

CLASSIC COMPUTERS CLASSIC COMP

ADAM

THE ADAM FORUM

by Paul Pappas

Free Telecommunications Software

Rob Friedman, co-sysop of the ADAM Forum on Compuserve, has an obvious interest in seeing ADAM users make the most of their modems. To this end Rob distributes the public domain CP/M telecommunications programs Modem7 and Mex, configured for an ADAM or external modem. Although both programs offer powerful features, Modem7 is probably best for novices, while Mex contains features for the expert.

To obtain the software send a blank CP/M formatted tape/disk (do not send unformatted media) for each program requested, your modem type, return postage, and a word of thanks to Rob Friedman, 3814 Ocean Ave T-2, East Rockaway, NY 11518.

Coleco's Scholarship Offer

Remember once upon a time when Coleco offered a \$500 scholarship for your child with the purchase of an ADAM computer? Of course, just a few restrictions applied, or so the offer stated. In retrospect, it appears so many

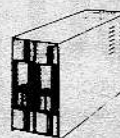
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I, II, III

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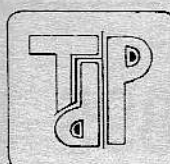
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restrictions were in effect some ADAM owners never received the scholarship. Danny Grantham recently wrote detailing his continuing battle with Coleco, excerpted next.

"I'm sure others got burned on Coleco's scholarship offer. After sending in all the system requirements, warranty, games, etc., Coleco denied the offer because of my receipt. They said that my system was a layaway and not an actual purchase; even though they had all of the serial numbers and warranty information. Also, in order to effect the warranty, you had to send in the original purchase receipt. Therefore, my duplicate receipt was denied. I have been unable to get anything done about this. I have written to my state Attorney General (New York) and the Attorney General for the state of Connecticut. Hopefully, I can get reimbursed for the offer."

If the mail I receive is any indication, other ADAM owners were indeed "burned" on Coleco's scholarship offer. Now that Coleco has filed for bankruptcy, more ADAM owners than ever are expressing concern about their promised scholarships. Perhaps the ADAM community can help Danny and the others who were promised scholarships. Regardless if you received

or were denied a scholarship from Coleco, I would appreciate hearing the details. Any information I receive, good news or bad, will appear in a future column.

Summer Games And Winter Games

You may well ask what reviews of Atari 2600 games are doing in a column focusing on ADAM computers. Allow me to explain. Expansion Module 1 allows the use of Atari 2600 cartridges on the ADAM, and more than a few ADAM owners still enjoy pulling out their old Atari 2600 games. With the resurgence of the video game market, quite a few new (and some old) Atari 2600 games were released this year. Believe it or not, some are both well designed and inexpensive (while some are just expensive).

Since I try to cover all the bases (an admittedly impossible task), I decided to test the waters with the following reviews. No doubt some ADAM owners will applaud these reviews, while others may well be offended. If you have an opinion, pro or con, please let me know. Your feedback will determine if Atari 2600 game reviews appear in future additions of "The ADAM Forum." At the very least, the following reviews may

continued on page 454

► COCO COLUMN

from page 264

Multi-Menu program, it made the job of creating a Multi-View menu a breeze. The Multi-View/Windint menu comes with the Multi-View system available from Radio Shack. It has been somewhat ignored by professional developers since its release. However, it's nice to see a product that takes full advantage of Multi-View type capabilities.

As the program begins, you are prompted for a filename that either exists or that you will create. Entering an existing filename will allow you to edit a current menu.

Creating a new menu is easy! You begin by naming the menu. Then you may define up to 20 menu options with a maximum 15 character name. Each one of those menu options may have up to 10 command lines that the menu option will execute. A command line will contain an OS9 command (like a command in your CMDS directory). If your command line needs a parameter, user input is available by using a percent sign (%). An example of a command line which prompts for user input might be: "DEL % What File To Delete? %". This would print "What File To Delete?" on the screen, and then

- 2) SSTAR %Enter File To Edit? %
(Would prompt for a file name and then invoke the Screen Star editor to edit that file.)
- 3) BASIC09 %Re-enter The File Name: %
(Would prompt for the file name again and load Basic09 with that file.)
- 4) %Run What Module? %
(Would prompt user to run an executable module, in this case the one you packed in BASIC09.)

After you have developed your menu structure, you may either use the Multi-View environment or in OS9 (but your boot disk must have the WINDINT module in memory). Under OS9, the menu will appear by typing: MENU "filename." Since the proper icons and AIF files were created when you developed your menu, you may also call your menu from a Multi-View environment. You would simply double click on a Menu icon which has your menu's filename, and the menu appears.

Multi-Menu's workhorse is the module "MENU" which will interpret the file you created and execute it. The program does not create any code which can be used by a compiler (i.e. like the C Compiler), and is in essence a sophisticated batch file handler. It does

CLASSIC COMPUTERS CLASSIC COM

► ADAM FORUM

from page 266

save some of you a few hard earned dollars.

In the surprise new crop of Atari 2600 games perhaps the most eagerly anticipated was Epyx's Summer Games and Winter Games, two titles from their extremely popular Games Series. Both games feature seven individual or head-to-head olympic style events for one to eight (although a maximum of two may actively participate at any one time). Summer Games features Hurdles, Swimming, Skeet Shooting, 100-Yard Dash, Swimming Relay, Gymnastics, Rowing, and Gymnastics. Winter Games features Slalom, Bobsled, Ski Jump, Biathlon, Speed Skate, Hot Dog, and Luge.

You select the country (from a list of eight) you wish to represent with your endeavors. At the completion of each event the top three competitors are presented medals. When all events are

completed the player with the most points is honored as the Grand Champion.

In previous games of this type running speed and similar actions were controlled by rapidly moving the joystick up and down. This was hard on the hands and harder on the joystick. The Epyx games use the more moderate method of requiring the player to use the joystick in sync with the on-screen action. For instance, to increase your swimmers speed press the fire button each time the arm reaches the water. In the hurdles, you push the joystick right to run and tap the joystick up to jump the hurdles. If you don't push the joystick up and pull it down again at the proper time you fall flat on your face. Just like real competition, coordination not mere strength wins the race. This is the best feature of the games.

The worst feature of the games are

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the same tired graphics most 2600 games are (in)famous for. In this age of razzle-dazzle graphics (which companies like Epyx made their fortune on), why more emphasis was not placed on graphics is a mystery. Several recent (and not so recent) 2600 games have surprisingly good graphics. Perhaps Epyx felt with their reputation and the 1988 Olympics further effort was not necessary for success. If so, they were wrong.

Although most of the events are initially fun to play, and the added dimension of real competition adds to the enjoyment, you will quickly grow weary of the poor graphics. I had high hopes for these games, but at \$15 each, I can only rate them at the lower end of the scale. Spend your money elsewhere.

Trading Post BBS

The Trading Post is a 24 hour BBS operated by avid ADAMite Herman Mason. Utilizing the A-NET V4.0C software on more hardware than I have space to list, Herman has made a major commitment to the ADAM community at large. The TPBBS incorporates message bases for information from the Sysop, ADAM newsletters, and (blush) "The ADAM Forum." TPBBS also contains subject specific (like SmartBASIC) message areas, public and private mail, ADAM BBS listings, program libraries, and an online game. An

Box 2756, Pearland, TX 77581, 713-482-5040) consists of simple instructions and diagram, white painted sheet metal cover, and red power-on light with mount. To install the kit you need a small phillips screwdriver, knife, pliers, soldering iron, and of course a power supply. Installation takes from thirty minutes to an hour, depending on your experience.

Because the light mounts in the hole through which the power cord passes, the bottom plate must be removed, the cord disconnected, rerouted, and reconnected. Depending on the difficulty you encounter removing the strain relief plug, you may find cutting the cord simplifies this step. The instructions give no indication where to reroute the cord or how to provide strain relief. I recommend routing the cord over the right front bracket and securing it with a cable tie passed through the hole in the bracket. This is a simple but adequate solution, and I believe a cable tie with instructions should be included with the kit.

Rerouting the cable is simple, but extreme caution is warranted. If the cord is not properly reattached, you could lose not only your ADAM but your life (household current kills)! For this reason I do not recommend the novice perform this step. Either have a knowledgeable person perform this step for you, or simply attach the cover and discard the



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private mail, ADAM BBS listings, program libraries, and an online game. An extensive online help facility makes navigating the board simple, even for first time users.

The TPBBS, like many other BBS' start users at a low privilege level, effectively locking them out of the more interesting aspects of the board. Users increase their privilege (and access) by active participation on the board. Unfortunately, most BBS' place great emphasis on uploading programs as a means of increasing privilege levels. Since most computer owners are users not programmers, digging up a piece of software not already on a BBS can be a difficult undertaking. On the other hand everyone has an opinion, and the free exchange of ideas is the backbone of a BBS. On the TPBBS, emphasis is placed on participating in messages bases, not uploading programs, as a means of raising privilege levels. It comes as no surprise the messages bases on TPBBS are active, informative, and up to date. I applaud the TPBBS for realizing well rounded message bases, not public domain programs, makes a BBS stand out from the crowd.

The TPBBS operates 24 hours at 216-791-4022 and is PC Pursuitable. Set your telecommunications software to Full Duplex, 8 Data Bits, 1 Stop Bit (plus Word Wrap Off and Character Filter Off for ADAMLink). Both 300 and 1200 baud is supported. If you are an active modem user please give the TPBBS a try. It's worthy of your support.

Power Supply Cover

The Case & Powerlight Kit (\$15 plus shipping) from ADAM'S House (Rt. 2,

simply attach the cover and discard the light.

The two leads from the light pass under the circuit board and solders to pins on top of board, pins easily located with the diagram. One lead has a resistor soldered on the end making it simple to identify a particular lead. The light mounts in the hole vacated by the power cord with a standard screw-on ring.

The instructions indicate the transformer terminals and top of a large capacitor should be covered with tape before installing the cover. Allow me to add, you should use several layers of UL listed electricians tape. The metal cover rests on top of the terminals, and a short circuit could ruin your whole day. The cover fits like a three sided box lid (the large heat sink in the front acts as the forth side) and attaches with the two screws on each side of the supply. The rear side is approximately one inch shorter to ensure adequate ventilation.

Overall I am pleased with the kit both functionally and aesthetically. Many ADAM owners may balk at paying more for a cover than the power supply, but then again power supply covers are not required by any means. For the ADAM owner who has (or wants) everything, a power supply cover is the perfect accessory.

WOAI Computer Line

WOAI Radio (6222 NW Interstate Ten, San Antonio, TX 78201, 512-734-7301) airs the WOAI Computer Line each Sunday afternoon from 12 noon to 2 pm. WOAI is a 50,000 watt clear channel station whose signal covers the southern half of Texas.

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