Alpha Micro Users Society

Newsletter

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STAFF

Sharon Greene, Secretary
Adam Fedor, Network Librarian
Pat Seitsinger, Able Volunteer
Steve Elliott, Newsletter Editor

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 Newtork.

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.

AMUS
JUNE, 1980
CURRENT MEMBERSHIP: 900

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS ACTIONS
The board of directors met at the NCC and acted on several items including: Mailing the Newsletter first class, raising the dues to $35.00 per year (pending rewriting of the bylaws), setting a usage fee for the network of $10.00 (also pending new bylaws), authorizing $250.00 per month for the position of Editor for the newsletter, authorizing $200.00 per month for the position of librarian to keep the network and its programs in order, changing advertising policy to accept any advertisement concerning the Alpha Micro, and initiating a committee to set up guidelines for software evaluation headed by Burl Hubbard.

AMUS General Meeting
The AMUS General Meeting was held at the Regestry Hotel in Irvine, California on the evening of May 19, 1980. About 120 people attended. Elections were held. The results can be seen on the inside cover of the newsletter. Various reports were given on the status of AMUS including financial matters, recent Board of Directors actions the Network, and plans for the upcoming year. Jim Taylor had members jot down items that members wished to have Alpha Micro work on, so that AMUS could pass along a list of high priority needs to Alpha Micro. Dick Wilcox, President of Alpha Micro, talked about what Alpha Micro was up to, and answered numerous questions about various hardware and software problems that members were concered about.

NETWORK NEWS
We have a new login proceedure since we have now installed a user accounting package which was sent to us at a substantial discount from the Byte Shop of Reno. When you call up the Network you might have to hit a carriage return or two to get the prompt: 'Please Sign in:' If you have your account name and password, you can enter that, otherwise, enter the word: 'AMUS'. You will then be shown the index of items on the network. If you care to use the electronic mail system, type HELP MAIL for a description of how it works. Sharon will be mailing each user a postcard with an account name and password. The 1200 baud line should be installed by the time the newsletter gets out. On that line is a remote rebooting device that will allow anyone to reboot the system should it crash while unattended. The proceedure is as follows: Call the 1200 baud phone number (303) 449-5565 and get a carrier tone. Press the BREAK key on your terminal for at least five (5) seconds. Wait one minute, (this gives anyone at the Network site time to interrupt the rebooting if they are in the middle of a job which should not be interrupted) and the system will reboot.

One of the advantages of the accounting system, is that we will be able to tell how much the system is being used and can hopefully better configure the system based on this information. There is also an account called SUGGEST on the system. You can mail any suggestions to this account.

Office Systems Management Seminar
August 11-12, 1980
Boulder, Colorado

The office of the future will incorporate many new technologies ranging from word processors, and electronic mail, to global communications. More importantly the workers in these environments will have different goals and aspirations. This new technology and management, including merging of data processing and telecommunications demands new approaches to marketing corporate operations.

This course is aimed at business and office managers, marketing and sales personnel, and system engineers.

August 11, Monday: Office Information Systems

This session is designed to give a comprehensice overview of new technologies affecting office systems management, and an overview or organizational planning. Topics discussed will include tele/information management, computer/communications integration, voice/data/image storage and transmission, organizational management, product and service planning, and resource development.

August 12, Tuesday: Office/Information Systems Design

This session is designed to put to use the information presented in Office Information Systems. The specific topics presented are: office and telecommunications management, office information design factors, telecommunications and information systems specification and procurement, job functions, and future office/information systems – office/home of the future.

The course instructors will be Thomas B. Cross, Director of Communications for the Boulder Communications Company and a Vice President of AMUS, and Dale G. Mullen, Manager of Telecommunications Services for Johns-Manville.

Cost for the seminar is $55.00. For more information and registration, please contact The University of Colorado Center for Lifelong Learning, 970 Aurora, Boulder, Colorado, 80302. Mr. Peter Seward. (303) 492-5141.

IS YOUR SOFTWARE WORTH STEALING?
C.A.R. Business Systems, Ltd, in London, England now has a hardware board that is used in conjunction with a special sortware module to provide any manufacturer with a software lock that is unique to a particular customer. The board, called S.A.M. for Software Access Monitor is available for $69.00 in lots of one with substantial discounts for larger orders. Contact: Leo Scheiner at C.A.R. Business Systems, Ltd., 71 Hammersmith Road, London W.14., England

TWO SYSTEMS OFFERED BY DATA DIRECTIONS

Data Directions of Northbrook, Illinois now offers two systems on the Alpha Micro; one for aviaton brokers, and another for printers.

The aviation broker's package called Search Master will allow parts inquiry, quotations, order entry, a customer master file, and quotes follow-up. Standard reports available on the system are: Parts availability, Order record, Outstanding quotes, Parts summary, Sales analysis, Purchasing history, and Customer/supplier lists.

The printer's package is called Print Master III and handles most of the Operations of a print shop including customized user cost/pricing structure, estimate generator, quotations, order entry, paper inventory, price list printer Sales & production analysis, Mailing labels, Accounts receivable, and word processing.

In addition to these two software packages, Data Directions also offers materials for business thinking about the purchase of a computer system. Three publications are available: 'Introduction to Small Business Computers' ($10.00), 'Printers Guide to Computers' ($25.00), and 'Evaluating Small Business Computers'($20.00).

A System Study and Analysis is also available from Data Directions for $200.00. This is a personal consulting service which includes an analysis of a number of systems and recommendation of the best system based on the needs of the business.

Contact Data Directions at 3000 Commercial Avenue, Northbrook, Illinois 60062. (312) 272-5385.

POINT OF SALE SOFTWARE AVAILABLE

Cybersoft, Inc of Birmingham, Alabama has announced the availability of their Point of Sale system which uses a CRT attached to a cash drawer through a 'black box' of their own design. Information available from the Main Sales Menu provides for: customer information, clerk information by category, and item information. Up to the moment information includes sales, returns, and net for: cash, store charge, wholesale, Master Charge, Visa, and other credit card sales. In addition, taxes collected are also displayed. The system also permits check cashing and cash paid out transactions with security code verification. Cybersoft believes that any retail outlet with sales of 1/2 million or more a year is a potential customer. For information, contact: Cybersoft, Inc.. 433 Valley Avenue, Birmingham, Alabama 35209. (205) 942-8567.

Philip Y.S. Wu
Petroleum Instrumentation Center, Inc.
915 Talbot Drive
Thibodaux, La 70301
(504) 446-8433

I have been using our company AM-100 computer for almost a year now. The system grew from a one CRT, one printer, one dual floppy system to a four CRT, three printer, double hard disk system.

I have not heard other members mentioning the Fujitsu 40MB hard disks. We have two drives (30MB) in our system using the Konan controller. If any of you use Fujitsu M2201K, I would like to get in touch with you to exchange ideas or experiences. The Fujitsu-Konan disk driver has not been updated for 4.3 yet. Hence, I am still running under 4.2. If any of you has written the new driver, or know of anyone who has, please contact me.

I have been unsuccessful in putting the 4.2 RUN module into system memory. Sounds funny, but I have very serious crash problems if RUN is in system memory. Any bright ideas?

Lastly, do any of you know where I can purchase an AM200 board, possibly with a set of PerSci?

If you have answers to my problems, please call collect 9 to 5, C.S.T. or write me, or the AMUS Newsletter.

> Yours sincerely,
> Philip Y.S. Wu
> Systems Analyst

Ed. Note: We talked to the Konan people at the NCC, and they had a driver for their 24MB disk that was running under 4.3A. They said that the driver was available free to anyone who owned their controller and disk. Have you been in contact with them lately?

Terry Hulseberg
Coaxial Analysts, Inc.
Denver, Colorado

Enclosed please find a copy of a short program I wrote to convert a number in any BASE up to 36 to DECIMAL, OCTAL, HEX, and BINARY.

Not being one who works with these base systems a lot, I've spent more time than necessary in trying to convert OCTAL to HEX and so forth. I decided it was time to take this burden off my back and am sharing it with you.

> Regards,
> Terry Hulseberg

Ed. Note: I've wanted one of these for a long time. When we tried to install the DC Hayes board, the hardware instructions were in HEX, the software used OCTAL, and the switch settings on the board were in BINARY. Terry's program not only works well, but is a fine example of easy to read programming. The program is in the Network library in the Utility PPn.

ALPHA MICRO USERS SOCIETY

1979 Financial Statement

INCOME $20,106,98

EXPENSES

Printing
        Newsletters $ 2,753.55
        Misc.   166.91
                                      $2,920.46
Postage
        Newsletters   707.33
        Misc.   480.32
                                       1,187.65

Rent   3,468,48

Salary   2,438.48

Office Supplies   2,430.94

Phone   2,548.18

Travel (NCC, Computer Faire)   1,294.60

Misc (Disks, Seminar fees, Taxes)   3,050.35

Bank Charges   89.24

TOTAL EXPENSES   19,428.38

BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD TO 1980   678.60

alpha micro

17881 Sky Park North
P.O. Box 18347
Irvine, California 92713

(714) 957-1404
TWX 910-595-2666

May 30, 1980

Mr. Stephan Elliott
Alpha Micro Users Society
P.O. Box 1723
Boulder, CO. 80306

Dear Mr. Elliott:

In order to clear up some confusion over our Third Party Service
Organizations and the areas they serve, I would like you to have
a list of these organizations and their area coverage.

1. Consultant Field Engineering, P.O. Box 774, Shawnee Mission,
   Kansas, 66202, (913) 649-4875. They cover an area within a 150
   mile radius of Kansas City.

2. Datagate, 3004 Lawrence Expressway, Santa Clara, CA., 95051,
   (408) 736-9990. They serve an area from Fresno north to the
   Oregon border, from the Pacific coast to the Nevada border and
   have an office that serves Southern California.

3. Digitronix, 4601 S. 50th St., Omaha, Nebraska, 68117, (402)
   734-0710. They cover Nebraska and Eastern Iowa.

4. Kalbro, 5555 Magnatron Blvd., Suite H, San Diego, CA., 92111,
   (714) 565-0288. They cover an area from San Diego north to
   Los Angeles.

5. Micro Service of Indiana, 2804 E. 55th Place, Indianapolis, Ind-
   iana, 46220, (317) 253-6787. They serve an area within a 150 mile
   radius of Indianapolis and also have an office in Columbus, Ohio.

6. Paragon Computeur Services, 7052 Orangewood, Suite 2, Garden
   Grove, CA., 92641, (714) 891-1559. They serve an area within
   a 150 mile radius of Garden Grove.

7. Northwest Computer Support, 3486 S.W. Cedar Hills Blvd., Beaver-
   ton, OR. 97005, (503) 644-5080. They cover an area that includes
   Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Northern California.

I hope this information will be of use to you.

Sincerely,

Susan Poyer
Editor, ISSG Newsletter

ALPHA MICRO TRAINING SCHEDULE

The Alpha Micro Educational Services Center is now offering 6 full-length, comprehensive courses covering Alpha Micro hardware and software products.

Instruction will take place in an informal classroom environment where lab exercises will be used to provide practical, hands-on experience. On-site classes may be arranged by special request and regional seminars are now being offered in various strategic locations throughout the United States.

To enroll in one of the listed classes, call the Educational Services Center at (714) 957-6076. You will be given an enrollment number which will reserve you a seat in the class. Enrollment forms can be obtained from the Educational Services Center.

Issuance of an enrollment number will reserve a seat in a specific class, but will not confirm enrollment. Confermation of enrollment will be sent by mail when the tuition payment is received. TUITION MUST BE RECEIVED AT ALPHA MICRO AT LEAST 10 WORKING DAYS PRIOR TO CLASS COMMENCEMENT or the reservation will be cancelled.

Minimum class size is three (3) while maximum class size varies depending on classroom size and equipment requirements. Normally the class size for all classes is eight (8) students.

CLASS OFFERINGS

COURSE NUMBER: 1; Hawk 9427H Disk Drive Maintenance

DESCRIPTION: An in depth maintenance course detailing all aspects of the CDC Hawk 9427H disk drive. Instruction will include operating principles, nomenclature, detailed theory of operation, diagnostic routines using the CDC field tester, alignment procedures, and troubleshooting.

PREREQUISITES: Minimum one year analog/digital troubleshooting experience and an understanding of digital fundamentals.

LENGTH: 5 days

TUITION: $300.00 per student

COURSE NUMBER: 2; Alpha Microsystems' Hardware Introduction

DESCRIPTION: A descriptive course exploring the theory of operation of the Alpha Mcro hardware and circuit cards. System troubleshooting is taught using block diagram analysis and diagnostic troubleshooting aids. This course is ideal for new dealers and those persons still unfamiliar with the Alpha Micro hardware.

PREREQUISITES: None

LENGTH: 5 days

TUITION: $300.00 per student

COURSE NUMBER: 3; Phoenix Disk Drive Maintenance

DESCRIPTION: An in depth maintenance course detailing all aspects of the CDC Phoenix disk drive. Instruction will include operating principles, nomenclature, detailed theory of operation, diagnostic routines using the CDC field tested, alignment procedures, and troubleshooting.

PREREQUISITES: Minimum one year analog/digital troubleshooting experience and an understanding of digital fundamentals.

LENGTH: 5 days

TUITION: $300.00 per student

COURSE NUMBER: 4;

Advanced Systems Maintenance (Hardware)

DESCRIPTION: An advanced hardware course covering buss structures and timing, processor organization, interrupts, memory and I/O addressing, instruction set, assembly language programming, I/O programming, system families, and the system monitor as related to the hardware organization. This course will cover all Alpha Micro circuit cards in detailed circuit analysis.

LENGTH: 10 days

TUITION: $600.00 per student

NOTE: At the time of this printing this course is just entering the beginning stages of development. All information listed above is subject to change depending upon final course objectives. Please call in advance to confirm information.

COURSE NUMBER: 5; AMOS Software Overview

DESCRIPTION: An intermediate level software course that explores the Alpha Micro Operating System in detail. Students will participate in exercises using AMOS while learning operating system architecture at length.

PREREQUISITES: Prior experience in any of the basic programming languages and a conceptual understanding of system architecture from the software standpoint. Minimum of four months usage of the Alpha Micro Operating System.

LENGTH: 5 days

TUITION: $400.00 per student

COURSE NUMBER: 6; Introduction to AMOS

DESCRIPTION: This course is designed primarily for the first time user of the Alpha Micro Operating System (AMOS). It is an introductory level software course that covers the basic concepts and flexibility of the Alpha Micro Operating System. Students will review system commands, disk file allocations, I/O handling, user requests, SYSTEM.INI, memory management, and terminal service.

REREQUISITES: None

LENGTH: 3 days

TUITION: $250.00 per student

NEW NEWS FROM ALPHA MICRO

The hottest item on the to do list at Alpha Micro is the Link Board. Announced at last years NCC, the board is now working, and the documentation almost complete. Alpha Micro wants to firm up distribution methods before unleashing the board on the market. It is pretty tricky to set up, and dealers will have to undergo training before installing the board. Dick Wilcox stressed that the board is not meant to answer all the world's problems. It will allow several systems to access common disk and tape storage, but if the CPU attached to the desired storage device is busy when the interrupt is sent, there will be some waiting.

Bob Currier has been working on an Electronic Mail Package which will be out with 4.4 if the modem he is specifying is available. It will operate through the 310 board and use the UDS model 103J/ACU auto-dialer modem. The package sounds pretty sophisticated, as it will allow error corrected, full duplex operation. All of this under software control with unattended operation.

A new version of PASCAL will also come with the update. Also, a new document called 'Introduction to AMOS' which is meant to take the very novice user through beginning steps in computer usage. Its a hefty document, and looks to be well written.

Alpha Micro is shipping about 100 complete systems a month now, and has over 4500 systems installed.

MORE MEMORY FOR THE NETWORK

Many thanks to the folks at Alpha Micro who have donated another 64K memory board to AMUS for use on the network. Alpha Micro also picked up the tab for the meeting rooms we used at the NCC.

DISK CONTROLLER UPDATE

There is a chip available for systems using the Phoenix drive that fixes some problems. For AMOS version 4.3A it niether hurts nor helps. In 4.4 it will fix the badblock problem by fooling the disk into reading another track, thereby allowing random files to read around a bad block in the middle of the file. Also, on the 100T this same fix solves the problem of the disk writing during an emergency head retract. Alpha Micro has also rumored a board to be named the 110 that will be installed on AM100 systems to solve the emergency head retract problem.

AMUS SEMINARS IN AUGUST

AMUS will be sponsoring four days of seminars and workshops the week of August 19-22. Plans call for a Tuesday workshop on communications, a Wednesday workshop on disk file recovery, and two seminars on Thursday and Friday. One for novice AMOS users, and another on the Alpha Accounting System. Watch next month's newsletter for complete details.

AMUS CHAPTER FORMING IN ENGLAND

David Lewin of London, England is organizing a local chapter of AMUS. Please contact him if you are interested in joining at: Lectriflex & Cables, The paddocks, Firth Lane, London, England, NW7 IPS

DUNN, MOORE & ASSOCIATES

USED SOFTWARE FOR SALE

Economical used software from Dunn, Moore & Associates will provide years of dependable service. These products have been heavily used by present owners, but are still fully warranteed by the manufacturer. Priced appropriately for end-users or dealers.

RENTAL PROPERTY MANAGEMENT (RPM)

1979 Model, running condition, over ninety programs, full source, documentation, on-site training, telecommunications support.

R P M   S Y S T E M

Accounting problems associated with the management of rental properties have been solved by RPM System from Dunn, Moore & Associates. RPM is a complete system for the management of residential, commercial or combined properties. Highlights of the RPM System include:

* COMPLEX   characteristics such as name, address, owner, manager, and property data.

* UNITs   in each complex are described in detail including such items as number of bedrooms, furnishings, and pooch permissibility. A record of current and past tenants is maintained for each unit.

* ACCOUNTING   maintains cash receipts and disbursements, cross-referenced to tenants, units, or complexes as applicable. Profit and Loss Statements are produced by complex and category of expense/revenue.

* REPORTS   include Vacancy, Delinquency, Deposits, Cash Receipts and Disbursements, Rent Collection, Overdue Notices, standard listings of all master files.

RPM is available to both end-users and Alpha Micro dealers. In either case, Dunn, Moore & Associates will provide installation, training and support to the Licencee for a one-time charge. Sub-License agreements from dealers to their end-users are welcome.

COLLEGE ACADEMIC RECORDKEEPING SYSTEM AVAILABLE
William L. Miller and Associates announced at the NCC their new product aimed at schools and small colleges. The system provides modules for admissions, enrollment, curriculum definition, continuous on-line registration, and grade reporting. The package is being marketed and serviced through dealers, so you should contact your local dealer about CARS, or you may wish to talk to William Miller direct at 8380 S.W. 151st Street., Miami Florida 33158. (305) 233-1216.

Peter Jax
Automated Professiona Systems, Inc.
11612 Knott Street, Suite 13
Garden Grove, Ca. 92641
(714) 898-1451

We are pleased to announce that APSI is an authorized Alpha Micro dealer. Our reputation for providing excellent software packages and complete end-user software support will now be enhanced by our ability to provide Alpha Micro hardware and hardware support.

Our current areas of support are concentrated in Southern California and our software is concentrated in the Healthcare and distribution industries. APSI also is a Data General OEM providing software and software support to clients in COBOL under the ICOS and AOS operating systems.

Our programming and consulting staff consists of eleven full-time analysts and programmers and we are actively looking to increase that by five in the next six months. If any newsletter recipient is interested in a full-time opportunity with a dynamic firm in Southern California, please have them call me.

We would be happy to receive any inquiries from AMUS members who need hardware, software, or support. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Peter R. Jax

Art Schultz
Functional Software
Simi Valley, Ca

Please accept this check in order to enroll me in the AMUS. I've put it off long enough.

My special interests lie in the areas of networking, small business systems, and assembler-level processing.

Richard T. Brown
3135 NW Nyssa Court
Beaverton, Oregon 97006
(503) 228-9553

On the AMUS Network - would it be possible for you to list the hours of (expected) operation on log-in so we'll have some idea of when to call. Please Make my name available on the Network list of members.

Another odd discovery - Vue eats files with the extension .TMP. Try your own tests on this, but be careful. If, for instance, you VUE TESTER.TMP and exit with 'Q' you will end up with no TESTER at all. If you exit with an 'F' you destroy TESTER.TMP, but are left with a TESTER.BAK which is the edited version of .TMP, not the original.

My experience with 4.3A is that is is slower than 4.1 (I skipped 4.2). I use PerSci floppies and have run some of the benchmark tests as well as normal programs with timing marks, and 4.3A is always about 1 to 2% slower than 4.1.

If anyone in the Portland, Oregon area needs programming services, my son, Alan is available for hire until about mid-August (AlphaBASIC, Assembler, Pascal) and will be available at Wasington University in St. Louis after that.
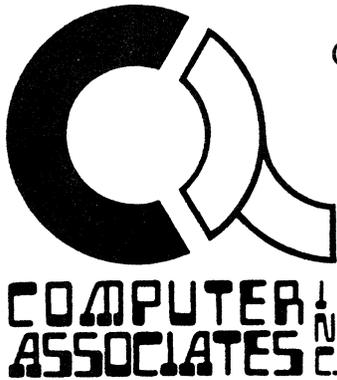
Richard Brown

Ed. Note: Richard also discussed a bug which was previously reported, which I edited from his letter. The essence of that bug report is that any time you convert from a floating point number to a binary or string it is best to use VAL to be sure you get exactly the correct value.

I though that the use of the .TMP extension was documented in the VUE manual, checked, and found that neither .TMP or .BAK are even mentioned. VUE does in fact rename the file you are VUEing to .TMP and then decides when you exit whether to rename it .BAK if you exited with 'F' or 'G', or to rename it with the original extension if you exit with a 'Q'. The moral of the story is to not use .TMP as an extension of files you plan to VUE.

I have been in EDP software since 1965 on a variety of machines and applications and now work as an independent consultant. I found the Alpha Micro system indirectly when I presented a list of requirements for a custom built system...it already did nearly everything I required.

I look forward to AMUS communications, and hope that I may find a way to contribute as well.

Sincerely,
Art Schultz

Computerized Business Systems

COMPUTER ASSOCIATES INC.

POWER FAIL RESET BOARD

--- the 'STOPPER' ---

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***************
* DESCRIPTION *
***************
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The 'STOPPER' circuit board provides an economical means of protecting disk data during power failure conditions for the Alpha Micro Computer or any other standard S-100 bus computer.

Power failure has been a problem with computers since the very first one. It is a problem that has not been properly addressed by the micro industry. The AM-100/T addresses the problem but not the original AM-100.

When power failure occurs with the AM-100 and a hard disk drive, the CPU box loses power before the disk drive does. During power decay, there is a period of time that memory, CPU, disk controllers, etc. are unstable. Computer Associates Inc. has found that during this period of instability, the disk controller may start writing to the disk. Not only is the "write" invalid, but the location of the write, the data written, the CRC, etc. are all unpredictable. For example, during a lighting storm, one system lost every 70th record on the removable pack. In another case, power went off in one of the buildings where a system was located and several cylinders of data were lost.

Thus Computer Associates has developed an S-100 plus board that monitors the voltage on the bus and activates the "RESET" line on the motherboard when a low power condition occurs. This activation is a hardware equivalent to holding the RESET button on the front panel while turning power off at the CPU box (a recommendation by Alpha and other S-100 computer manufacturers).

While this simple mechanism will save your data, by connecting one line from each disk controller to the 'STOPPER', it will also monitor valid disk writes. By constantly monitoring these writes, the 'STOPPER' can allow a valid write to complete before activating RESET in case power fails while a valid write is in progress. If, however, power continues to fall to the point that the data may be unreliable during one of these valid writes, RESET will then be activated to prevent further writes from being chained together.

By installing a 'STOPPER' in the CPU box, the micro becomes "almost equal" to minicomputer systems for professional data processing and storage. Without it, out computers are still hobby systems — subject to loss of data at any time !

the 'STOPPER'

"KEEPS YOUR DATA FROM GOING DOWN THE DRAIN"

727-E Arcadia Circle N.W. Huntsville, AL. 35801   (205) 533-5130

COMPUTER SALE$

MARKETING AGENCY FOR

Accounting By Computer Inc.

3804 HIGHLAND DRIVE, #3
SALT LAKE CITY, UT 84106

P. O. BOX 17355
SALT LAKE CITY, UT 84117
PHONE: (801) 272-1100

After Over 1 MAN-YEAR *of*
Design and Implementation!
TURN-KEY ACCOUNTING +
ALPHA ACCOUNTING =
TURN-KEY ALPHA ACCOUNTING !
GENERAL LEDGER
ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE
ACCOUNTS PAYABLE
PAYROLL
Other Interfaces

AT LAST!
HASSLE-FREE INTERFACING*

WHAT YOU DO?
1. Create 'PATTERN' File with account types (*a Standard pattern file is provided for General Accounting, which may be used as is or modified*).
2. Fill Out an 'INTERFACE MATRIX' Form to outline:
   .Control Accounts for Accounts Receivable, Accounts Payable, etc.
   .Summary Accounts such as Sales, Sales Tax, etc.
   .QUICK CODES which may substitute for account numbers in data entry
   .Data Entry Specifications for specialized journal screens
3. Set Up Chart of Accounts with General Ledger Account Number, Description and Pattern Code (*Other information is generated automatically - if elected*).
4. Create a variable 'INTERFACE FILE' for Each Module: Accounts Receivable, Accounts Payable, Payroll, etc. (*9 interfaces initially provided*).
   *All information in the Account Set-Up is verified as to completeness.

WHAT YOU GET!
5. When the Module Menu (Acc.Receivable, Acc.Payable, Payroll) is accessed:
   .New Module Interface File is built if any changes in General Ledger interface.
   .New Module Account File is extracted from the Chart of Accounts for data entry verification-(*Complete verification in Acc.Receivable & Payroll as well as Acc. Payable -- and in any other modules built*).
6. Completely VARIABLE INTERFACING to the General Ledger. No 'fixed interface' restrictions except those for a good audit trail and acceptable accounting form.
7. Complete GENERAL LEDGER DISTRIBUTION in all Data Entry Modules (Sales, Receipts, Payroll, etc.) - *Maintains good accounting control - avoids unedited direct posting to the General Ledger - ..an accounting NO! NO!..*
   .Sales distribution to multiple sales accounts, multiple sales tax spread
   .Multiple payroll distribution of an employee to several accounts
      Distribute non-taxable pay, expenses, etc. where they belong!
8. Summary and Control account integrity of the accounting system is maintained:
   .Control accounts posted only from totals in data entry modules
   .Summary post high-activity accounts: Sales, Sales tax, Payroll taxes, etc.
   .Select either DETAIL or SUMMARY posting of other general ledger accounts
9. Complete AUDIT TRAIL, referencing of Accounting Journals & Supplemental Reports:
   .FOLIO numbers are set and increment for each Accounting Source Journal.
10. TRANSACTION DATE controlled posting to the General Ledger. *Variable Interface by Transaction lets you proceed with next months detail before closing last month - Post the General Ledger any time!*

GET THE 'DEMO' PACK TO SEE HOW ACCOUNTING SHOULD BE DONE BY COMPUTER.
TRY IT. YOU'LL LIKE IT! OTHER DETAILS PROVIDED UPON REQUEST.

A. G. DYE, C.P.A.

Ira C. Hanson
Eastern Sierra Programming
P. O. Box 7506
Mammoth Lakes, Ca 93546
(714) 934-2937

I anxiously await the newsletter each month as it is my main source of information about the Alpha Micro. Following are some comments and random thoughts that I have been meaning to write for some time.

Though some statements in this letter may sound quite negative, I assure you that I think that the Alpha Micro software is the best overall I have seen for any micro and compares very favorably (or better - VUE) with the large mainframe systems I have worked with. The support Alpha Micro gives wiz the $25.00 update disks is excellent. The documentation at first was poor but now very good with the exception of the BASIC manual. The operating system, BASIC compiler, and VUE are superb. The BASIC interpreter leaves much to be desired in the way of an editor. PASCAL is cumbersome and its implementation is incomplete. I have found no practical use for LISP. The DOCTOR demonstration program runs on some system releases and not on others. Alpha Micro needs to pass each system release through a quality control test before final release. Major bugs like those in 4.3 for PerSci systems should not get into users hands.

The timing comparisons on pages 34-46 of the March Newsletter are very interesting. Now I would like to see the same tables with Hawk and Phoenix drives included.

I purchased my system in October 1978 from the nearest dealer to me which was at that time 350 miles away. My home is in a ski resort area at 8100 feet elevation. This remote location has presented a few unique problems which may be of interest to others. A few of my problems have also been just bad luck. My dealer has since gone out of business, probqably for the betterment of his customers. I was promised a great deal in the way of service before purchase but he was unable to deliver much if any after purchase. For example, my PerSci broke down six times in the first six months. I got replacements when he happened to have them but finally I was forced to buy a second PerSci backup. I once had to lease a PerSci from another cmpany while mine was at PerSci being repaired for three months. The promised delivery of the new drive was three days, but somehow it was six weeks before delivery. Almost daily phone calls to PerSci resulted in a variety of promises which were never kept. Since the second drive arrived one year ago, I have had no further disk drive troubles.

This dealer, knowing that I have to drive 700 miles round trip to get service, sold me an Anderson-Jacobson 841 Selectric typewriter. Let me warn anyone who is thinking of such a purchase that it is the most unreliable piece of equipment that I have ever owned, bar none.

I had it for eleven months and it was in the AJ repair shop in San Jose, C a. for most of that time. I cost about $1200 to buy and required over $1000 in repairs. I sld it for $600 with full warning about its unreliability. I now have a Qume which is a joy to own and use. I was intentionally purchased from another dealer.

I didn't expect or require much software support from my dealer, and indeed, I got none. My background is 25 years experience in computer applications, systems programming and compiler writing for many different machines and languages. I worked for a large aerospace company in the San Francisco Bay area. The Alpha Micro was just one more machine to learn. As I used it for those first few months I kept asking myself what would I have done if I didn't have my experience to rely upon when questions came up and there was no one to seek out for an answer. The documentation was poor at that time. I had to try thinge to see what worked. I called Alpha Micro several times and was always put on hold. To this day I have never gotten through to anyone at AM who could answer a technical question. A sorry state of thinge indeed for an end user.

I found the AMDEAL letter on page 13 particularly interesting. I have felt for some time that Alpha Micro is only willing to talk with dealers and now this is demonstrated by the fact they are sending a news letter 'SOFTWARE NEWS' to dealers only. This type of organizational setup will work for the end user only if he has a nearby dealer who is technically competent and is willing to pass along information whcn no sale of eqipment is involved. Since I have no dealer and the one I had was not technically competent in software, how can I expect any information to filter down to me, an end user? I feel left totally out in the cold.

One of this months letters mentions static electricity problems. You would not believe the static problems here in this dry air at 8100 feet elevation. My system used to crash about once an hour. If a person touched any piece of equipment or the table, the system would go dead. I ordered an anti-static floor mat from Advanced Computer Products in Los Angeles. After two months of waiting for delivery, I called them. They said they no longer sold the mat and therefore disregarded my order. They said it was not their policy to notify customers if they could not fullfill an order. Here is another cmpany to avoid doing business with. Next I phoned 3M in Los Angeles and they immediately shipped a 4X8 foor may and billed me later. My system crashes from unknown causes went from eight per day to maybe one per month. A floor mat is a much nicer slution to the static problem than messy sprays and ultimatly cheaper too. There are three IBM 5110 systems in town, and they all use the 3M mat.

I program all three IBM 5110's and even though I am not an admirer of IBM hardware or software, it is sure a pleasure to do business with IBM. They know something about how to treat their end users. They even provide a toll-free number to call for technical questions. There must be a message here somewhere about how a producer of mediocre hard-software came to be the big number one.

There is a big untapped market for micros in rural areas like Mammoth Lakes. I am frequently asked about computers by local businessmen who want and need a small system for the usual bookkeeping needs of any business (payroll, A/R, A/P, Inventory, and G/L). What they do not need is the hotshot salesman from a software house in L.A. who wants to sell them a total system and then disappear with no local support for the software and no viable plan for hardware maintenance. We get a lot of these types in town on a ski weekend trying to sell everything from TRS-80's to Alpha Micros. A few disasterous sales have been made only to be scrapped later. We have one continuing disaster with a Data General Micro Nova at the water district offices. I am appalled at the lack of professionalism of some dealers and software houses. First time users can be easy prey for salesmen or programmers who may have good intentions but lack the experience to prepare the customer for what he is getting into. I can not in good conscience recommend the Alpha Micro or any other system except IBM to local users because of the lack of support. IBM provides 24 hour a day repair or replacement if equipment and that is extremely important when you have a payroll to run and the machine is down. Also, one can always go over to another installation and use their equipment on an emergency basis though this has never been necessary.

Does anyone out there run a time sharing service with an Alpha Micro over phone lines only? That is to say most terminals on the system are remotely connected via modems over dialup phone lines. If so, are they using Hawks of phoenix's and do they use 1200 baud transmission rates on the phone lines? How many terminals can be handled with good computer response? How are system crashes handled? Is the Alpha Micro a good choice for such a system? Is anyone making a profit with time sharing and what are the rates to the customer? I am considering such a system and would like the benefit of others experience. The opject is to provide work processing and other usual data processing services to local businesses.

Does anyone have a used Hawk and controller for sale? If so write me stating condition and price.

Someone requested in the newsletter that PRINT be modified to print a page at a time. Good request. I have a program in BASIC that reads a file, asks for the number of lines per page, waits for the paper to be changed, underlines and bold face prints like the logo on this letter. The underline and bold face capabilities will only work on a Qume. The program is slow and needs to be rewritten in assembly language wuich I will do someday. In the meantime, if anyone has a Qume and wants the one page listing of it, it's free for the asking. Send a SASE to the above address.

Every so often I have a disk go bad. It's always the same problem. The first eight records have been destroyed. Does anyone have the same problem, or an answer for what has happened? One of my users does only text editing with VUE on her disk and she has the most frequent occurance of this problem. No other users are on the disk and no user programs are executed while she is running. I'm baffled by this one. I don't know how to write on record zero through seven in BASIC even if I tried. The remainder of the disk is always intact.

Sincerely,
Ira C. Hanson

Shawn Davidson
Computer Programming Unlimited
P.O. Box 492
Costa Mesa, Ca 92627
(714) 646-9155

Our company handles specific consulting and specializes in some of the stranger uses of the Alpha Micro. We have Written a Dental Office Management System, as well as several Machine Language programs. We offer consulting services to anyone interested, (we don't limit ourselves to the Alpha Micro) and will be happy to answer questions that you may have regarding some of the things that happen in the operating system, AlphaBASIC, etc.

I would also like to bring two things to your attention. As is suspected, the HWK500 driver (the device driver for the AM500) does not work correctly with the verification set. We strongly advise that NO ONE use the verification option (SET VERIFY) until either we, or Alpha Micro releases a fix. Currently, when the SET VERIFY is used, instead of performing a comparison between what was written and the buffer, it writes the buffer out and then reads what was written into the user buffer. To us, this is NOT a verify and could potentially create problems.

Also, in the latest issue of AMUS, someone said that there were problems with BASORT.SBR(7,6) when used while an ISAM files was open. They were right. It appears , in one of Alpha's

periods of inspiration, they forgot that ISAM allocates an additional 60 bytes of area for the internal buffer (which follows the data buffer). Then in BASORT, they used the standard offset of 1074 bytes (octal) which is from one DDB to the next. Fortunately, they included enough information to fix the program. If those involved will make the following patch to their BASORT.SBR program, everything should work correctly (this is how RUN does it).

```
.LOG BAS:
Transferred from SYS: to BAS:
.COPY BASORT.OLD=BASORT.SBR
BASORT.SBR to BASORT.OLD
Total of one file transferred
```

```
.DDT BASORT.SBR
PROGRAM BASE IS nnnnnn
PROGRAM SIZE IS 1556
1200/ ADD #1074,R3    ADD 50(R3),R3    lf
1204/ BR 1164    cr
 c
.SAVE BASORT.SBR
ERASE BASORT.SBR,    SAVE BASORT.SBR
DIR BASORT.OLD/H,BASORT.SBR/H
BASORT OLD   2   101-450-077-514
BASORT SBR   2   456-021-636-125
```

If you have any questions, please feel free to call us.

Shawn Davidson
VP Development

Steve Post
P.O. Box 1428
Santa Cruz, Ca 95061

My compliments to the Movers and Shakers of the group for the accomplishments of the past year. I have tried to network and found it a good beginning but have had some trouble with the quality of the phone lines. In down-loading a file, it is a pain to have to guess at some of the codings that were garbled on the way.

I have two small ideas to contribute, both command files. The first is a handy way I found to execute the most common commands with minimal key-storkes, by using U.PRG. I have copied it to files named A.PRG, B.PRG, ETC. and use the following command file to load the keys:

KEYS.CMD

```
:T
A DIR/W
B DUMP BITMAP DSK1:
C SYSTAT
D DIR/W()
E STAT
F MAP
G DSKANA DSK1:/L
```

KEYS.CMD is executed for each job. The commands may be different for each job, and can be changed interactively. I make the seven programs (A-F.PRG) resident in System memory to speed access, and because they take very little space in the monitor. Now I can type 'A' and return instead of DIR/W - a saving of four characters for a command I use constantly - or larger savings with longer commands. Since I use a SOROC IQ 140 terminal, I have single keys which will enter the letter AND the return, so I save even one more character. That really adds up over a period of time.

The second idea grew out of the first. The actual commands must be loaded AFTER the MEMORY 0 command that terminates the SYSTEM.INI file, and so cannot appear in it. But loading the keys is the first thing to be done after initializing and should be done as part of that file. I could use a START.CMD file in the selected PPn, byt never know which disk will be mounted on DSK1:. My solution is to FORCE another job to FORCE my job to execute the KEYS.CMD file, but as the last insytruction before the MEMORY 0. The lag in the double FORCE is enough for my job to execute the memory 0 and close out the system before it executes the KEYS command file. It looks something like this:

SYSTEM.INI

```
:T
JOBS
TRMDEFs
SYSTEM stuff
SYSTEM A
SYSTEM B, etc.
SYSTEM
ATTACHes
LOG DSK1:PPN
FORCE JOB2 FORCE JOB1 KEYS
MEMORY 0
```

I would like to ask the members and those in the know at Alpha Micro where I can get a copy of the FORTH programmin language for the AM-100. I was told by the FORTH interest group that such a system was written under the direction of Alpha Micro but they later decided not to support it and it was made public domain. The importance of this version over coding from the FORTH standards is the need for the Interpreter to be reolcatable, so as to operate within the Monitor and communicate with the system resources appropriately. Does anyone out there know how I can obtain that FORTH system?

I also own an Apple II and would like to communicate with anyone who is interested in a 6502 Cross-Assembler or an emulator. That would be a very interesting project for me, if I can find the time. The Apple makes a super intelligent terminal for the Alpha Micro, and the AM is a tremendous development tool for the Apple software - just VUE alone increases my programming speed for the Apple by a meaningful factof, even counting the time to down-load the finished file to the smaller computer. An emulator and de-bug package would be amazing. I have not gotten very far on a driver that will allow the use of VUE direct from the Apple either, and that would also be nice.

Let me add my voice to the chorus of requests to allow the spooling of ANY output to a file. I think this means that files can be specifies as devices or terminals so that a file can be forced to run a job and store its output on the disk. I know Alpha Micro is re-organizaing the file and device structure and is probably already on this one (RSTS has it, I think). So how about a brief announcement of the shape of the new system so we don't bother writing kluges and re-inventing unreleased wheels? Or will that all be taken care of at NCC? Since I can't attend this year's AMUS meeting, I hope you include the news in full detail in the newsletter.

And lastly, I have experienced great delays in getting the newsletter. So much so that I don't know if I have all the issues. How about a listing of the dates of all the past issues? And would more money for greater postage solve the delay? I'll pay first class, it's cheaper than the phone call to Denver to get the newsletter by modem, at least at 300 baud. With the passwords now to be included in the newsletter, the delay could be a real pain. How about using our name and membership number to allow access to a special bulletin board with the passwords listed? Then you don't need to publish them at all, and they needn't be crossed off the newsletter. One PPN with no password could have a BASIC program that would look up the membership information and verify the membership number to it. It would take a newsletter label and the current membership number, which does not appear in the label but IS in the file. And you might want to record the times we don't get it right to see if someone is passing their number around.

Thanks again for the continuing support.

                    Steve Post

Ed. Note: First about FORTH. Jim Taylor announced at the NCC AMUS meeting that he had a friend in Florida that would be willing to convert FORTH for the Alpha Micro if several people were willing to put up a few hundred dollars each to get the job done. Several people came FORTH at the meeting, and it should be in progress now. However, as I understand it, this FORTH will be the operating system, for the reasons you pointed out earlier. You may want to get in touch with Jim to see what's up.

We are now sending newsletters by first class mail as per the Board of Directors decision at NCC, and I will try to get the list of back issues in the next issue. It's true that we did miss a few issues in the last two years, so you may have a complete set and not know it. By now, you should see a greatly improved AMUS Network, complete with individual accounts for each member which does away with the password problem. Also, the Byte Shop of Reno software that runs the loggin and logout for users keeps track of how much time the system is used by each member.

Richard Eacker
Elcon Associates, Inc.
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Beaverton, Or 97005
(503) 644-2490

Received the pile of past issues of AMUS Newsletter two days ago and have just finished reading them. I would like to thank you for your prompt response to my request. Although a great deal of the information was over my head since I am new at this, I have come to the conclusion that Alpha Micro has a very dedicated following and one of the finest and most active User's Groups around.
ELCON Associates is an Engineering Consulting Firm specializing in Electrical and Mechanical Engineering. We have a wide variety of capabilities ranging from small Hydro-Electric projects here in the Northwest through Industrial and Utility Power Distribution and Private Telephone Systems.

We purchased our Alpha Micro system which is currently running with a Hawk 10MB drive, for the primary purpose of relieving and over-burdened bookkeeper and secretary. Since the purchase two months ago, we have broadened our future expectations considerably thanks to A/M's terrific capabilities. As time goes on we will be doing programming in the areas of lighting and industrial power distribution, as well as time-accounting for engineers. We invite correspondence from any user with a similar bent for the purpose of mutual edification. To assist in any interchange of information, we currently have installed on the system a PMMI MM-103 direct connect modem which can run up to 600 baud.

Since I started getting the Newsletter (which was Monday, May 12th), I have already sent off for information from two of your correspondents. I am very excited about having the Alpha Micro and being able to readily exchange information with this enlightened group. Keep up the good work.

                    Sincerely,
                    Richard Eacker
                    Electrical Engineer
                    System Administrator

P.S. Does anyone have some good dope that they'd be willing to share on what AM plans with VUE and TXTFMT. I've looked at a pile of word-processor programs for AM and others and we have come back to VUE and TXTFMT as they are. Would really like to see jst a few improvements and there are some exciting noises about the next release.

C/U Business Computers has for sale a most useful program we call the "Notes Program". The utility of this program is limited only by one's imagination. This program has been in use for over two years and enhanced many times over.

Program Description:
The Notes Program consists of a quantity of user defined sequential files linked together in a tree structure from menu's that are also user defined. The program runs quite fast.

Menu Description and Features:
1. Each menu level can contain up to 40 menu lines - each user defined.
2. There is no limit to the number of menu screens (levels.)
3. A file or menu level may be initiated from any one menu screen.
4. Automatic header shows: Program name - today's date - level # - user # - menu name - file name.
5. Full line and menu edit features are implemented.
6. Screen edit features are documented on line 24.
7. Each line in the menu is completely defined by the user.
8. Each line is automatically numbered by the program.
9. Each screen menu may be sent to the printer.
10. Top level menu is password protected.

File Structure Features:
1. One screen of notes (20 lines) is kept in a separate user named file.
2. Multi-user file protection is implemented.
3. Each file line is automatically dated (may be deleted w/ctrl. Z).
4. Each file line has complete character editing implemented. (12 ctrl kys)
5. Each file may be sent to the printer.
6. Any number of user defined files may be created.

The Notes Program can be used to keep:
1. Notes to be transmitted from one employee to another.
2. Price lists by category.
3. Phone numbers.
4. Job quotes.
5. Shop records.
6. Equipment records
7. Supplier information
8. Price lists
9. Inventory information

Conclusion:
This most useful program may be had on floppy for $100 or hawk dsk for $225. This will include necessary SBR's, complete installation and user operating instructions. Call 217-367-8346 or save C.O.D. charges by sending check or M.O.

NORTH AMERICA TITLE SERVICES

2223 West Loop South • Houston, Texas 77027
713 871-1402 • 713 667-3021

January 25, 1980

NEED TO EXCHANGE DATA BETWEEN THE OUTSIDE WORLD AND YOUR ALPHA MICRO ?

We have a package that allows you to exchange data via the IBM 3747 series machines and the Alpha Micro.

Capabilities:
      1. Go from 9-track 800 BPI tape to floppy disks via the IBM 3747 (or equivalent) then to your Alpha Micro.

      2. Dump data or program files from your AMOS sturctured devices to an IBM 3747 compatible floppy disk and then to tape.

How it works:
      Three assembly language routines called from a user AlphaBasic program form the heart of the system. These allow you to open an IBM compatible floppy for input/output, read off a file to an AMOS file, or write a file of your choice onto the floppy. ASCII to EBCDIC conversions are performed automatically for you. These subroutines can be used in conjuction with a custom AlphaBasic program to fit almost any need.

Other programs in the package:

OUT.BAS	Sample general utility program for writing files from AMOS to IBM format.
INPUT.BAS	Sample general utility program for reading files from IBM 3747 format to an AMOS file.
IGMDMP.BAS	Utility program to examine data on an IBM 3747 floppy.
IMGHEX.BAS	Utility program used to examine data on an IBM 3747 floppy in Hex without EBCDIC to ASCII conversion.
DUMP.BAS	Utility program to examine a random AMOS file.
????.CMD	Sample command files to use the above programs and by which you may model you own.

COST: $400.00

TO ORDER, OR REQUEST INFORMATION CONTACT: Eugene C. Platt, V.P. AMUS
10333 Northwest Freeway
#526
Houston, Texas 77092
713/681-6949

NORTH AMERICA TITLE SERVICES

2223 West Loop South • Houston, Texas 77027
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May 1, 1980

!!!!!!!! ATTENTION RJE USERS !!!!!!!!

Are you tired of having to drive to the office and reboot
after a power fluctuation or software failure ?

Yes!!! I thought so, then sit back and let AUTO-BOOT save you
time and money.

AUTO-BOOT is a self contained electronic device which monitors
your modem activity and with the proper code will
automatically reboot your system, without you leaving your
chair.

AUTO-BOOT comes with everything you need. The AUTO-BOOT box
plugs in-line between your modem and RS-232 port. Plug in the
AUTO-BOOT to the modem and then plug the cable from the
computer to the AUTO-BOOT box. AUTO-BOOT works with either
1200 or 300 baud modems and has its own power supply.

When AUTO-BOOT detects the Boot code it will:

    1. Flash a panel mounted L.E.D.
    2. Generate a 4.8 KHz pulsating audible alarm which will
        warn anyone working at the site that a boot will take
        place in approximately 1 minute.
    3. After approximately 1 minute your system will be reset
        and boot.

AUTO-BOOT has a reset button which will reset the device and
terminate the reboot sequence.

PRICE: Effective May 1, 1980, $175.00 each or $150.00 each
       when ordered in quantities of 3 or more, all orders
       must be prepaid.

For more information or to order contact:

    Eugene C. Platt, V.P. AMUS
    10333 Northwest Freeway
    #526
    Houston, Texas   77092
    713/681-6949

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Barry I. Feldman
Electronic Systems
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Chicago, Illinois 60610
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Here is an Alpha Micro AM100T hardware & software fix.

The serial ports on the AM100T board do not work properly. They lock up the system if you use them. Pin 18 of the Signetic 2651 Communication Chips on the AM100T boart should not be connected to anything. To accomplish this carefully remove the chips, bend pin 18 up, and then replace the chips. This will enable the IO ports to work properly.

Also, the AM1Q0T Driver Software has a minor bug in it. The driver first checks if the IO port is ready to transmit after receiving an interupt. This makes the use of control C difficult sometimes when you have a lot of output to your terminal. The software should check first for Receiver Full after interupt thus always allowing input characters to be processed first. I have fixed this Driver to do just that I have sent a copy of the source called ES100T.MAC.

I think I told Jim Taylor about the AM100T hardware fix over the phone. Well, anyway, I know I told some one at AMUS about it.

I hope these fixes help some other members with these problems. We will let AMUS know of any other Bug Fixes we make or come across. I would like to know if there are any other users with the same problems and if these fixes have solved them. I there any practical way to let me know of the reslts.

If you have any questions or comments about these fixes please leave them in ES.REP.

Thank you,
Barry I. Feldman
Systems Engineer

Ed. Note: Unfortunately, ES100T.MAC didn't get transferred across to our system. We have the hardcopy for the program though, and it will be in PPn 114,1 as soon as we can type it in. As with all hardware fixes and software fixes to the AMOS system, it is best to consult your dealer before making any changes so that there aren't any problems about breaking a warranty, or service being withdrawn because of user meddling.

John V. Kjellman
Victorex, Inc.
1529 Cypress Street
Walnut creek, California 94596
(415) 943-1023

A few comments on two fronts. First we have been pleased with the number of responses we received on the basis of an earlier letter of ours you published, concerning some of our software activities. We have also found it useful to contact some of the companies whose names we got from the newsletter. There is more going on between dealers, software houses and users than I imagined. We have been particularly interested in noting that over half the responses for our file buffer routines have been from outside the U.S.

At present we would like to be maintained on your software list for three items:

1. FWIRTE.SBR, FREADR.SBR, and FBUFIO.SBR; MACRO subroutines for use in AlphaBASIC for flushing and refreshing file buffers. They are available for $63.00 on a diskette, with documentation.

2. An "enhanced" version of the Payne, Jackson and Associates accounting system. Requires PJA license. Retains the PJA file and program structure, but considerable easier to use and has some additional features.

3. A Resort Property Management Reservation System, designed for the firm that is managing a project of resort residences, each individually owned, which are being used for short periods by their owners and being made available for short and long-term rental to the general public the remainder of the time. Handles all related accounting and scheduling functions. Could be readily adapted to hotel/motel use.

Currently our greatest interest in your newsletter is in letting folks know what we are doing, and in learning what other folks have in the way of software, which might readily meet the needs of one of our potential "unique" customers. In this regard, what ever can be done to provide a regularly published directory of software of some sort would be great. As it is now, I sometimes go thumbing back through several issues, trying to find something I think I read about many months ago.

Along that same line, it would be useful if we had some way of knowing which of several available programs were most suited for our needs. There are a number of companies making their accounting and word processing systems available, for instance. If I had access to users' reports on all of the word processing systems, and I could intelligently rate them relative to my needs without a lot of effort,

I'd have bought somebody's programs a long time ago.   As it is, I just haven't had time to go through the selection process. Any help coming in this area?

And, on the second front: bug reports. I find it not only less than useful, but downright distracting that almost every Tom, Dick, and Harry's bug list gets published, more or less verbatim. Many get repeated several times, some are a result of somebody (usually a new user) not reading or understanding the manual, and some seem so obscure that I see no point in publishing them. We have seen some written up that we have never experienced, in what appears to have been the same environment.

Utopia would be for all users to submit all genuine bugs to Alpha Micro Systems on a Software Performance Report, with Alpha Microsystems providing you with a list monthly of all verified bugs, with their comments as to temporary and permanent solutions, if any exist. Perhaps the timing could be coordinated so as to have some way of getting the work out real quick like when problems are discovered in new releases, so we don't all spin our wheels on the same problem.

Very truely yours,
John V. Kjellman

cc Bob Currier, Alpha Microsystems

Ed. Note: Progress is being made on the cataloging of software. We have developed and are compiling new information about software which will be on the Network, and published periodically in the Newsletter.   Also, a committee has been working on software evaluation. These take time, but we should start to see a comprehensive software list, complete with the names of current users that you can contact to see how they like what they bought.

I realize that bug reports can be conflicting, confusing, dumb, or whatever. The options are: don't publish any bug reports; only publish bug reports that the AMUS full time staff of four software and hardware experts have tested and confirmed (how about the one that erases files randomly on the disk....who wants to test that one?); or wait for Alpha Microsystems to send us bug lists. I am afraid that we would never get any bug reports out at all if we were dependant upon A/M since their stand is that they already communicate everything that is necessary to the dealers and it is the dealers responsibility to get the info to the end users.   I asked Bob Currier if AMUS could be put on the mailing list for the software report that goes to dealers, but he is concerned that we might publish dangerous material that could cause more problems if a naive user tried to implement a fix to a bug. Thus, I have been content to just put out the letters that we have received, and left it up to the AMUS members to decide if the bug presented has any bearing on their situation.

ALPHA MICRO USERS SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please fill out as much information as possible.

Name _____   Company _____

Address _____   City _____

State _____   Zip Code _____

Business Phone _____   Home Phone _____

Circle one: Own   Lease   Thinking

Check all applicable: Dealer ___ OEM ___

User: Corporate ___   Individual ___

Describe equipment: _____

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AMUS may use my name for mailing lists ___

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