Executive Board

Officers

President: Mark Thomas (717-9866)

Vice President: Bob Padgett (938-2413)

Vice President: Gene Smith (636-8598)

Secretary/Treasurer: Dallas Denny (939-2128)

Staff

CUGA Editor — Gene Smith (636-8598)

C-64 Librarian — Issy Weaver (448-9454)

C-128 Librarian — Bob Pitts (636-8003)

Amiga Librarian — Bob Padgett (938-2413)

Next Meeting:

7:30 pm, Thursday, March 28, 1991
Tucker Christian Church

Program: Workshop

Subject: "Hands On" Computing
Bring your own or use
some of ours. Programs
or Hardware. See what
we can accomplish!!!

We're hoping this meeting
will show us all
what we can do
working together
— — — — — — —

GEOS REVISITED
by Dallas Denny

Several years ago, at the first CASE show, the GEOS program was reviewed, and I won it as a door prize. Next to the Amiga computer system we gave away, GEOS was considered the prize to get. It had just come out, and everyone was hungry for it, and I won it.

I took the program home and tried it, and, as a result, wrote an article for the newsletter of The Nashville Commodore Users Group called "I Won GEOS-- Big Deal!"

If you have guessed that I was somewhat unenthusiastic about the GEOS program, you guessed right. I found it kludgy, obtuse, and counterintuitive. It was excruciatingly slow, filled with glitches, and it lacked many features which I considered critical. Yes, it would (finally) produce a nice-looking printed page, but oy! The effort! I promptly sold GEOS. Good riddance!

In the past several months, I have had the opportunity to watch two wonderful demonstrations of GEOS by John Taggart, a man who is enchanted with the program and who finds that it meets his needs. He is a wizard with GEOS, and was so enthusiastic about it that I obtained a copy of the latest version and again tried my hand.

I was ready to like GEOS, but found that I could not. The same frustrations awaited me. Again, I concluded that GEOS was not for me-- and for the same reasons that I had disliked it the first time. (I have similar problems with the MacIntosh. It drives me crazy.)

I have come to a conclusion about GEOS and the Mac. It is not that GEOS is a bad program and that the Mac is a bad computer, but rather that there are Type A and Type B computer users. If GEOS and the MAC are for type B, then I am Type A.

GEOS (and all this goes for the MacIntosh, too) is a graphics-driven environment, in which everything is more-or-less laid out for the user. The program, an analog of a desktop, is menu-driven. Files can be opened and laid on the desk, put away, or placed in a trash can (where they are retrievable until the trash can is "emptied"). This suits Type A users, who are visually-oriented and who can deal with pictures instead of words. The DOS prompt and the BASIC prompt drive them crazy, for words must be entered. But the GEOS arrow is like a friendly finger that they can point.

The start-up screen on my 64, like MS-DOS, and like EasyScript, the word processor I usually use, is not menu-driven. There are many things that I can do, limited only by the vocabulary of Basic 2.0, DOS, and EasyScript, respectively. I am able to do anything at any time, simply by typing in the command. There is no need to move through a variety of menus to finally get to the place where I want to be. There is no need to move my fingers from the keyboard to manipulate the mouse. I just type in the command, and it is carried out (and I type 85 wpm, so I can get things done fast). The interface is language-oriented rather than graphics-oriented.

Of course, I must know the command-- and there's the rub. Few computer users are willing to take the time and energy to memorize a plethora of commands. They would rather have it all laid out for them (via menus).

For the computer novice, Type A programs like GEOS are a godsend, because they enable the person to immediately start to use the computer.

If you are very frustrated with your Commodore or Amiga, they ask yourself-- am I a Type A or Type B person? Am I using a Type A or Type B program? It might save you some hassle.