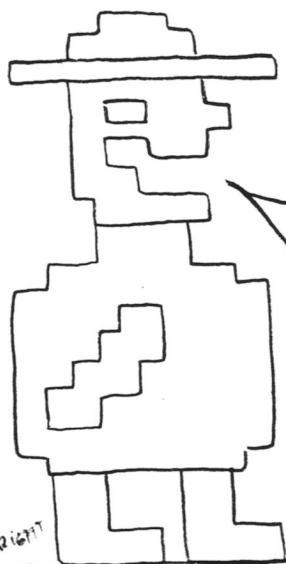


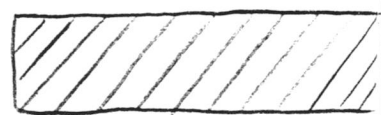
THURSDAY, MAY 24, 1984

# THE ALL NEW GRUNT PRESS

ISSUE 80



It's A  
Minor problem  
but... I can't  
get there  
from here



WRIGHT

## THE GRUNT PRESS

### THE EDITOR'S SAY

Hello. My name is Edmond Hum.

This is the second anniversary issue of The Grunt Press. Yes folks; the very first issue came out two years ago, on May 27, 1982. (Admit it: do you care?)

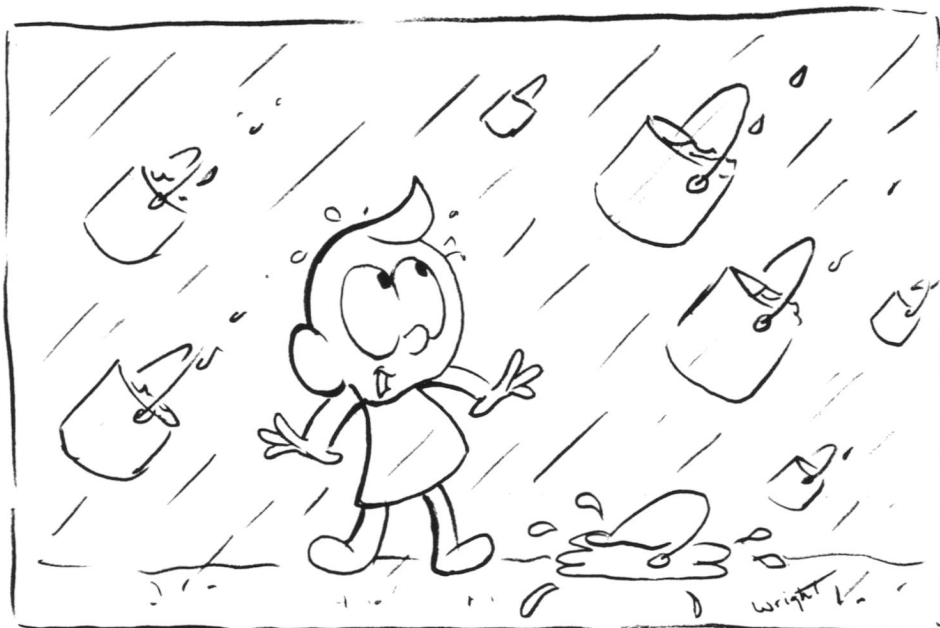
It was better known as GP back in its original form. Since then, it has had four editors: Trevor Pierce (known as Ed), Leo Binkowski (who called himself Led, for Leo the Editor), Mary Bermel and myself.

Leo and I are still here. Interestingly enough, I leafed through the collector's item premiere edition, and only two people mentioned in it are still NABU employees; John Kelly and Eric Mesdag (Warren Belkin's name was also mentioned, but he's just working on contract for NABU these days).

When some hotshot writes the book on how NABU came to be, I'm sure he or she will look back on these issues of The Grunt Press and record with glee the creativity, energy and mental decay that makes up this company.

Next deadline for articles is Monday, June 4 (please type them in Wordstar, if you can). Make your mark in NABU history and see YOUR name in print.

\*\*\*\*\*



From the radioactive waste disposal zone of Leo Binkowski:

Yes, I'm again dumping my depraved thoughts into The Grunt Press (maybe not as the LED, we already have Ed). I can say with reasonable assuredness that Miner 2049er is finished. Joaquin Fernandez has done a super-duper job with some of the finest code (and lots of it!) that I have ever seen.

Please don't yell at me when something doesn't click, (that's what we have QA for) because more often than not, the version which you are playing is not supported by me any more, as Joaquin and I have already revised it. Even in the current version, each and every level is possible, with a little experimentation. (Check out screen 7 for a little personal touch)

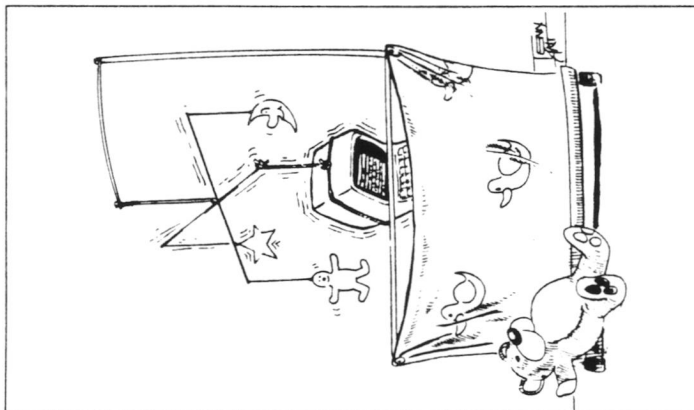
Some notes on development tools. If any assembler programmers wish to make their jobs slightly easier, get yourself a good hex calculator. By good, I mean non-TI LCD PROGRAMMER type hex calculator. That particular model has a random number generator keyboard. Press a key, and you'll have a random number of that digit in the display. After a while you'll just stick with ZSID. Try the HP-16C programmable from Hewlett Packard. The only stickler is the price: \$220 CDN before tax. If you wish to do some across the border deals, I got mine for \$85 US, which when you work out the exchange, 5% duty, and 9% federal sales tax, is about \$125 CDN. If you wish to go the 14% cheaper shirt pocket way, well, that's up to you.

Karen Shaw, I see, has taken to ZORK I. For those of you who don't know what is coming up on the NABU Network, it is an all textual adventure-type game. This game is similar to SLEUTH, only about 5000% better. It took me four years to solve (not all at once, I'm not a total vegetable). Hints and maps are available from your local games department.

By the way, how does anyone feel about doing something to Warren's brand new Celica? As I recall, Chris Wallace developed something like a bullet-hole on his windshield soon after taking delivery of his RX7 (hmmm...I wonder how that got there.)

more...

\*\*\*\*\*



CARTOON SUBMITTED  
BY  
SHELLEY MCQUILLEN

LEO - continued

EOT thoughts:

Are you tired of being berated, lectured, and preached upon by a certain 1100 repairman? Content has received numerous tongue-lashings about us not cleaning drives, hooking up foreign devices, and using bad disks in drives (hmm..Terry?). Of course, we only clean our drives regularly, should we do this before each disk access? I have put together a little coupon below for the frustrated to fill out:

Yes, I am an intelligent person.  
Please skip the sermon and fix  
my machine. I promise not to put  
covers along with the disk into  
the drive, and will not try to  
blow the @#! out of it with a  
sawed off .22 when it crashes  
whilst doing a backup.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
ext \_\_\_\_\_

(please drop in collection basket)

\*\*\*\*\*

#### STATUS REPORT FROM DOUG MEREDITH

Ed asked for a brief status report on this group. Well, to sum things up, I'd say things were going "pretty good", but now they're going great. Actually, I would have attached my most recent status report, but it is somewhat boring. Avin Chitnis probably took it with him to Japan, or otherwise disposed of it. No doubt part of the reason for requesting a contribution is that this group is more visible now. Trying to put three people in my work station was a bit tight, and as Keith Soley recently discovered, too much pressure on these partitions can cause instant demolition. As a result, we've spread around.

Joining us in planning is Joyce Cheng, a fourth-year commerce student at Carleton. Joyce is primarily involved in developing market estimates, forecasts and revenue projections. Iain Page, a consultant with software development and design experience, as well as market planning experience, is working on the disk drive and CP/M products.

more...



DOUG MEREDITH - continued

Although somewhat divergent, these activities are consistent with the general mandate of market or consumer research, especially to the extent that the results of whatever is being researched, if acted upon, becomes planning. Ultimately the process should be cyclical.

Present activities have included service measurement, i.e. from the consumer's point of view rather than bit error rates. This has involved the latest version of the Delta Sessions: the focus groups that previously received a certain amount of internal and external media attention. Also carried out was a pre-launch evaluation in Alexandria (great), an evaluation of our advertising (not bad) and some interviews with some people who had cancelled (infidels!). We have also been doing a certain amount of ergonomics/human factors work on the disk drives. This product is being launched in a controlled way among selected subscribers, so that its market acceptance can be monitored closely. The purpose of this is, of course, to ensure that the product is, or becomes, as acceptable from a consumer point of view as possible. Nevertheless (something of a milestone), we do have disk drives and they are being installed.

The results of the latest service measurement study have not yet been computed, but based on the discussions, it is my impression that we are developing a more "mass" appeal. The proportion of subscribers who own other computers seems to be dropping substantially. The change is no doubt the result of pricing and the rental option. Although not computer sophisticates, our subscribers want to be comfortable with computers, and see NABU as an excellent means to this end. On the other hand, there appears to be less patience with any types of service problems. But then, when you think of other consumer products, there's not much reason to think that expectations in terms of the quality of service wouldn't be high. We expect consumer products to work well and do what they're supposed to do, and that's about the extent of our concern. How satisfied are you with your TV service? When's the last time your phone gave you problems? What was the attitude of the waitress or waiter when you bought your last Big Mac? Generally we give little thought to any of these things unless they don't do what we want or expect.

The change in emphasis for NABU may be a reflection of a real change from what may have been seen as a technological novelty, to that of a real consumer product. The consumer, of course (right, wrong or nuts), is always right.

"We're only doing  
this until  
Atari Dumps  
ALAN ALDA"



## LETTERS FROM GHANA

By Edmond Hum

"Ed," read the memo from Keith Soley. "The readers of your Marvelous Magazine might find the attached letter to be of interest. A typical NABU prospect?????"

Attached was a handwritten letter from Ghana, West Africa (see next page). Strange, I thought. It was a request for some buttons, pens and the like. And a mention of severe poverty. But how in the world could someone in West Africa have known about the NABU Network and written a letter to Ottawa, with the correct postal code and all?

Upon further investigation, I found out that Connie Nield had received a similar type of letter earlier this year, also from Ghana (see page after next). Tucked in her drawer was an authentic bank note from that country, sent in thanks to NABU from the appreciative writer. "Our marketing and public relations people must be doing a great job if people in Ghana are responding to us," said Connie.

But what could have spurred people halfway around the world to write to NABU? Shelley McQuillen had the answer. Apparently back in 1981, a teacher from Ottawa had gone to Ghana and had encouraged her students to write away to various companies for tokens and little souvenirs. "Well of course we were just totally enamoured that anybody would know about NABU from so far away," says Shelley. Eventually a file of letters accumulated, all of them were addressed to Denny Doyle. But after a few information kits were sent to Ghana, the decision was made not to respond to these letters anymore.

"We would have had all of Ghana write to us," says Shelley. "It was doubtful our market penetration was ever going to go to West Africa. Besides, there was no way to capitalize on this, except to do it out of the goodness of our hearts."

What must have happened recently, then, was that these two writers obtained NABU's address from one of the students who had received kits, and decided it was worth the postage to write away for souvenirs. Connie Nield says an information kit will be going out to the most recent writer.

Who knows? We may yet collect more postage stamps from Ghana.

\*\*\*\*\*

QA'er Jana Chytil's  
business card

Jana Chytil



105 DESMOND AVE. KANATA, ONT. K2L 1E8 836-5068

VIDEO GAME PLAYER EXTRAORDINAIRE, ATHLETE  
MUSICIAN, COMIC, MAGICIAN, WRITER, ARTISTE  
CARDSHARK, SALES & SERVICE

9/5/84

ABU STEPHEN MORGAN

% EVANS LARBI

PYI CORPORATION

ASAMANKESE E/R

GHANA WEST/AFRICA

13<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 1984

Dear Sir/Madam,

I'm very 2ert and most reverence to submit you this my humble message. Sir I kindly beg you to send me free Complete books or magazines about NABU Company. Again I kindly beg you to send me pictures, bangles, pens and Calendars of NABU Company.

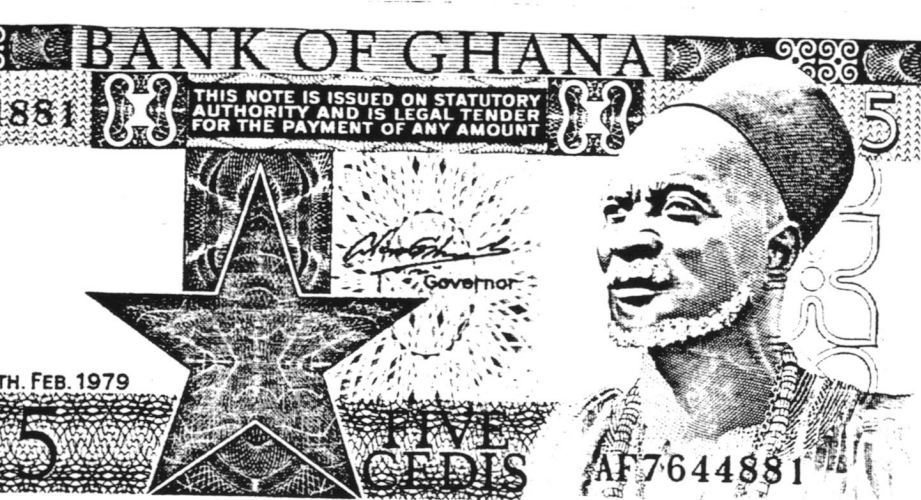
I am Orphan and also a pauper I didn't have and books to read or even clothing to wear so please try to help me because I'm suffering in this Country. Sir try to give me pencil in your company or in your Country. I hope you will put my request down.

I hope that you will try as much as possible to help me. Hoping hear from you very soon and save me.

Thank you

Yours faithfully  
Stephen Morgan





Mr. Joseph D.E.K. Agyikah  
% Mr. Richard T. Aggor  
P. O. Box 27,  
Asamankese. #18  
Lhama w/A  
26<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 1984.

Dear Sir

I have receive your find enclosed copy you have sent to me. I thank you very much for the books you have sent to me; please infact when I got the book I became very happy.

I am interestend that I am learning about other Country that is far away. I will be grateful if you could encore me. Please I don't have proper thing to send you, but you get this money to remember me. Our Lhama money that is five cedis or \$5.00

Please will not say more about what you have done.

for me but, our Lord Jesus christ will bless you and your company. I end here with my deferential letter and send my greetings to you all. Hopping to hear from you soon. Thank You.

Yours Sincerely  
J.D.E.K. Agyikah  
*[Signature]*

NABU MANUFACTURING  
CORPORATION  
1051 BAXTER ROAD  
OILAWA, CANADA  
K2C 3P2

## THE Q.A. REPORT

By Helen Vilmansen

If you've been wandering past Q.A. in the last couple of weeks, you may have noticed a few melodious notes coming from within. Jana Chytil is our new self-appointed music coordinator. It seems that she comes to work hooked up to her Walkman, but feels that once she arrives, it's impolite to hog all that music to herself. So, Q.A. now has a handy-dandy little ghetto blaster competing with the programs (not to mention the odd person who comes in with a few enlightening words to say). As a result, I have now committed every Culture Club lyric to memory - every LP, every EP (and soon, I'm told, the videos will be available). Now, ... ask me if I ever wanted to.

We've had a few comments about the music, some favourable, some not. Les Perley is dropping a few subtle hints..."How can you work with all that NOISE?"

Actually, I find the music helps relax me. With all the amount of time we've been spending here at Baxter Centre, we have to take what relaxation time we can get. This is only my second experience with the monthly roll-out, and from what I've observed, the entire crew here responds with a massive input of adrenaline and hard work (not to mention bribery playing a key part in the motivating phase - "If you stay late, we'll order some pizza.")

We do see a few interesting things though. By now, everyone must have seen the new animated graphic welcoming subscribers in Alexandria -- the NABU Network rising phoenix-like out of orange ashes. Imagine the surprise when our first glimpse during the test cycle was a prominent logo of the NABU Network -- fading and disintegrating bit by bit into an unfriendly little pile of something. It did seem to have a chilly omen-like quality to it.

The U.S. launch has been on our minds a lot lately, what with new U.S. and Canadian main menus to examine, as well as the U.S. and Canadian versions of Network Index and Network News. Just when I thought I finally had the Canadian menu in control, out comes this U.S. version. At this point, I can only have nightmares when I look into the future and see the NABU Network throughout North America, with custom-designed Network News/Indexes for hundreds of cities.

Hopefully, by now, everything in Alexandria is going full steam ahead, and we can start concentrating on new applications and upgrades. We had a very nice treat last Friday in that the Q.A. staff was invited to the American launch/monthly roll-out celebrations at Wong's Palace. Even while at lunch, there was work in progress, as evidenced when a new product code (B52) was developed by members of Operations, backed by Keith Soley, then reviewed and verified by members of Q.A. Nice work if you can get it.

## GRUNTING ON A TWELVE-SPEED

By Terry Newcombe

So you try and bicycle 335 km on the Victoria Day weekend and say it was for the fun of it. Ow, my seat!

Lucky me, cycling to Kingston and back on the 13th (note the number) Annual Rideau Lakes Tour. Why is it that with 800 of us making the attempt (and 700 of us succeeding), only one poor fool (namely me) could be found doing it on a Canadian Tire bike instead of a \$700 Japanese make or whatever?! Would you believe I had a lot of their 4% discount money?

There they all were, their bikes gleaming, racing gloves on tight, helmets fastened on, \$80 cycling shoes fastened, and all of them wearing those \$70 skin-tight zipperless shorts -- you know, the ones with inner soft leather lining and no seams where you're sitting for 10 hours on a thin post (I had my \$5.99 K-Mart shorts, of course).

We left Carleton University at 7:30 a.m. Saturday. The first half of the way, to Perth, was quite flat and uneventful. But the second half seemed like a third and a fourth half too! Take, for instance, the hill entering one town -- you know you're in trouble when they threaten fines for all trucks not stopping at the top to check their brakes.

And maybe you thought Saturday afternoon's twenty-minute storm was bad on Major Hill's Park -- try it in shorts and a t-shirt five miles out from any sign of civilization. It was with shock that I realized that the PING! PING! I was hearing were hailstones bouncing off my helmet.

Somehow we made it into Kingston by 6:00 p.m., swapping stories while in the Queen's University cafeteria line-ups (two people were actually blown off their bikes by the post-storm winds, for instance). And those line-ups weren't nearly as long as the ones for the showers. Did you know that the shower heads in the women's residences at Queen's are at shoulder height? Do you know how it hurts to bend down to turn on the water after an intimate relationship with your bike all day? Are Queen's women really that short? Are Queen's engineers really that dumb?

Needless to say, no one stayed up for the game that night (what's a Stanley Cup?).

The return trip the next day was actually much better. We had the winds behind us and no precipitation from higher than our foreheads. Some of us continued to get blisters on our blisters, mind you, and you could tell a bump on the road was coming up by the groans up ahead.

All in the name of fun? Give me Dig Dug any day; even Parlour Power!



## JOSIE

"She is an extremely efficient, effective and well-organized lady," says Keith Soley, Vice-President of Marketing and Sales. "She's incredibly dedicated and committed. I never have to ask whether or not something I asked her to do is being done. She just does it."

Keith is talking about his right-hand person, his executive assistant Josie Spagnolo. Josie, 27, is so dedicated to her work that it doesn't faze her at all that in order for her to work at NABU, she has to commute from her home in Montreal to come to Ottawa everyday.

"People come from all over the world to work at NABU," she says with a laugh. Josie gets on the 6 a.m. Voyageur Colonial bus in Montreal every weekday, either sleeps or reads for the couple of hours it takes to get here to Ottawa, and then takes a cab to NABU. "The travelling doesn't bother me," she says. Just recently, in fact, she says she met an older man on the bus who lives in Montreal and has taken the bus to Ottawa, where he works, for nine years.

"I like Montreal. It's what I call home," says Josie. "I live with my parents, and for the moment it is very convenient for me to do so. I'm used to having so many comforts at home. Financially, it's to my advantage; my money's my own and I have no major expenses other than transportation costs. My parents think (and hope) I'll eventually get tired of travelling and live and work in Montreal, but for now I don't mind the travel. Besides, I like this job."

She first met Keith Soley when she was 22 and worked at Systemhouse in Ottawa as one of two of his executive assistants. When the other person left after six months, she took the role entirely. Though Keith left Systemhouse in September 1982, Josie continued to work there until July 1983, and decided to go back to Montreal for some time off. By October 1983, Keith was at NABU, and he wanted Josie to work for him again.

"She's a very self-motivated type who knows what she wants and how to go after it," says Tracy O'Keefe of Applications Development. To illustrate the point: until January of this year, Josie was also taking courses at the University of Ottawa for her MBA (she has five courses left to take, but can't decide whether to concentrate her studies in Marketing, Sales or Finance). This was in addition to commuting back and forth from Montreal and the rigorous demands of her job that often required her to work overtime. She ended up staying in Ottawa with friends some nights to save on time.

more...

## JOSIE - continued

"I sometimes feel restricted because of the secretarial requirements of my job", Josie says. "There's many more areas I'd like to get involved in. The ideal set-up would be if there were a secretary helping out. This would allow me the time to be a true assistant to Keith.

"Eventually, I'd like to change my job and do something quite different, that is, I would like to go into an area where I feel I could use the knowledge acquired during the course of my MBA studies. I sometimes feel, however, that my work experience as a secretary and administrative assistant may be a hinderance. Yet, on the other hand, the business knowledge acquired during my work experience will, I'm sure, be an asset. In any event, when I see an opportunity that I like, I'll go after it".

Her style of dress is a definite asset that she brings to her job. "Her tastes are very dynamic," says Tracy O'Keefe. "You can tell by the way she dresses that she comes from Montreal." Josie says she feels she under-dresses compared to other people, both women and men, in Montreal. "In Ottawa they're a little more conservative, while in Montreal they're much more conscious of the clothes they wear. People in Montreal love to follow the latest fashion", she says.

When asked about how she coped with the workload when Keith was in the hospital with kidney stones, Josie says she just kept in touch with him. "People came to me if they wanted to talk to him or inquire about some decision that was required of him. They still do. In fact, a definite problem arises when papers requiring Keith's approval go directly to Keith without my seeing them or being aware of them. Inevitably, when this happens, and the papers are left with Keith, I have a difficult time when I need to locate the papers and/or knowing their status. As a result, I try to ensure that all papers requiring Keith's approval go through me first. In this way, I can keep track of where everything is."

When asked if she could take over Keith's job, she hesitates and says no. "I don't have that kind of confidence," Josie admits. "A person in a position of authority has to make decisions and stand by them, and I haven't developed my confidence to that level yet."

"Maybe that's my attraction to working for an executive of a company: you're aware of many of the 'goings on' of the company before other employees are. You're aware of the direction the company is taking, the problems it is facing and the alternatives available. As a result, you learn a lot about how to run a company and the business practices that are most and least effective. Consequently, a mandatory requirement of the job is the ability to keep information confidential. I feel quite confident in saying that no information leaks have come from me in the past nor are they likely to do so in the future. You see, I take my job seriously."

## The Colossal Canadian Couture-Cioni Crappy Copywriting Contest !!!

It takes a veritable connoisseur of the fine arts of copywriting to recognize a truly vile phrase. Now I admit, as NABU's copywriter for some time, I got pretty skilled at both creating and recognizing some deliciously hurlish prose. But I know it in no way approaches the talent hidden in the hearts of my colleagues here at NABU. I have this mouth-watering feeling that right here in corporate corridors lurks the real and dark genius required to write spectacularly putrid prose.

So I've gotten together with my scholarly chum Maria Cioni to set up the Colossal Canadian Couture-Cioni Crappy Copywriting Contest (CCCCCCC) Below you'll find some examples snaffled from the Edward Bulwer-Lyton bad writing contest to start you off. So mix up those metaphors, infuse subtlety with the obvious and pop those crappy little submissions down to the Grunt Press before June 15.

What does the winner get????

Besides being published in one of the most literary and talked-about circulars in town, the winner will be rendered wordless by the well-earned reward that will be bestowed upon her or him or them by the covetous combination of cheeky Couture-Cioni charm. You lucky stinker.

— M. Couture

Note: The darkest genius of all may lurk in the cells of the Mezzanaine floor where, rumour has it, there is no air. (But parking spaces are ample).

### FORMER BAD WRITING CONTEST WINNERS

"Their growing passions  
crackled electrically as they  
gazed up at the sliver of moon  
that hung like a clipped toenail  
to a carpet sky."

"The lovely woman-child Kaa was mercilessly chained to the cruel post of the warrior chief Beastx, with his barbarian tribe now stacking wood at her nubile feet, when the strong clear voice of the poetic and heroic Handsomas roared, 'Flick your Bic, crisp that chick, and you'll feel my steel through your last meal.' "

## FROM THE RUBBIE IN DAVE ALLAN'S CORNER

I wish people would get off Chris Wallace's case about his RX-7. Seriously, colour aside, if you're going to buy a Japanese mondo-techno-Kamakazie-buggy, the RX-7 is the way to go. Stack it up beside a 280 or 300ZX and they look like beached whales! As for the Pulsar, it looks like something the lizards from "V" would go to Hull in... (I'm jealous as I own a British car which should be sent back to the factory every thousand miles!). Unfortunately, unlike the Batmobile, Chris's RX-7 did not come with an underground parking spot (I understand Keith Soley's station wagon has similar problems).

At this point, I would like all of you to review the non-disclosure agreements you signed when joining NABU, and if you didn't, consider Keith's measured words from the last wine and cheese party for Applications Development, which featured Les Perley's scrumptious salmon: "You are privy to information that the stockholders don't have."

I'm back!! (calculated arrogance!). And having a wonderful time putting together an information provider system based around the IBM PC (or reasonable facsimile) as the host. Actually it's just mashing a few layers of software on top of stuff Indy Singh and Eric Mesdag have already written (my first few demos will be pure plagiarism and will only impress the unenlightened!). The only other wonderfulness to come from this is a rewrite of the DEBUGGER (Dave Allan 1981) in "C" which should spawn a whole new series of new mumblings and grumblings, and possibly (ha!) a smaller and better debugger for general distribution. Don't hold your breath! It's going to be five to six weeks in coming (second coming??).

Returning after a few months' absence, I notice a lot happening, but where's the MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface) card? Scary stuff, eh, kids!?

In the meantime, congratulations to Norm, Mike, Indy, Eric, Tom (Tom for other reasons as well!) for attending to the thousands of details that took the disk software from something that worked after a fashion to a viable product. In my current capacity I expect to find new opportunities for overburdening a whole new department!

\*\*\*\*\*

## SACS GIVE OUT GOLD STARS TO WORTHY NABU-ITES

By Kathleen Pickard

Yes, we are still here, despite those people who fervently wish that we would disappear and thereby quit asking for source code, documentation and (worst of all!) fully completed paperwork.

more...

## GOLD STARS - continued

In this issue, however, we wish to concentrate on the contributions of certain individuals who have made our lives a little easier. Gold stars go to:

- \* Terry Newcombe for conscientiously providing us with source code (all eight disks) every time DIG DUG goes up on the test SEL, and for promptly revising the documentation whenever it's necessary.
- \* Donna From for completing the documentation and submitting the source code for each one of the @\$\$\*!@& LOGO BLOCS. (Is it our imagination or do those things really breed?)
- \* Laura Schening and Thong Nguyen for helping us to complete the documentation on some of the very old applications.
- \* Anna Soininen and all the QA'ers who, without complaint, test all the 'stuff' SACS puts up on SEL2.

A note on the last point. Part of SACS' responsibility is to put together (i.e. recompile, reassemble and relink) every application after it has gone into production. This must be done for each revision (code change) of each application. It's the only way to ensure that SACS has complete and current source code. It also indicates if the documentation has changed and the developer has forgotten to revise it. The application then goes up on the test SEL and QA checks to make sure that it matches the one in production.

What other exciting tasks are completed, started or just downright ignored by SACS, you ask? You'll have to wait for the next fun-filled issue of the GP to find out. Hang in there!

## \*\*\*\*\* **Popcorn odor sparks court battle**\*\*\*\*\*

MONTREAL (UPC) — Popcorn smells great to most of us, but the odor of 48 varieties of the stuff landed a popcorn-maker in court here. A linen store complained that the fragrances from Rocky Rapoport's business, located in the same shopping centre, were ruining business. That prompted Rockland Shopping Centre Inc. to request a temporary injunction preventing Rapoport from making popcorn until he installed a ventilation system.

But Judge Charles Gonthier of Quebec Superior Court rejected the request. "The odor of freshly cooked popcorn is not offensive," he said in his judgment. "On the contrary, it is considered to be attractive."

Do you ever notice how when you walk from your car after you've parked it near the Queensway the smell of fresh-cooked popcorn? Quickie Convenience Stores makes it on the premises at Baxter Centre. Unfortunately, they only sell it at their stores, and not at their offices. Pity.

\*\*\*\*\*  
PUBLISHER: CHRIS WALLACE  
Special thanks to Glenn Wright  
CHIEF MUZZLER: KEITH SOLEY  
NEXT DEADLINE: MONDAY, JUNE 6!