

Newton Software Exchange

INDEPENDENT
OSI USERS
NEWSLETTER

Vol. 1, No.1 January 1979

MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. Box 518, Newton Corner, MA 02158

WELCOME !

This is the first issue of the Independent OSI newsletter. One hates to start off by being two weeks late, but one of our disc drives threw some nasty glitches and bombed the working model of our new word processor. There is always something to be learned from such messy situations, and a short article appears elsewhere in the newsletter that indicates some early symptoms and how to catch them before disaster strikes. It will be our goal to send out the newsletter about the middle of each month. As you are reading this, we will be working on the February issue.

As this is a users group, the content of the newsletter will tend to reflect your views and requirements. Those of you interested in participating range from homebrewers to engineers, doctors to school teachers, novices to experienced programmers. With such a mix, we hope to be able to provide you with information and contacts which will make your use of computers more meaningful.

We have been asked by many subscribers: "Will you act as an advocate for us with OSI?" Frankly, that is up to you. This newsletter was begun because we were tired of reinventing the wheel and were receiving what we felt was inadequate response. Hopefully, by sharing our experiences we will make up for this lack.

However, we also hope that OSI will use this newsletter as a medium of reaching some of the users and that they will find some way to continue publishing their own periodical. The last issue we saw was Mar/Apr 1978.

We should also note that we received not one word of criticism of the hardware that any of you have. Our own experience has also been favorable.

There were a surprising number of you who sent along good wishes and a willingness to provide articles and share technical information. That was very encouraging. We now hope that you will submit articles, hints, programs. And please don't be concerned about writing style and depth of documentation. We come from an editorial and publishing background and can massage your copy if required. Please, just be accurate and as complete as you can.

We will use the newsletter to help you establish contacts with each other; to let you know what software is available, and what hardware may also become available from sources other than OSI.

Any suggestions about the newsletter will be warmly welcomed, though we cannot guarantee that we will be able to answer every letter personally.

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HELP---

This column is devoted to helping people solve specific problems. If you have any helpful information, please write directly to them. BUT -- it would be very useful if you could send us a copy of the information, or, if the recipient could send us a copy along with any comments. That way, we could build an information bank here to respond more rapidly to information requests. We would also publish the responses of more general interest.

Bruce B. Thompson
216 Northwest Terr.
Silver Springs, MD 20901
Wants to use his 2-P with his amateur radio station to: send and receive RTTY (Baudot); send and receive CW (Morse code); transmit amateur TV. He needs some hardware help especially I/O port installations.

Jonathan Rotenberg, president
Boston Computer Society
17 Chestnut Street
Boston, MA 02108
Is researching OSI with Winchester disk and would like any comments from users. (If you are in the Boston area, the BCS meets monthly. Next meeting: 7 p.m. Feb. 28 at The Commonwealth School, 151 Commonwealth Ave.)

Jeff Cotton
4170 Bitterroot Dr.
Westerville, OH 43081
Has a bare board system (400 CPU, 420 RAM, 440&430 IO, 500) and is planning to add BASIC to one of the 500 boards. He needs a hex dump or listing of the monitor that runs Basic in ROM.

Richard Beebee
6 Palmetto Ave.
Marlton, NJ 08053
Also is a board builder who asks: is it worthwhile to upgrade the 500 board

from the 400, or to upgrade to the 580 bus from the 480? Would this change the programs? Anyone have experience with the extended monitor for machine language or the OSI assembler -- comments? Anyone with Multiprocessor board experience? Anyone interfacing the OSI bus to the S-100? And anyone using non-OSI disc drives?

Michael Goodman
Terra Cotta
Ontario, Canada
Wants to add a floppy to his C2-4P. He also in not sure how to go about building the disc controller. Any suggestions?

Ian A. Morton
1500 Goodrich Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55105
Has a C2-8P with xtra RAM which he uses as an architectural acoustics consultant solving mainly simulations and statistical evaluations. He has two nagging problems: system is bothered by heat (drops bits, etc.) and occasionally the keyboard locks up, requiring power down.

Stephen Laslo
62 Davidson Dr.
Cherry Point, NC 28533
Is also looking for schematics for his C2-4P; 502 and 540 board, keyboard and power supply. He is looking for a local dealer to quote him a price on a half populated 16K RAM board. He also gets a graphic character as the second character on all error messages. Suggestions?

C.E. Deckard
3502 Sparkman Dr.
Huntsville, AL 35810
Would like to relocate ACIA and PIA on his C2-4P (which has a 500CPU board instead of the 502). He would like the monitor to be in contiguous 1K without messing up BASIC.

We will run as many of these requests as we can each issue.

ARTICLE SUGGESTIONS

 Ian Robinson
 2831 Fourth St.
 Eau Claire, WI 54701
 Is really into OSI. He has a 12K cassette unit at home and a 48K dual double sided floppy Challenger II interfaced with a Teletype Model 43 at work, running general ledger and other business applications. Ian suggests articles on: 430 board fixes that enhance speed and/or reliability; 440 board mods to allow a 64 char. line; software using the A/D & D/A. Biofeedback applications.
 Ian also throws out the idea of telephone networking and even a chess teletournament, and wonders if there are other hackers who could suggest inexpensive hardware/software for such telecommunications.

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 Yes, we too have a few ideas.
 How about an ongoing POKE DIRECTORY ?
 Can we start with the March issue? Send us your POKES (sample programs or subroutines would help) and we will start compiling them.

REGIONAL GROUPS

 Ted R. McCartney
 Business Data Corp.
 PO Box 57256
 Washington DC 20037
 Says that a users group is being formed in the Washington-Baltimore area. Contact him, >>and Ted, please keep us informed, too.

SOFTWARE

 COMPUTERSHOP
 288 Norfolk St.
 Cambridge, MA 02139
 Is putting together a directory of low-priced software (retail \$12.95) and asking dealers who have developed such software to send in info. Forms are available for those who have programs for sale.

Shenandoah Microcomputer Services, Inc.
 40 Woodlee Rd.
 Staunton, VA 24401
 William Gibbs, president is an OSI dealer and software writer. He has a fact sheet on his Patient Service System which aids doctors and dentists keep track of patient accounts. It is set up to be used by the receptionist. It is available for outright purchase by dealers for \$2500 or through licensing with a \$500 royalty per sale. He has an 80-page manual for \$25 that describes the system in detail.

 Micro Computer Diversified, Inc.
 2514 12th St.
 Galena Park, TX 77547
 Announces a Letterwriter Package for \$29.95 and a Graphicswriter for \$8.95; both on cassette. They are developing a Super Sea Wolf - "almost animated"- game.

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 Is currently field testing a simplified word processor for disc-based systems. More in the next issue.

SOFTWARE TO SHARE

 James L. Cass
 19559 Tulsa St.
 Northridge, CA 91326
 Is a C2-4P user with strong computer hardware design background. He will exchange programs on cassette "with listings available later". He would also like some help in hooking up a printing terminal. Are there some Angelenos who can steer him to a local homebrewers group?

 Edward H. Carlson
 3872 Raleigh Dr.
 Okemos, MI 48864
 He has modified the program locator (by Ralph Sherman) in DDJ p30, 2#4, and a disassembler from DDJ. He is interested in an assembler, extended monitor, games.

...cont...

...SHARE

Charles E. Doelen
4421 Devereaux ST.
Philadelphia, PA 19135
Has a I-P and apparently a wonderful time
with it. Wide interests; wants to share.

Joseph Endre
3336 Avondale Crt.
Windsor, Ontario, Canada N9E1X6
Is expanding his C2-8P to dual disks.
He also has a lot of software, but did
not specify the type; wants to share.

Rodger Olsen
1690 Bolton
Walled Lake, MI 48088
Has programs to swap. He also needs some
advice: how to drive a hard copy ter-
minal with his Challenger II without
going to disc.

INTERESTING PROJECTS

The following are samples of
special interests and projects

Bruce Nebergall
20 Canyon Rd.
Levittown, PA 19057
Superkit. 430 board modified to use
the Bit Buffer instead of OSI circuit.
Small business, industrial control,
games, music, amateur radio. He has
also done some interesting interfac-
ing: a digital cassette recorder, a
model 7102 Friden teletypewriter, and
is working on a non-OSI disc interface
that will run on OSI software. Any
help on the last item?

43 R.D. "Slim" Cummings
510 West Fifth St.
Pittsburg, KA 66762
Is interfacing his Superboard II to
an SS-50 bus in order to use boards
from his SWTP unit.

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ABOUT THOSE DISC DRIVES

As a result of our disquieting experience.
Some tips:

If the indicator light on the front of the
drives starts to look dim, check the power
supply connections. We have to tighten ours
every couple of months. The ground partic-
ularly seems to vibrate loose.

Soft errors can creep up if corrosion
builds up on the PC board contacts to the
ribbon connectors. To correct this, un-
plug the ribbon cable and, using an eraser,
gently clean the surface of the connectors.
WARNING: detaching the cable voids your
disc drive warranties. So, if the war-
renty is still in effect, contact your
dealer. POWER OFF, of course.

...PROJECTS

David Morganstein
9523 48th Place
College Pk. MD 20740
Has a 48K+8K for CP/M system. Enjoys games
and has a "real time" lunar lander which
PEEKs the keyboard. Also adapted MICRO-
CHESS. Would like to know more about the
inside workings. >>wouldn't we all<<

James A. Harper
Health Services Foundation
1310 Ninth ST.
Berkeley, CA 94710
Is configuring an OSI system for business
and is interested in OSI and non-OSI
COBOL and IBM compatible 1/2" mag tape.

William A. Brown
Squires Electronics
8900 W. Burnham Rd. F-13
Tigard, OR 97223
Has a Challenger III, 48K, dual disc, Ha-
zeltine terminal and A J Selectric. In use
daily running a full invoice program. He
is interested in other business applica-
tions: GL, A/P, A/R, payroll.
He also wishes OSI provided a BASIC with
a line editor. >> amen<<

As our circulation grows we plan to increase the number
of pages of the newsletter.

Membership in the users group includes a subscription to
this newsletter. Dues are \$5.00 per year.