

Newsletter

VOL³ NO7 AUG 1980

ALPHA MICRO USERS SOCIETY
1216 Pearl St., P.O. Box 1723
Boulder, Colo. 80306
(303) 449-6917

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AMUS office hours are from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Mountain Time. Our overworked secretary is Sharon Greene who is happy to assist you with any question you might have about AMUS, or the Alpha Micro Computer. If she doesn't know the answer to your question, she will try to direct you to someone who does.

The AMUS Newsletter is published monthly and sent to all AMUS members. Additional copies and back issues of the newsletter may be ordered from Sharon Greene. AMUS members may place one full page advertisement in the newsletter each month at no charge. Please submit material as high contrast, camera ready copy on 8 1/2 X 11 inch white paper. Bug, fixes, articles, letters, reviews of software and information about Alpha Micro applications are happily accepted. material must be received by the 20th of the month for inclusion in the following month's edition.

The Alpha Micro Users Society Network is a computer system meant to give members access to information and other Alpha Micro users with similar interests. It consists of an Alpha Micro computer with a Hawk disk drive, a 300 baud modem, a 1200 baud modem, and 160K of memory. AMUS members are given an individual account and password on the Network so that they may receive personal electronic mail. Many thanks to Alpha Micro Systems in Irvine, California; North America Title Co. of Houston, Texas; and The Byte Shop of Reno, Nevada who have donated equipment and software to the Network.

AMUS has a library of programs that have been donated by members for distribution to other members. Programs are available either through the AMUS Network, or, if you prefer, we can make floppy or Hawk cartridge copies and mail them to you. Orders may be placed through Sharon Greene.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Since I have become president of AMUS the organizational structure has been constantly changing. Pat Seitsinger has now taken on the task of publishing the newsletter each month. This will hopefully bring about two beneficial results: 1. The newsletter will come out on a more regular basis, and 2. I will have more time to handle calls and problems from members.

We are in the process of rewriting the by-laws for AMUS. These will give us more flexibility to change as the organization grows. Dues have already been raised to \$35.00 per year to help us cover our operating expenses, and we will be building a stronger seminar base to both help members learn how to better use the Alpha Micro computer, and to bring some coin into our coffers so that we can offer better services to members. Until May of this year, the only paid staff member was Sharon, our secretary. The board has now allocated \$200.00 a month for the network librarian, Adam who puts in at least thirty hours a week, and \$250.00 a month for the Newsletter Editor. When I was in charge of editing the newsletter, I found that each issue took between 40 and 60 hours to assemble, paste up, and get from the printers to the post office.

We hope that you will understand that if a newsletter is slow getting out, or a problem isn't immediately addressed, its because all of the board members and people helping out at AMUS are volunteering their time and have business of their own that must be attended to. As AMUS grows, there are naturally more calls, more contacts to be made, and more tasks to do. I believe that we are about to hit critical mass where the membership and the staff will coalesce into a thriving, self supporting full time organization able to put its finger on any information any member needs about the Alpha Micro computer.

This all means work, mutual help, and paitence. Here at AMUS we are going to work hard to catalog and collect all the information we can about how Alpha Micro computers are being used, what software is available, and what people can answer what problems. You as members can help us by writing and telling us what you are doing with the Alpha Micro, what software you have available, and what areas you can assist in.

Stephan K. Elliott

The AMUS Newsletter is published monthly by AMUS, P. O. Box 1724, Boulder, Colorado 80306. Subscription rates are \$7.50 per year. Application to mail at second-class postage rates is pending at Boulder, Colorado 80302.

This month's cover was created by Alan Martin on the CDC 7600 using a graphics software package called DIGRAF.

From The Editor

A sincere thank you to Steve Elliott for spending the last two years of his life on this newsletter - and, believe me, it is really a part of your life. Steve, you did a marvelous job - you'll be a hard act to follow.

Steve devotes a tremendous amount of time to Amus, assisting members in solving all sorts of problems - everything from disk problems to programs. Please take a moment to say thank you to him - you can leave it on the network.

We're starting a new column this month - called the Wishing Well. If there is something you wish you could find, let us know. We'll put it in the column and, who knows....

Anyone with suggestions about the newsletter, please let me know..... we're going to try our darndest to keep up Steve's good work.

Keep them cards and letters comin'

Pat

AM-100 USER'S GROUP
616 Long Pond Road
Rochester, NY 14612

The AM-100 User's Group, run by Lefford F. Lowden, publishes a monthly newsletter which includes discussions of programming, programs under development and for sale by computer stores or individuals, and programs in the library.

Cost is \$18.00 per year in US, Canada and Mexico; \$36.00 per year in Europe, Asia, etc.

Some of the items that have been included in the newsletter are requests for programs, requests for information on hardware, errors in system programs and their fixes, if any (or at least ways to avoid them). Longer discussions have included multiple user file access programming techniques, I/O using the assembler, undocumented features of system programs, etc.

A library of user-written software is maintained and available to members of the group. Submission of one or more programs by a member grants that member the next year's membership free.

It is not necessary that a member own an AM-100 (T).

Lefford Lowden

Ed. Note: For more information, contact Lefford at the address above. An application form is included with this newsletter for your convenience.

PROBLEM IN ALPHABASIC

DIM - DESTROYS VARIABLE INDEX AREA

John Kjellman reports a problem with a DIM statement destroying part of the variable index area (but not the variable being dimensioned) in certain situations. The next time the destroyed variable is accessed, big trouble. The puzzling thing is that the addition of a simple PRINT statement at the beginning of the offending program generally makes the problem go away, at least until the next program change is made. What puzzles them is that the problem occurs so infrequently and in only two programs.

John has sent a complete test setup to Alpha Micro so they may see it for themselves. Bob Currier indicates they should be able to find the problem quickly and solve it.

Victorex, Inc.
1529 Cypress Street, Suite 103
Walnut Creek, California

94596

(415) 943-1023

FORMATTING FLOPPY DISKETTES

John Kjellman also reports that he has learned from Alpha Micro that a floppy diskette cannot be formatted when the floppy is being used as a peripheral device and while another job is running. This is not a 'bug', but a requirement, undocumented. John warns that the problem is here to stay.

Victorex, Inc.

AM-100 USER'S GROUP
616 Long Pond Road
Rochester, NY 14612

Name: ----- Phone: -----

Company: -----

Address: -----

City: ----- State: ----- Zip: -----

AM-100(TM) serial number: -----

System configuration:

Applications and software interest:

Software for which you are looking:



1739 MOOR DALE LANE
P. O. BOX 17355
SALT LAKE CITY, UT 84117

TELEPHONE (801) 272-1100

JULY 14, 1980

.TO:
AMUS USERS OF ALPHA ACCOUNTING

We hereby CANCEL our offer to provide TURN-KEY accounting modifications of ALPHA ACCOUNTING!

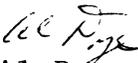
Due to our misunderstanding, we believed that we could properly license our turn-key modifications as an Add-On to an existing Alpha Accounting licensed user.

We have since been told by Alpha Micro that we can not license any modifications to Alpha Accounting. Further, since we are not a Dealer, we can not sell Alpha Accounting licenses, which we never intended to do.

Without the necessary licensed protection for our own extensive proprietary development, we are unwilling to incorporate them in another's product, even if Alpha Micro wanted that done, which they do not!

If you want modifications to Alpha Accounting, see your Dealer!

Sorry for the mixup.


Al Dye

P.S. Please Don't Ask Us Anything About Alpha Accounting. Thanks.



REDBAL™

RELATIONAL DATA BASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR THE ALPHA MICRO

With REDBAL, it's a snap to build and use small data files. Even non-technical users can create files; edit, select, sort, and merge them; and print reports from them. The User Interface is guided by clearly worded menus and question-and-answer dialogs. The versatile File Editor allows you to add, change, delete, display, and search for records in any file. The Report Generator queries you for the report format (file name, page dimensions, titles, column headings, print fields), then stores the format description for future retrieval.

Programmer Interface: Basic programmers can access data through a group of Basic language subroutines that allow storage and retrieval of individual fields or entire records.

Specifications: REDBAL handles any number of files, each with up to 30 data fields per record. Four types of fields are supported: single ASCII character, floating point number, variable length string, and paragraph. (The file editor includes a paragraph editor that lets you modify individual characters, phrases and lines.) Fields can later be added or deleted, even if a file already contains data.

Uses: We developed REDBAL to handle the data dictionary for one of our consulting projects. We love it! It has received a vigorous testing period within our company. It's great for any filing and reporting job that lends itself to tabular data. We've used it for mailing labels, our customer data base, and a research bibliography. We also use it as a tool for designing software: We create a rough version of the proposed system in front of the customer's eyes, then walk through it until it's right.

Special Bonus: To help develop REDBAL, we created a special librarian program called LIBRA [tm]. It copies the REDBAL subroutines -- and any other source files such as maps -- into Basic source programs. Copy files can be nested up to 10 levels deep. LIBRA also renumbers Basic programs. It successfully handles continuation lines. You get LIBRA as part of REDBAL. (If you're doing application development, LIBRA alone may be worth the purchase price of REDBAL.)

A REDBAL license includes source code and documentation on an AMS format diskette. (If you require another format or medium, please contact us.) The following introductory prices are good for a limited time only:

REDBAL (including LIBRA) single-user license \$75 *
LIBRA only, single-user license \$25 *
* California residents please add 6% sales tax

Send check or money order with your name, address and phone number to:

AMERICAN BUSINESS DATA SYSTEMS
890 Osos, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401
(805) 543-5487

Analogics, Inc.

- Business Systems Development
- Computer Sales & Service
- Management Consulting

July 22, 1980

AMUS
P. O. Box 1723
Boulder, Colorado 80306

ANALOGICS, INC. is now offering an enhanced version of the Alpha Microsystems (tm) Order Entry and Inventory Control software for Wholesale Distributors and related Industries. The package was written by a highly experienced team of system and applications programmers and has been in production use for over eight months.

1. Up to 5 quantity/price breaks with automatic rollover or manual selection.
2. Separate sales and credit memo statistics for each part.
3. Complete Open Purchase Order system with line item detail and all option (add, delete, change, inquire).
4. Inventory inquiry will display all open purchase orders on demand.
5. Multi-company and/or warehouse capability with comparative sales, profit and stock data on the same display screen or on hardcopy reports.
6. Full options (add, delete, change, inquire) on Credit Memos.
7. Additional cost and product packaging information.
8. Two levels of product identification (Product category and catalog page) for more detailed sales analyses.
9. Expanded warehouse bin location field.

In addition, the Accounts Receivable programs have been extensively rewritten to eliminate the time consuming sorts and rewrites of the AR open item file during posting and purging operations. A payment due date field has been added to accommodate special term and automatic computation of finance charges.

Conversion from current Alpha Accounting is a simple process using the built-in file conversion programs.

Yours truly,



MICHAEL M. WEINER

clinical analytics, inc.

multiply the power of your Alpha Micro

ANNOUNCING ORACLE®

A UNIVERSAL DATABASE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

ORACLE® IS COMPREHENSIVE!

databases may be tailored to fit the unique needs of any application -- business, professional, scholarly, hobby, household • no need for programmer or specially trained system operator intervention, even to open new databases • printed ranks • sorts • statistical analysis • user-designed reports • labels • individualized form letters, directories, and documents • special data types -- string (text), numeric, date, time, age (interval), cash, phone, social security number

ORACLE® IS POWERFUL!

up to 40 fields per record • dynamic allocation of record length • up to 512 bytes per record • multiple independent databases • hundreds of thousands of records • multiple ISAM fields • tight data packing • searches specified by up to 20 conditions • variable-length (1 to 70 character) string fields which may contain multiple entries (subfields) • automatic encryption and decryption by key • automatic case conversion for entry of proper nouns • global field and subfield search-and-replace

ORACLE® IS FRIENDLY!

user-controlled database design -- even ISAM files automatically constructed • rapid data entry and update facilitated by special input routines and formatted screens • command entry via sophisticated natural (English) language processor • HELP commands • entry error checking • clear, comprehensive documentation

ORACLE® understands

```
.....
".....
"I want to see every contributor whose donation was more
than $1,000 and whose zip code is higher than 06499 but
less than 06576."
.....
".....
>Please rank all medications except ampicillin for me.
The diagnosis must not include fracture and the date of
visit should be past 1/5/80 but prior to 14 February
1980. The time of visit must be later than noon but
before 4:30 PM. I also want the patient's age to be
greater than 2 years 8 months yet younger than 10 yrs."
.....
```

Clinical Analytics, Inc • 77 Everit Street • New Haven, CT 06511
• (203) 787-3952 •

oracle®

Computer Applications Research

26th June 1980

A.M.U.S.,
C/o Community Free School,
P.O. Box 1724,
Boulder,
Colorado 80306,
U.S.A.

Attention: Mr Jim Taylor

Dear Jim,

Following NCC where we met with a number of Alpha dealers to demonstrate Alpha-COBOL, we have added several important enhancements at their suggestion.

1. Qualification statement
2. Level 88's
3. Nested ifs

We are now delivering Alpha-COBOL with these enhancements against our first orders. We are considering increasing the retail price of Alpha-COBOL as a result of discussions with Alpha dealers. However, we will honour all orders paid for before the end of August at \$1,000 per copy.

The addition of Alpha-Cobol to an Alpha-Microsystem brings to the marketplace the most powerful and cost-effective solution for companies having a substantial commitment and who are seeking to distribute their main-frame processing.

Alpha-Cobol is the most intelligent, fastest running and fastest compiling ANSI 74 standard Cobol on a true multi-user, Multi-language 16 Bit micro computer.

Alpha-Cobol enhances the Alpha-Microsystem computer into a true distributive business machine Alpha-Cobol is fully compatible with AMOS the Alpha-Microsystem proprietary operating system. The file structure of Alpha-Cobol is also compatible with Alpha-Basic.

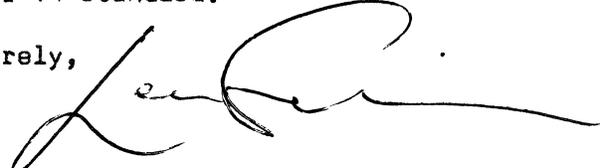
Alpha-Cobol will compile a 2000 line Cobol program in 32 KBytes at up to 7 lines per second (On the T processor).

Alpha-Cobol accepts concurrent multi-user compilation and or running of Cobol programs while still allowing the compilation or running of Alpha-Basic programs in other user partitions.

Alpha-Cobol has the facility of highly efficient chaining of COBOL programs. Files need not be closed and re-opened and Data may be held in core. As a result the size of an Alpha-Cobol process is virtually unlimited.

Alpha-Cobol provides full screen handling capability without departing from the current ANSI 74 standard.

Yours sincerely,


LEO SCHEINER (Director)

A division of CAR Business Systems Limited
71, Hammersmith Road, London W14 Telephone 01-602 4451

Registered address 5, Singer Street, London EC2

CONTEMPORARY CYBERNETICS GROUP
ANNOUNCES
A COMPLETE INTERACTIVE ACCOUNTING SYSTEM

We have modified the Osborne Accounting System to run on the Alpha-Micro Computer. This accounting system includes a General Ledger package, an Accounts Payable and Accounts Receivable package, and a Payroll with Cost Accounting package. These packages may be run stand alone or as a total accounting system. All of these packages have the following features:

- Menu Driven
- Password Protected
- Interactive Data Entry
- Structured Design for Ease of Modification

The General Ledger package:

- Accepts Direct Postings
- Accepts Postings from External Programs
- Allows You to Format Your Own Balance Sheet and Income Statement
- Maintains Account Balances for the Current Month, Quarter, Year and Previous Three Quarters
- Allows You to Generate Financial Reports Including Income Statement, Balance Sheet and More

The Accounts Payable and Accounts Receivable package:

- Can be Fully Linked to the General Ledger Package
- Has an Accounts Payable Check Printing Feature with Invoice Detail
- Has an Accounts Payable Invoice Aging Feature
- Allows You to Pay Invoices by Vendor or by Invoice
- Has a Provision for Progress Billing
- Allows You to Generate Customer Statements
- Has an Accounts Receivable Invoice Aging Feature

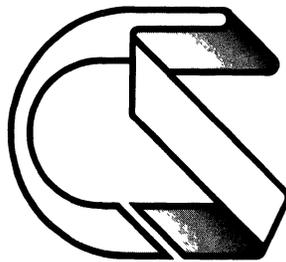
The Payroll With Cost Accounting package:

- Maintains Monthly, Quarterly, and Yearly Cumulative Totals for Each Employee
- Allows Payroll Costs to be Distributed Among Various Jobs and Tasks
- Allows You to Generate a Payroll Journal, Government Tax Forms, and Other Reports

All orders and general information:
CONTEMPORARY CYBERNETICS GROUP
1204 Willow Green Drive
Newport News, Virginia 23602
(804) 599-4749

\$700.00 for Total System
\$250.00 per package
Accept MASTER CHARGE,
VISA, PREPAID, OR COD

PRICE INCLUDES: SOURCE PROGRAMS ON FLOPPY AND COMPLETE DOCUMENTATION.
AVAILABLE ON HAWK REMOVABLE AT AN ADDITIONAL COST OF
\$100.00.



CREATIVE SYSTEMS
SOFTWARE & SERVICES, INC.

July 16, 1980

!!!! ATTENTION ALL ALPHA USERS !!!!

CREATIVE SYSTEMS proudly announces the release of our latest software development package, known as the ...

"MAXIMIZER"

The MAXIMIZER from CREATIVE SYSTEMS is specifically designed for the glass industry. The package consists of A/R, A/P, G/L, P/R with modified order/entry, inventory control, and production control. The MAXIMIZER handles the paper work!! The system automatically produces confirmations, posts the proper adjustments to your inventory, gives you a minimum stock report, and produces the bill. The production control selects units to be produced (from the order entry/inventory control data) based on the parameters you set; produces an exception report which identifies any exceptions to your specified parameters; produces production tickets; does your optimizing for you, giving you diagrams and cutting instructions which will increase your glass use by 10% or more.

We would be pleased to answer any and all inquiries regarding this system. If you have any upcoming requirements for a glass industry application, please contact Linda Kloepfer at the phone number listed below.

Thank you.

DUNN, MOORE & ASSOCIATES

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*****
*
* -----
*   USED SOFTWARE FOR SALE           RENTAL PROPERTY MANAGEMENT (RPM)
* -----
* Economical used software from    1979 Model, running condition. A
* Dunn, Moore & Associates will    complete system for residential
* provide years of dependable      and/or commercial application.
* service. These products have
* been heavily used by present
* owners, but are still fully
* warranted by the manufacturer.
* Priced appropriately for end-
* users or dealers.
* -----
*   STATISTICAL ANALYSIS (SASSY)
* -----
* Everything you always wanted
* to know about statistics but
* were afraid to program !
* -----
*
*           * * * * S A S S Y * * * *
*
* SASSY reads YOUR data files - no more entering numbers til your
* fingers wear out to do statistical analysis. You specify which
* one (or group) of your files to read and the variables within
* that file and SASSY does the rest !
*
*     .....GRAPHICS - CRT and/or Printed Output
*           (with ordinary terminals and printers)
*
*     .....ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE
*
*     .....MULTIPLE LINEAR REGRESSION
*           (12 independent variables with interpolation)
*
* AND, if you just can't resist the temptation to do data entry,
*
*     .....PITA allows you to input your data, graphs it for
*           you, regresses it with your choice of regression
*           type, interpolates, and performs graphical
*           interpolation with your maximum and minimum values.
*
* -----
*
* A very special thank you to the University of Arizona for testing
* SASSY for Dunn, Moore & Associates.
*
*****
```

Khalsa Telecommunications Package

Release 2.0

Micromodem-100 Version

A new release of the Khalsa Telecommunications Package is now available from Khalsa Research Corporation. The Micromodem-100¹ Version is a significantly improved version of the Telecommunications Package we donated to the Alpha-Micro user community two years ago. We think you'll find the following features of the enhanced version well worth the new license fee.

The new interface driver is interrupt driven, so it uses CPU time only when characters are being transmitted or received, or when the phone is answered or hungup. It is also reentrant, allowing any number of modem boards to work from one copy of the driver. Neither of these features were available with the old package.

The new package includes programs for transferring files between AM-100 systems. These programs use a block format with headers and CRC information to verify data transmission. Blocks of data are retransmitted if necessary to correct transmission errors. These programs are able to send both ASCII and non-ASCII files (such as .PRG and .RUN files).

Both the baud rate and the terminal driver may be changed without rebooting the system. This allows someone to dial in and select the appropriate terminal driver from any driver in memory.

This release of the interface driver supports our TWX add-on, which will allow your AM-100 to operate as a terminal on the TWX network. If you are already on TWX, you could save over \$100.00 a month by not renting a hard-copy TWX terminal. Incoming TWX messages are stored on disk, one file per message. Outgoing messages can be sent to other TWX terminals or to TELEX through Western Union's Infomaster.

The new packages may be licensed through your local AM-100 distributor if he is a licensed dealer for us. If there is no KRC software dealer near you, just give us a call and we'll help you out.

If you paid us a license fee for the ORIGINAL package (about two years ago), you can order the new package for just our standard update cost: only \$25.00 plus shipping and any applicable sales tax.

Khalsa Research Corporation
Lamanda Park 108
131 N. San Gabriel Blvd.
Pasadena, CA 91107.
(213) 681-5111

1. Micromodem-100 is a Trademark of D.C. Hayes Associates, Inc.



July 18, 1980

AMUS
c/o Community Free School
P. O. Box 1724
Boulder, Colorado 80306

Dear members,

Ohio Data Base is proud to announce the availability of two Alpha-Micro applications:

- 1) Club Billing (Country Clubs, Tennis, Racquetball, etc.)
- 2) Asset depreciation.

The depreciation system features straight-line, sum-of-the-year's-digits, declining balance, declining balance with straight line crossovers, 20% bonus depreciation, investment credit reports, multiple asset categories, and complete asset file maintenance.

The club billing package is running very successfully in Cleveland. Since the features are rather extensive, please contact: Ohio Data Base, Attn; Jeff Christian, 4402 West 215th St., Suite One, Cleveland, Ohio 44126 for further information on either package.

Yours Sincerely,

Jeff Christian
Ohio Data Base

Payne, Jackson and Associates

A PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION

Certified Public Accountants

611 West Ninth Avenue, Anchorage, Alaska 99501
(907) 272-7261 or 279-2351

July 1, 1980

Alpha Micro Users Society
Box 1724
Boulder, Colorado 80306

Dear fellow Users:

Phoenix 90MB Disk Drive:

We have recently seen several negative comments in the newsletter about the Phoenix (including one of our own). Well it is about time someone said something nice about it. Our Phoenix has operated admirably through extreme temperature ranges, several earthquakes (including some man-made ones), and many partial and full power failures. To date (as far as I know) the only hardware related data losses resulted from system crashes and full power failures causing the loss of partially created sequential files. As you know AMOS updates the directory after a new sequential file is fully created and the file has been closed. The removable pack loading hazzard has never occurred here. We simply make sure that everyone who changes packs knows how to do it first.

It is true that some software bugs have created problems with its operation. However, it is nearly impossible to find all bugs before something is released. The problems which we had bringing up the Phoenix last summer (August 79 newsletter) were all software except one which looked like software and was actually being caused by an AM-200 board. Most of those bugs were quickly fixed by Alpha Micro. Yes, the backup time is high, and the bad block system is a bit tricky. But Alpha Micro is apparently changing (version 4.4) the bad block system to the alternate track concept which is used with the KONAN controller. If it wasn't for the human error factor one could almost stop doing backups. It's that reliable. All in all, our Phoenix has been just great.

PJA Income Tax System:

Last year we responded to Tax System inquiries with apprehension. Well it now has enough of a track record, that we really feel enthusiastic about it. Modesty keeps me from saying more. The 1980/81 version (version 3A+) will support 25 separate forms and schedules. We are even looking at some state tax programs on a request basis.

PJA Accounting System:

In response to comments about time required to set up the parameter files, version 8D (soon to be released) includes some predefined files. This means that new users can start using the system first, and then change it around to suit their needs or taste after they "get the hang of it". Those files are also available to existing users. We have lots of things planned for future versions. What we need is a 72 hour day so we can service our clients and still have time to do what we enjoy (improving and expanding our software).

I recently had another look at the Alpha Accounting Package while doing a financial statement review for a client. I left with a renewed agreement with what John Kjellman said in the Feb-80 newsletter: "For small nonmanufacturing businesses, we think it (the PJA Accounting System) is more appropriate than the Alpha Accounting Package."


Phil Payne

APL LANGUAGE NOW AVAILABLE

AlphaAPL is the name of the APL computer language implementation for the Alpha Microsystems computer. APL is a simple, yet powerful language and is particularly useful in financial and scientific work. AlphaAPL incorporates most features of IBM's APL/360 including many generally available extensions. Some important features of AlphaAPL are:

- * Full multi-user capability
- * Very interactive development facilities
- * Oriented to non-data processing personnel
- * Powerful data manipulation operations
- * Concise programming facilities
- * Uses standard operating system conventions
- * Use with any conventional terminal (ASCII or APL)
- * Can execute many times faster than BASIC
- * Allows user defined functions (APL subroutines)
- * Allows external subroutine calls (BASIC compatible)
- * Supports local and global variable types
- * Includes assembler language development aids
- * Has extended mathematical functions
- * Supports recursive programming techniques
- * Will automatically backup workspace files

Although AlphaAPL occupies only 24K of user memory, it is recommended that more than 32K of user memory be available. The AlphaAPL package includes the APL language, examples, an AlphaAPL implementation manual, source for many external subroutines and assembler subroutine development aids. The package is immediately available for \$500.00. The implementation manual alone is \$25.00.

Please contact Softworks Limited for additional information about AlphaAPL.

Victorex, Inc.
1529 Cypress Street
Walnut Creek, California 94596
(415) 943-1023

July 21, 1980

Mr. Steve Elliott, President
Alpha Microsystems Users' Society
P. O. Box 1723
Boulder, Colorado 80306

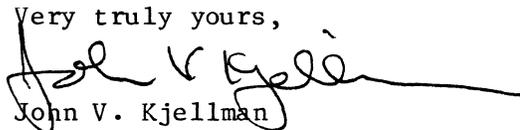
Dear Mr. Elliott:

Victorex is pleased to announce a new memory dumping program which will dump any word of memory, in any bank, regardless of where the dump program itself is running. It displays memory in octal (or hex), decimal, ASCII, RAD50 and binary formats, one word per line, with relative and absolute addressing. The octal display includes both word and byte formats. Not good for dumping large sections of memory, but great for dumping JCBs, DDBs, file buffers, terminal line tables, memory management tables, etc., as the relative address makes it easy to find specific words within these tables, and the several formats make it easy to interpret the results. A second version of the program sends the output to an ASCII file. The program is named DUMPER and is reentrant.

Another new MACRO program has been written as a BASIC subroutine, and returns the number of available blocks and the largest number of available contiguous blocks on a Hawk disk drive. The current version of this routine is named FREBLK and is not reentrant.

These programs are available on diskette for \$63.00 each (taxable in California), with commented MACRO listing, under a not-for-resale or commercial distribution license agreement, as are the file buffer flushing routines we announced earlier. If more than one program is ordered on a single diskette, the price for the additional programs is reduced to \$43.00 each.

Very truly yours,



John V. Kjellman

LETTERS, WE GET LETTERS.....

Sydney Z. Spiesel
Clinical Analytics, Inc.
77 Everit Street
New Haven, CT 06511
(203) 787-3952

I have passed another round of bug reports to Alpha Micro and thought I might take the opportunity to pass on some information, to tantalize you about some new software and to comment on some comments in the Newsletter.

Which gives me a chance to quarrel with Mr. Kjellman's comments about bug reports in the June AMUS Newsletter. It is certainly true that some bug reports in the Newsletter represent naive or not-so-naive misunderstandings of Alpha Micro documentation (not surprising in view of the complexity of the system and in view of the quality of some of the older documentation). It is also true that some reported bugs seem trivial or obscure. However, bugs reflecting misunderstanding are almost guaranteed to bite multiple users and all the 'trivial' or 'obscure' bugs were likely discovered when someone attempted to apply them to a programming problem. My programs or modules often come to thousands of lines and sometimes make use of unusual (though it is hoped not obscure) instruction; I know that I would just as soon be able to predict how they will behave when they are run. If my programs do not execute properly (or at all), I would also just as soon not spend an afternoon having to find out why; especially if someone has already done so and was willing to share the results of their work. Though I can almost always find a way to write around the bugs I find, it still seems reasonable to let Alpha Micro and AMUS know about them.

It also seems reasonable to let AMUS know when they have been fixed. Accordingly:

1. The AMSORT bug in Version 4.3A noted on page 17 of the March, 1980 Newsletter is reported to have been corrected in Version 4.4.
2. DIRSEQ will be made reusable in Version 4.4 (February Newsletter, p. 14).
3. Shawn Davidson of Computer Programming Unlimited was kind enough to supply the fix (June Newsletter, pp. 12-13) for the BASORT-ISAM problem noted in the March Newsletter and to point out that my suspicions about SET VERIFY (February Newsletter) were even insufficiently paranoid.

Ira Hanson and Steve Post both comment in the June Newsletter about supported and non-supported languages -- I'd like to add my two cents. When Alpha Micro first appeared there was obviously a real commitment to producing elegant and advanced software: FORTRAN and COBOL were omitted (presumably in acknowledgement of the recession of the glaciers); BASIC was enhanced with the best features of both these languages; and LISP, PASCAL and PDL were developed or adapted. LISP has almost no utility for conventional data processing uses but certainly stretches our brains and because of its power for Artificial Intelligence applications it is able to teach something terribly important to people writing interactive programs: how to write routines which can deal with the wierdness and vagaries of human responses. LISP also made the Alpha Micro available to people interested in computer science (not just data processing) and enhanced its value in academic environments.

PASCAL similarly added to its value in academic settings (it is a wonderful language for teaching students about programing though -- and I know I risk getting punched in the nose -- I personally don't think it's much good for most interactive applications programs). The addition of PASCAL undoubtedly also seemed necessary in the context of the competition between the pre-TRS-80 micros and in the context of the love affair between that language and one of the major magazines in the field.

Work on two similarly advanced languages was begun (actually, I think virtually finished): FORTH and 'MPL', which was said to resemble SAM-76 and TRAC (R). These languages were certainly valuable for specific programming needs; probably, if we could just break out of our habits, they could be very well applied to most applications, including business data processing.

But Alpha Micro chose a different path. They elected to concentrate exclusively on the small and middle-sized business market; probably a reasonable decision if the company was to survive and make money. Supporting FORTH and MPL could only have been at the expense of the business and system software. It seems a terrible shame, though, that these apparently abandoned projects were discarded rather than released informally for someone outside of Alpha Micro to complete. I am pleased to hear that work seems to be going ahead with FORTH at least.

Let me move on to one minor and one, I think, major announcement. The minor announcement is that Sisyphus Iterations is no more. It has become dignified, proper, credible, and slightly stuffy Clinical Analytics, Inc. We had been doing research on the use of small computers in the management of medical problems -- clinical, not financial -- and we are continuing to do that (though we are still undecided about marketing our extensive package of sophisticated biomedical and statistical programs). But our work has led us to develop (this is the major announcement) a very advanced universal database management system for the Alpha Micro; one superior, I believe, to any such system running on any computer smaller than Godzilla. The system may be applied to the very efficient and flexible storage, recall, and analysis of data gathered in any area of thousands of records with up to 40 fields (record size is dynamically allocated up to 512 bytes). Best of all, the system is very friendly and extremely easy to use -- even by inexperienced people with a positive aversion to computers -- since commands are entered using a sophisticated natural (English) language processor and since all kinds of tricks are used to speed and simplify data entry. Programmers or skilled system operators are never required to establish or use the database system (even multiple ISAM files are created automatically).

The system has been in use for almost a year and has been applied to problems ranging from artists' paint orders and inventories to the analysis of pediatric emergency room patient encounters to the study of children with complex behavioral disorders.

As soon as the brochure and other propaganda is back from the printer I will send a formal and fancy product announcement, but meanwhile I will take the liberty of enclosing a final draft copy of the manual for your perusal as well as a copy of the 'working' product announcement.

Enough for now.

Sydney Z. Spiesel, PhD MD

Ed. Note: We're impressed, Sydney...and we took the liberty of including your product announcement in this newsletter.

wishing well

MICROPROCESSOR DEVELOPMENT

Dale Mosby
P. O. Box 1355
Corvallis, Oregon 97330

Anyone using the Alpha in Microprocessor Development Application ?

Does software exist to control S-100 prom burners ?

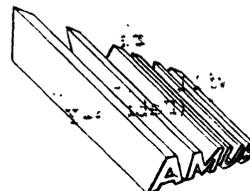
Any cross assemblers available which will run on the Alpha Micro ?

SIMULATION MODEL - PROPERTY ANALYSIS

Thomas F. Taylor
Golden Jet Airways
P. O. Box 90253
Los Angeles, CA 90045
(213) 670-1976

Tom needs a simulation model for property analysis which will allow comparison of properties prior to purchase. The model should consider loan amount, interest rate, number of units, required down payment, maintenance costs, occupancy rate, etc.

Tom also would like to talk to anyone who has done graphics on an Okidata printer.



ALPHA MICRO USERS SOCIETY

Software Report Form

Software name _____

Software category
(legal, medical, etc.)

Developer _____

Brief description: _____

Number of current users: _____

References: _____

Minimum hardware configuration: _____

Special hardware requirements: _____

Batch mode: yes ___ no ___

Real time: yes ___ no ___

Multi user: yes ___ no ___

Interactive: yes ___ no ___

Language: _____

Documentation supplied: _____

Price:

Hard disk (specify model)

Floppy disk (specify format)

Source _____

Source _____

Object _____

Object _____

Company name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Contact: _____

Please complete and return to Sharon Greene, AMUS, P.O. Box 1723,
Boulder, Colorado 80306 (303) 449-6917

ALPHA MICRO USERS SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please fill out as much information as possible.

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AMUS may use my name for mailing lists ___

Make checks payable to AMUS

Annual dues are \$35.00 per member.

For more information call Sharon Greene at 303/449-6917 or
write AMUS, P.O. Box 1723, Boulder, Colorado 80306

Each member representative receives a one year subscription
to the Alpha Micro User's Society Newsletter, the cost
(\$7.50) of which is included in the annual dues.

AMUS
p.o. box 1723
Boulder, CO 80306

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