

CONNIPTION

"My Mrs. Cleaver, that's a lovely dress you're wearing."

Summer of '86

We're BEATRICE

Volume 1 No. 6

This Publication is Rated



Connipion Free to Print

Middlesex County — The First Integrated Circuit Court of Appeals today lifted a temporary restraining order barring publication of *The Connipion*, effective immediately. Charges of second-degree irreverence and "gross satirical misconduct unbefitting an underground newsletter" were dismissed for surplus of evidence.

Prosecuting attorneys were unavailable for comment at press time.

"We're delighted to be back on the street," said Managing Editor Edgar ('Ed') N. Chief upon leaving the courthouse. "We've had the current issue waiting on the laser printers for two weeks now, and the servers were starting to mutter 'Strike!'. Also, we'd like to thank all the engineers who contributed to the Connipion Defense Fund and showed their support for us with their prayers and their threats to start working only 40 hours per week. We were deeply moved."

On a related note, Consumer Value Stores of Holmedale, NJ, parent company of the CVS Pharmacy chain, announced today that their stores will no longer sell issues of *The Connipion*. The company denied that this action was prompted by the recent report of the Presidential Commission on Trivial Journalism, which linked unofficial biweekly publications to an increased tendency toward longer release schedules. "It's just not a big seller for us," said a company spokesman.

Wall Street Beat

by Remora DeBullion

How does that old song go, "When the shark bites"...Well folks, I'm afraid the Shark won't be biting this week -- as a matter of fact, the Shark has been bitten. Bad news for you maybe but GREAT news for me. The name's REMORA DeBULLION, you know, like CREAMORA. I like to think of myself as the Creamora of The Wall Street Beat, looks like the real thing, but leaves a bitter taste in your mouth.

I'm Sharky's second cousin once removed (by the local law that is). Speaking of the law, that's why I'm stringing for Sharky this week. Seems he got himself into a little legal trouble; something to do with the Chief finding a white powdery substance inside some Pork Bellies.

Well the BIG news this week is that Upper Management at Apollo Computer Inc. has once again taken one bold step for high-tech, and a giant leap for unemployed VPs. According to our "elbow-grinding" sources, they are on the edge of announcing the appointment of *Chuck Upphams* as Senior Vice President of Ptomaine Engineering. Chuck will be responsible for integrating the food service group into the company, establishing new cafes throughout the company. Let's hope all the tables will rock now, not just those in the back.

...Oh yeah, one last thing. A reader wanted to know what Sharky's name means. Sharky says it has to do with getting the bite on the gold market. As for mine, just like Mama DeBullion always said, look it up Bubbee...

Apollo Extends Customer Support

Senior company representatives of Apollo Computer Inc. announced today that several new customer support services have been added in an effort to upgrade "this critical area."

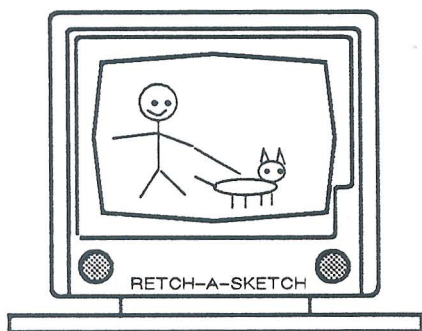
"Often, when a customer calls in with a problem, we don't know who's to blame," comments Billy Bugoff, a telephone support specialist. "Is it simply that the cus-

tomor is a moron unfit to use our systems, or is there some slight chance that we may have fallen short?

"This is a critical concern, at the very least from a corporate liability viewpoint." To meet this need, Apollo now has three specially-trained "fault handlers" who are entrusted with the job of determining guilt.

These positions include a default fault handler (whose job is to trap and respond to general user faults), a backstop handler (who deals with recriminations arising from intramural sports), and a multilevel handler who can blame anyone, even vice-presidents. "We trust that this new level of service will satisfy even the most paranoid customer," Bugoff said. "If it doesn't, then it's their fault." (Next week: new cleanup handlers for Food Services.)

Apollo Announces Support of ETCH-A-SKETCH(TM)



Apollo Computer, Inc. has signed a joint marketing agreement with Ohio Arts, Inc., the makers of Etch-a-Sketch®. The two companies will work together to produce a version of Etch-a-Sketch that runs on Apollo nodes, calling it Retch-a-Sketch.

Starting with the next version of DN3000 hardware, all Apollo monitors will be equipped with two small knobs, similar to those found on the famous Etch-a-Sketch toy. When running Retch-a-Sketch, users will be able to produce sophisticated two-dimensional drawings by manipulating the knobs. To erase a drawing, a user simply picks up the monitor, holds it screen-side down, and shakes it gently.

Apollo's support of Etch-a-Sketch is seen as crucial to its continued leadership in the workstation market. Almost all software engineers graduating from colleges and universities today are familiar with the original product.

Market analysts predict that support for a graphics system with which they are already comfortable will win many engineers over to Apollo.

When They Say . . . What They Mean

Following is a list of High Tech jargon and its real meanings:

"Well, the marketing realities are..." means "we don't know what to do, so we're going to do what everyone else is doing."

"Leverage our cash" means "buy it so that we can blame the vendor when we mismanage it."

"Strategic Alliance" means "we'll buy you lunch if you buy us lunch."

"UCR" means "unimportant customer reaction."

"Beta Test" means "debug the installation procedures and xerox some documentation."

"Project Team" means "lining up your scapegoats."

"Balanced Plan" means "spend less money."

"Early Release Software" means "compiled once."

"Open Systems Strategy" means "reference UNIX frequently."

"Long Range Planning" means "next week's customer visits."

"Communications Strategy" means "make TCP/IP faster."

"Resource Tradeoff" means "marketing and sales take turns telling you they want everything."

"Network Management Tools" means "replace the ring boards faster."

"Great Sales Prospect" means "might buy a node if they like lunch," or "main office in Hawaii."

"Joint Development Effort" means "let's lie about the same things."

"Check Off Item" means "the customer doesn't know what he's doing so he's doing what he read about in Computerworld."

"Strategic Product" means "I told EDS it was half done."

CRITICS CORNER

At the Keyboard

with

Gene and Roger

"Hi! I'm Gene Pistol, command critic for the Lowell *Sun-Times*!"

"And I'm Roger Hebert, command critic for the Lowell *Tribune*. Tonight we'll be reviewing four new commands which opened this week at nodes across the network. We'll take a look at *FIND_ORPHANS*, a gripping tale of personal triumph set amid the crowded, twisting by-ways of Double-Slash."

"That's right, Roger. We'll also review a new work by the renowned Japanese developer, Kurosawa. *ESA* tells the story of a young man caught between the demands of his war-torn country and the imperatives of personal dignity. Then, on a lighter note, we move to a new summer chuckler, *LOPSTR!*, from the people who brought us *Airplane!* and *TOP SECRET!*"

"But first, let's look at *BOFF*, a raunchy, rowdy new command from John Waters. *BOFF* is soft-core software very much in the tradition of his earlier *Pink_\$Flamingos*, starring Divine. I don't know about you, Gene, but the whole concept of turning someone's B-flag off just for kicks strikes me as being gratuitous and tasteless."

"I agree totally. There is nothing to recommend this command. Stay away from it; don't use it; don't encourage this kind of coding. I wouldn't be surprised if this command is barred from major releases for the next several years. How does Waters get work, anyway?"

"Gosh, Roger, beats me. Our next command is *FIND_ORPHANS*, the poignant story of a young hacker's search for her mysterious past. I really liked this one. The pace is just right, and the search sequences through the incredibly rich and complex tapestry of Double-Slash are stunning."

"I have to disagree with you there, Gene. I found this command to be completely trite and sentimental. I just couldn't identify with the uncataloged objects. I mean, for a command to work for me, I've got to believe what I see on the screen. And I just don't buy the premise of a bunch of files floating around without UIDs."

"Ok, so one big disagreement there. Let's move on to Kurosawa's latest effort, *ESA*, a monumental command whose sweeping dramatic force completely carried me away. It's the story of a young man seeking to address the nature of symbols external to his own psyche, while caught up in the conflict between personal integrity and social responsibility in war-torn 17th century Japan. I have to say, I cried at the end."

"Me, too, Gene. Kurosawa's done it again. This command is even better than his pioneering effort, *Seven SALVOLs*. It's just simply a joy to log in when Kurosawa's in town."

"Which bring us to our last command: *LOPSTR!*, a monster spoof from the masters of merriment who gave us *Airplane!* A giant, clawed sea creature invades the open streams along the East Coast and wreaks havoc in the network. I especially liked the scene where the Lopstr takes over the screen and, using a mysterious ray gun, turns everybody into icons. This is Hollywood camp at its best. Roger?"

"I guess I like it, too, although not quite as much as you seem to. The special effects are pretty weak, in my opinion, but the fine performance and quick response time make up for it. I'll give it a qualified 'Yes'."

"Arf! Arf!"

"Hey, there's Spot, the Wonder Dog, which brings us to this week's 'Dog of the Week.' It's *EDACL*, a grade-B command that aspires to do everything and so fails to do anything. Let's face it, the file protection story has been told a hundred times in the past, and *EDACL* gives us nothing new. The producers seem to feel that, if you make the thing complicated enough, somebody will love it. Wrong! I couldn't find a single person in the node room where I saw this who would say something nice about it. I've said it before, Gene, and I'll say it again: 'If you can't tell the story in sixty seconds, you'll never do it in two hours.'"

"Well, let's recap. Roger and I both say 'No' to *BOFF*, John Waters' latest release. We found it tasteless and crass in the extreme. I vote 'Yes' for *FIND_ORPHANS*, feeling moved by its depth and breadth, while Roger votes 'No,' saying he can't identify with the abandoned objects. We both give a hearty 'Yes' to Kurosawa's *ESA*: we were struck by its expressive power and symbolism. And finally, Roger gives a tentative 'Yes' to *LOPSTR!* based on its pace and characterizations, while I recommend it more strongly for its carefree, madcap attitude."

"Thanks, Gene. Be sure to join us next week, when Gene and I review four new commands from the wonderful world of software engineering. Until then, I'm Roger Hebert."

"And I'm Gene Pistol. Thanks for watching, and we'll see you at the keyboard."

Apollo Ironmen (and Women) Compete

By Hildy ("Ace") Hogan

There's no doubt about it now -- the competition is heating up. Las Vegas oddsmakers are doing a brisk business, the coaches are trotting out their Gipper speeches, and the competitors are looking a little worse for wear. The contest that has all America talking? It's the *9.5th Annual Ironman Software Release*.

From the vigorous Compiler Benchmark Testing to the delicate and tricky DSEE BUILD -FORCE_ALL, the *Ironman* always tests all of an athlete's skills, and this version has been no different. Here's a close-up report on the action so far.

"We think our team is doing fine," said co-head coach Hi Lower. "We're a little behind our record pace from the *9.0th Ironman*, but I'm sure we'll make it up in the later events. We've trained hard, and I feel confident that we'll avoid the crashes that occur so often in the force-all BUILD event. We won't poop out at the end."

Coach Lower's confidence was echoed by long-time team leader Spider Webb. "We didn't want to run out of gas early in the race, so we've been letting our momentum bldt to each new level slowly," Webb said. "Now we're ready to make our move."

But some of the competitors don't sound quite so optimistic.

"I've entered the *Ironman* before, but I tell ya, it gets tougher every time," gasped one member of the Compiler team. "We finished the Benchmarks in good shape, but there's just no way to train enough so that the demanding OS curves don't get to you."

Another contestant grumbled about last-minute changes to *Ironman* entrance requirements. "You think you're all installed in the *Ironman*, and then they dump the whole procedure," said the engineer, who chose to

remain anonymous for fear of permanent disqualification. "I'm not sure we'll ever reach the command line."

Bookies are taking bets now on a variety of finish times. Check *The Connption* in the coming weeks for the latest standings.

Overkill Comes to Apollo

Oliver Overkill has joined Apollo in the new position of Vice President of R&D Vice Presidents. Oliver's full-time responsibility will be managing our growing staff of vice presidents through their career cycle -- hiring, resizing, and expanding as necessary.

"We've felt the need for a position like this for a long time," said Tom Vanderslice, Apollo's Chairman of the Board, President, and CEO. "It's time we looked to the future and begin preparing for entry-level VPs." (See related story.)

"I'll be working with the innovative idea that anyone reporting to a vice president should be of at least vice presidential rank," Overkill said. "I haven't worked out the details of the plan, particularly the long-term effects, but I feel the idea is sound."

Overkill comes to Apollo with a strong background in management acquired in his five years with Morton-Thiokol. He has also worked with the Department of Defense on weapon systems cost containment and with Union Carbide on one of its overseas projects.

We began a nationwide college recruitment campaign this week, based on the following ad:

Join the foremost engineering workstation company in an innovative new position.

Be a trend-setter -- you could be the Apollo's first

ENTRY-LEVEL VICE PRESIDENT

Why spend all those years climbing the corporate ladder at some less prestigious company when you can jump immediately from beer bashes at the frat to champagne strategic planning sessions?

Just think how "Vice President" will look on your business card. Imagine the envy of your friends at your first college reunion. Don't be left out. Send us your resume today. If you know of any new graduates (Associate's or Bachelor's Degree), tell them about our new program.

Apollo's New "CASE Pack" Systems Enhance Software Development Environment

June 20, 1986 -- Apollo Computer Inc. today introduced additions to its family of computer-aided software engineering (CASE) packaged systems, pre-configured for maximum software development enjoyment.

Apollo compliments these hardware and software products by teaming up with key third-party suppliers to offer life-cycle CASE solutions designed to increase individual and team happiness in each stage of software project development. Users of the CASE Packaged Systems will receive coupons for significant discounts on development tools and application packages from Barstow & Jaynes Inc., Gallow Vineyards, The Polar Corp., and Busch.

"Apollo and its solution suppliers are taking steps to better serve the burgeoning CASE thirst by offering the tastiest, least filling software engineering environment in the industry."

CASE Packaged Systems Include:

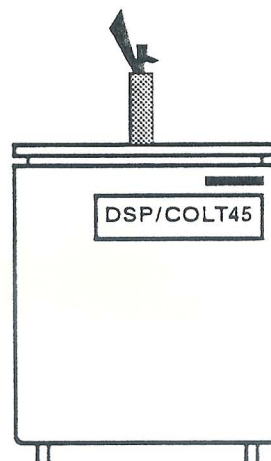
CASE Six Pack -- Designed with the needs of smaller software drinker in mind, CASE Six Pack is Apollo's entry-level CASE Packaged System, and is priced at \$3.89.

CASE Twelve Pack -- Apollo's CASE Twelve Pack, especially suited for larger software engineering drinkers, is prepackaged to serve as a base for easy expansion and is priced at \$6.89.

CASE Case -- Apollo's CASE Case, targeted at software engineering drinkers involved in the development and/or maintenance of large amounts of code, maximizes the potential of Apollo's high-speed, 12-megabit per second token ring network and is priced at \$12.89.

CASE Keg -- Apollo's CASE Keg provides the ultimate in "on-line" software development enjoyment, providing continuous reliable access to the entire CASE "productivity aid" environment. This allows a migration path for organizations which outgrow the smaller CASE packs and provides a centralized "database" where all users can "tap in." With the flick of a single switch, data can be kept flowing throughout the entire organization! The CASE Keg is priced at \$32.89.

DSP/COLT45 Server (pictured below) -- Apollo's DSP/COLT45 Server is for the serious minded high-tech professional. This product is in limited quantity, and well worth the price at \$10,999.95



In addition to discounts on Apollo hardware and software products, CASE Packaged System users will be offered extended warranty, dance lessons, and alcoholism counseling discounts.

"I'm very pleased with Apollo's leadership CASE products, and particularly with the fact that these outstanding packages have been announced on my birthday," said Pristine Already, Vice President of Recreation and Dancing.

Apollo Vows to Cleanup IX Act

CHEMSFUD, MA -- Apollo Computer Inc. is close to signing a long-term agreement with Tidy-unix Systems Inc. to make Apollo's Domain/IX Unix operating system sweeter, fresh-smelling, and incomparable.

The alliance with Tidy-unix represents a departure of sorts for Apollo, which in the past handled Unix software development with its own in-house team and proprietary rubber-glove methodology.

Asked whether the work would focus on System V cleanliness, senior technology and marketing vice-president Rolling D. Pummel said, "We've had a lot of reaction, and think that technology in the marketplace has reached a point where it has become incumbent on us to indicate to our salespersons the depulcritudinary effects of peddling odoriferous products in sanitized sales situations. By the way, did you know I graduated from college?"

Pummel said the Unix work with Tidy-unix is in addition to an agreement to cooperate with AT&T on the Saniunix Interface Definition standard. Pummel would not say whether the work would result in a sterile Unix running on its Domain comfort stations. A Tidy-unix Systems official yawned.

The proposed agreement would provide enhancements to Apollo's Domain/IX Unix operating systems to achieve compatibility with the proposed IEEE T3.P9.v02.12/a standard. Pummel said, "It's not incidental that three times to upgrade the source in a co-resident manner is proprietary. Even the subcommittee refers to its efforts as the '2000 unices' project."

In an unrelated matter, company president Strom L. Panderfleece told stockholders here that an internally developed entry into the "super back-end" arena will be released next year. The project could complete with products from former chairperson J. Bill, whose start-up is developing.

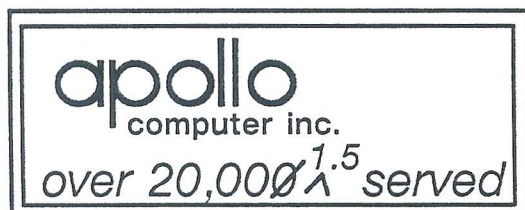
"We'll bowl them over," said Panderfleece, his gaunt frame quivering with silent glee.

V.P. Housing Shortage

(Copyright Lowell Moon) An Apollo spokesman admitted today that Apollo Computer, Inc. is encountering severe difficulties finding housing accommodations for the recent influx of vice presidents into its R&D organization.

The spokesman, who wished to remain anonymous, said, "Influxes are always hard to accommodate, and in the case of VPs there are some peculiar living arrangements that must be dealt with in ways that are consistent with community standards as defined by the high court."

The spokesman declined further explanation, but under duress revealed that Apollo had recently acquired a 35% interest in Storage Containers, Inc. of Salem, N.H.



Woopi for "woopi"

CAMBRIDGE, MA -- Apollo has signed a mutual non-destruction pact with InterPow software, premiere maker of workstation publishing systems. This pact includes a worldwide distribution agreement, joint ownership of a time-sharing condominium in Revere, and a marketing campaign whereby OEMs may trade DN3000 shipping carton boxtops for free software updates.

In addition, Apollo announced the release of a new DOMAIN version of the wps (Wotta Pow Software) product, containing numerous bug fixes and enhancements. This release is numbered wp3.14159 and is pronounced "woopi."

Among the many extensions in the wp3.14159 product are:

- More complete status messages such as:
 - "Saving an at anchor frame. Please wait."
 - "Loading a component with an odd number of bytes. Please wait."
 - "Loading a font. Please wait."
 - "Cheking your spelling. Please wiat."
 - "Moving cursor. Please wait."
 - "Processing an alarm window. Go have lunch."

- Support for foreign languages. Current the following languages are available:

Icelandic
Tagalog
Latin
Pig Latin

Concurrency (multi-lingual word processing) will not be available. "You only speak one language at a time," notes product manager Barry Loam. "Why would you want to write more than one?" Keyboard support issues are still being negotiated.

- Further "lockout" of Apollo features deemed incompatible with the InterPow philosophy, such as:

Suspending all processes while printing a file instead of just while composing and sending it;
Ignoring alarms as well as cut/paste buffers and keydefs;
Trapping the cursor within the WP window.

- More creative behavior in the face of routine system errors. Currently a menu pops up saying "Signal received! File not found! <E> exit <F> file <C> cancel." This will be replaced by a small graphic of a dead duck.
- Automatic spelling checker. Use will be mandatory.
- Capability of taking a GPR bitmap file and inserting it into a frame. "Currently, only the color black is supported," notes Pierre Bouchard, Market Segment Manager. "With white coming along in early 1987, we expect the graphics to be more interesting."

When asked about table of contents management, index generation, chapter decimalization, and ASCII conversion, Bouchard turned into an icon.

classifieds

Just Wanted

Top Dollar for Used Nodes! We want your old equipment. Will pay premium price for used monitors, ring boards, mice, you name it. Roy's Bit Bucket Salvagers, Tooksberry MA, 445-1101.

For Sale

Can't Get ICS To Respond? U-Fix-It For Less! Complete line of factory-reconditioned components for the do-it-yourselfer who can't wait for a serviceman to get him up and running. We've got it all: monitors, max. mem. megs, mice, much more. Even those hard-to-find portrait displays! Roy's Bit Bucket Salvagers, Tooksberry MA, 445-1101.

Help

"There I was, minding my own business on my own node, when . . . WHAM! Some jerk with a ray-tracing process creeps on and nearly shuts me down. I was mad enough to spit! Can't we stop these cycle-happy speed demons?

YOU BET WE CAN! WE'LL HELP YOU PUT THE BRAKES ON YAHOOOS WHO FONDLE YOUR CPU WHILE YOU'RE LEFT SITTING IN THE DUST. YOU'RE SUFFERING FROM

"NETWORK NEGLIGENCE" CAUSED BY FAULTY SYSTEM ADMINISTRATION AND LIBERTINE ACCESS CONTROL, AND WE CAN HELP YOU COLLECT! CONTACT THE LAW OFFICES OF DEWEY, CHEATHAM, AND HOWE FOR A FREE 20-NANOSECOND CONSULTATION. WE WILL BE HAPPY TO REPRESENT YOU IN ANY AND ALL CLAIMS. WE ARE OFTEN ABLE TO SETTLE THESE MATTERS OUT OF COURT AND RESTORE THE QUALITY OF LIFE THAT HAS BEEN TAKEN FROM YOU.

CALL US TODAY AT 1-800-SOSUEME FOR YOUR FREE CONSULTATION. DON'T SUFFER A MINUTE LONGER!

(Paid for by The Law Offices of Dewey, Cheatham, and Howe, specializing in the areas of Software Malpractice and Workman's Compensation. We are pleased to announce a new addition to our staff: John Chewett, Junior Partner, specializing in the areas of corporate malfeasance and trademark infringement.)

APOLLO DEVELOPING "NEXT GENERATION PLUS ONE" COMPUTER

Sources inside Apollo's R&D organization have recently revealed that the company is developing "Sixth Generation" computers -- machines that will meet the needs of customers after the era of the supercomputer.

Apollo made its mark on the computer industry when it perceived the demand for engineering workstations years before other computer vendors. Now it intends to take the lead again by developing impersonal computers.

"Impersonal computers are the logical outgrowth of the current trends in the market, combined with foreknowledge of supercomputers," said an engineer who asked not to be named. Computer companies have been bending over backwards for years to provide friendlier and friendlier computers. The results: a decline in personal computer sales and decreased respect for computers.

"Let's face it--people want bossy, nasty, abusive computers," said our source. "They're tired of menus. They're tired of eye-ease colors on their monitors. Look at the popularity of UNIX! Do you think it's an accident that engineers are clamoring for an antiquated operating system with command names like 'awk' and 'fgrep' and that produces obscure, unhelpful error messages?"

Close market scrutiny and data analysis done on an IBM PC has led Apollo decision-makers to start development of the User Abuser, a machine designed to meet the growing demands for user hostility. The product will combine the best of the supercomputer technology with an ergoantagonistic interface. The new interface is the product's hallmark. Several aspects of the interface have already been determined.

The hardware interface will involve a keyboard with no function keys and no backspace key. To execute any of the 567 functions available, the user will have to press,

simultaneously, a minimum of three keys and one of the seven foot pedals. Other innovations may include a tiny monitor that displays five lines at a time; no windows; and extremely poor resolution.

Other aspects of the products will undergo similar transformations. More than five errors during compilation will cause the entire system to crash and erase the disk. Error reporting will be minimal; the typical error message will be a string of exclamation marks. The documentation for the entire system will consist of a one-page list of components.

The Connption (ISSN 1011-0010) is published whenever we get around to it (but always after hours on personal time, we swear) by RD Associates, 270 Billerica Road, Chelmsford, MA 01824. Second-class postage paid nowhere. Subscription rate in the U.S. and its possessions, \$124.94 a year; Canada and New Hampshire, \$99.94 a year; elsewhere, \$1.94 a year. Microforms are available from University Microfilms International, 300 N. Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Postmaster: send address changes to email: 'connption'. ©1986 by RD Associates. Inquiries about licensing and marketing opportunities should be directed to Mr. Sharky DeBullion, The Connption, 270 Billerica Road, Chelmsford, MA 01824, tel.: (617) 256-6600. The Connption, Wall Street Week, All the News that's Print to Fit are registered trademarks of RD Associates.