these machines have been on the market for more than a year. Yet I am sitting here typing this on my Commodore 64. Why?

I have asked myself this many times. I like to make lists:

Most advanced machine: Amiga.

Largest software base: MS-DOS.

Most bytes per buck: Atari 1024 ST.

Least expensive machine: C-128.

I tell myself: (1) I'm going to get an Amiga. The software will materialize; (2) There's no use resisting the tide any longer. I'm going to MS-DOS; (3) I'm going to get a C-128 so I can program in BASIC 7.0 and still run all my C-64 software; (4) I'm going to get a Macintosh and get heavy into desktop publishing; (5) I'm going with Atari because Commodore is in financial trouble. And then I realize (1) How can I think about getting an Amiga when there's not even a decent word processor for it and Commodore is headed straight for Chapter 11; (2) MS-DOS machines have TERRIBLE sound and graphics, and I can't stand the slow response time to my keystrokes; (3) If I get a C-128, I'll have to eventually buy a 1571 drive and an RGB monitor, and for that much money, I may as well go ahead and get an Amiga; (4) I will never get a Macintosh, because there is no alternative to using that ~~!-&\$!~~ mouse, and besides, I can't afford a laser printer, so I might as well forget about desktop publishing; and (5) I can't bring myself to buy an Atari when the Amiga is so much more advanced.

And so I sit here. With my C-64. I want a new computer, but I'm waiting. I don't know what I am waiting for, but I hope I'll know it when I see it.

(Watch for the upcoming series "Computing in the Hinterlands" by Dallas Denny, appearing in two parts. The first installment will appear in the next issue of NCUG Magazine.)