

# **NUTS & VOLTS**

**M A G A Z I N E**



**\$3.50**

**VOL. 16 NO. 5**

**MAY 1995**

*Exploring Electronics And Technology For The Hobbyist And Professional*

## **DXing The Cosmos**

**Amateur Radio Astronomers**

**Search Out Signals From Deep Space**

- ★ **Domino Effect Topples Complicated Controllers**
- ★ **The Nuts & Volts Guide To Mining The Internet**
- ★ **Launching Your High-Tech Career**
- ★ *All New! Open Channel*





# Don't miss out on a great deal!

## Call, write or fax for your **FREE** Tucker Catalog!



**OPTOELECTRONICS**



**GoldStar**

**BK PRECISION**

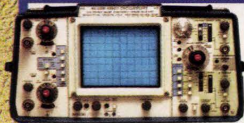
**WAVETEK**

**LEADER**

**HC Protek**

**EXTECH**

**HAMEG**



*Protective Front Covers Available... Only \$25!*

### **Tektronix 465M** **100 MHz Portable Oscilloscope ...\$695**

- Dual Trace: 5 mV/div to 5 V/div
- DC to 100 MHz bandwidth
- Time Base A 0.5 sec/div to 0.05  $\mu$ S/div into 22 steps; Time Base B 50 mS/div to 0.05  $\mu$ S/div in 19 steps
- 8 x 10 cm display
- Portable—weighs 25.3 lbs
- Front cover not included.



**AC or Battery Operation**



### **Fluke 8600A/01** **4 1/2 digit Multimeter ...\$350**

- Includes option 01 for AC or Battery operation!
- Measurement functions: AC & DC Volts, AC & DC current & resistance; 4 1/2 digit display
- DC & AC voltage ranges are  $\pm 200$  mV, 2 V, 20 V, 200 V & 1200 V
- DC & AC current ranges are 200  $\mu$ A, 2 mA, 20 mA & 2000 mA
- Resistance ranges are 200  $\Omega$ , 2 k $\Omega$ , 20 k $\Omega$ , 200 k $\Omega$  & 20 M $\Omega$

\*All Test Instruments Include Manuals and are Completely Operational Unless Otherwise Stated.



### **Fluke 893A** **Differential Voltmeter** **\$269**

- Can be used as a differential or conventional voltmeter

- Voltage range: 0 to  $\pm 1100$  V (AC & DC)
- Resolution: 1  $\mu$ V
- DC accuracy:  $\pm 0.01\%$
- AC accuracy:  $\pm 0.05\%$
- 50 Hz to 10 kHz
- Compact size

**We Take Trade-Ins!**

### **The Original HP-IB** **Hewlett Packard 10833A, B, C, D** **HP-IB Interconnection Cables**



<b>10833A 1 meter</b>	<b>.....\$35</b>
<b>10833B 2 meters</b>	<b>.....\$35</b>
<b>10833C 4 meters</b>	<b>.....\$30</b>
<b>10833D 0.5 meters</b>	<b>.....\$35</b>

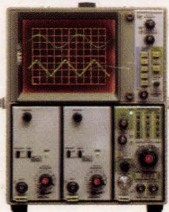
For the best data transfer and control...go with the original! Our price makes it easy to afford the best, the high quality HP cables. They have a connector block at both ends and each cable has a plug on one side and a matching receptacle on the other, allowing several cables to be connected in parallel. Don't settle for less, call Tucker!

### **Unparalleled Value On This Full Performance Oscilloscope System** **Thousands Off Original Tektronix Price**

### **Tektronix 7603N System** **(7603N/7A15AN/7A15AN/7B53AN Option 11S)** **Complete Oscilloscope System .....\$495**

Recognize this? If you've worked in electronics then you know Tektronix Oscilloscopes. This system is one of Tektronix's best and TUCKER lets you have it for only \$495. It views signals from 500  $\mu$ V to 80 V. That's 5 mV to 10 V per division with a X 10 magnifier. Speed? You got it. It clocks in at 5 nS to 5 S/div. It shows you DC to 65 MHz with dead accuracy (2% of the input). The Mainframe can use many plug-ins. So your system grows with you. In fact, it also saves you money and space that way. It also has the DELAY function to focus in on a signal's particular component. Its bright CRT shows you a single sweep, a low repetition rate, or a very fast rise time sharply so you'll see what you want. You get two 7A15AN Vertical Plug-Ins to provide you with extra control and an ideal Multiple-Setting Comparator. You control the polarity and magnification any way you like. The quick 7B53AN Horizontal Plug-In gives you the variety of sweeps and triggering to get the job done. Tektronix Quality and Tucker Pricing are always a Winning Team! Protective front covers are available for only \$25

\* 2 Universal P600S X1/X10 Switchable Probes



\*\* For This Mainframe

### **5 Channels, 12 Traces & FREE Probes! Protective Front Covers Available... Only \$25! Kikusui COS6100M ... 100 MHz Oscilloscope ...\$695**

The COS6100M combines ease-of-use with powerful features that sets it apart from other scopes. Order yours today and we'll include 2 FREE TPI P1001S X1/X10 Switchable Probes! The COS6100M can be found in production, testing, R&D, and even home shops because of its wide capabilities and low cost. You'll appreciate the versatility of 5 channels and 12 traces, plus its portability and very bright, clear display. The front-panel is laid out in a fresh, user-friendly fashion so you don't have to learn a "new scope" all over. It will trigger four ways: off of channels 1, 2, 3, or "ALT." A patented "trigger lock" allows for stable, automatic triggering even on complex signals such as TV waveforms. Another unusual feature is its ability to display several patterns at once. For example, this Kikusui COS6100M can show you X-Y displays of channel 3 vs. channel 1, and vs. 2, 4, and 5. Bandwidth of 100 MHz, sensitivities are CH1 and CH2: 5 mV-5 V; CH3, CH4, CH5: 0.1 V and 1 V. The sweep speeds are 20 nS-0.5 S (A and B). This is a great deal on a powerful oscilloscope!

### **Logimetrics 920-S101** **Signal Generator .....\$295**

The 920-S101 is a solid-state instrument, used for generating accurate CW, amplitude modulated, or frequency modulated signals over the 11 MHz to 80 MHz frequency range (three overlapping ranges). Easy-to-use, front-panel is logically designed so that quick setups are possible even with inexperienced users. Internal 1 kHz or external signal may be used for AM modulation. In the FM mode, signal may be modulated by an internal 1 kHz signal or by an external 50 Hz to 10 kHz signal. Calibrated output signal in 10 dB steps from -110 dBm to +10 dBm. Both Amplitude and Modulation are displayed using large, easy-to-read meters.



### **Great For Unattended Operation** **Hewlett Packard 7550A** **RS-232C Plotter .....\$795**



Outstanding value on this high performance plotter offering both HP-IB and RS-232C interfaces. Great for many applications, accepts A3/B and A4/A size media, uses drafting media pens, and will rotate graphs 90° for a choice of either horizontal or vertical formats. Designed for easy operation, the 7550A has an automatic sheet feeder and utilizes a front panel display and function keys to guide through each plotter setup, report plotter status and give program messages. Acceleration: 6 g (80 cm/sec); 0.006 mm mechanical resolution; addressable step size down to 0.025 mm; repeatability of 0.1 mm.

### **FREE HP-IB Cable** **Hewlett Packard 2225A** **HP-IB ThinkJet Printer ....\$149**



Order this popular HP ThinkJet Printer at a great price and we'll include a FREE HP-IB cable! This printer is a quiet, compact desktop printer that is very efficient (150 cps) while delivering crisp, easy-to-read text and graphics for letters, reports, and spreadsheets in either draft or quality mode. This printer is well known throughout the industry so software support is never a problem. Print cartridges are disposable and easily replaced. Due to its size, features, quality, and dependability, the HP 2225A is an excellent choice.

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- HSC# 15218 Yellow, HSC# 15219 White  
HSC# 15221 Green, HSC# 15222 Red  
Your Choice \$1.95 ea.

## Modem Madness...

- Hyundai external 2400 & 1200 bps modems
  - New in box with telco cable, manual, power adaptor
  - CCITT V.21(V.22/V.22bis for 2400), MNP-5 compatible
  - 5" x 1.25" x 8.5" compact size, software included
- HSC# 15179 2400 bps External Modem \$17.50  
HSC# 15238 1200 bps External Modem \$9.95  
♦ 1200 bps internal modem card, new with software  
HSC# 15239 1200 bps Internal Modem \$4.95

## HiFi Speaker Special!

- 40W Max, 20W RMS Woofer, 4Ω
  - 5.5" dia. mounting, 1.7 lb. overall weight
  - Black Injection-molded Graphite Cone
  - Foam Suspension, Plastic Trim Ring
  - Two-way Crossover Network with connection panel from same speaker system, freq. unknown
- 5.5" Woofer, new HSC# 15295 \$9.95  
Crossover, new HSC# 15296 \$3.95

## 220V Printer Special!

- Citizen 120D+ 9-pin Dot-matrix printer, Parallel interface
  - Narrow carriage, friction or tractor feed, tractor included
  - 120 cps draft mode, 144 cps High-speed Elite
  - Overall Size 3.5" x 14.5" x 9.5" (without tractor)
  - 220VAC, British-style plug (big blades)
  - Brand new in box, 90-day warranty
  - Could be used with step-up transformer, inquire.
- HSC# 15253 \$69.95

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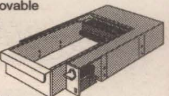
## Handy Power Supplies

- A) Switching power supply rated at 5VDC, 3A, Measures 2.75 x 3.25 x 5.25", IEC receptacle for universal (100 - 250VAC, 47 - 63 Hz) input, IEC cord not included, 6' Output cord with DIN plug  
New in box, HSC#14996 \$5.95
- B) Linear supply rated at 12VDC @ 1200 mA. Input is strapped for 240 VAC input, use as is with 110VAC for low voltage output, or re-strap it for 110VAC use at 12VDC. Measures 2.5 x 4 x 6.5", IEC cord not included.  
HSC# 14980 \$5.95
- C) Standard 6' IEC power cord for use with above supplies, misc. colors & styles, used. HSC# 80119 \$9.99
- D) Multi-output linear supply rated at 5VDC @ 600mA, +12VDC @ 250mA, -12VDC @ 250mA, 110VAC input, measures 2.5" x 3" x 4.75", generous 4' AC input cord, 5-pin DIN output cord, HSC# 15137 \$14.95
- E) Same as "D" above, only 5VDC @ 500mA, +12VDC @ 1A  
HSC# 15139 \$9.95



## IDE Docking Bay

- Makes 3.5" IDE Drives removable
  - Fits in 5.25" half-height slot
  - Plastic construction
  - Remove drive for security
  - New in box
  - Power interlock protects drive
  - Includes data & power connections
- HSC# 15304 \$39.95



## Multimedia Woofer!

- 60-watt air-suspension speaker with built-in crossover
  - Mediavision Model 670-0020, used with CDPC system
  - 6" speaker, 30 - 300 Hz freq. response, 40 Watts RMS
  - Handsome black styling with removable black grille
  - 9" x 7" x 17" cabinet, 1/4" phone plug input (cable incl.)
  - New in box, 90-day warranty
- HSC# 15178 \$27.50

## WORM-drive Project

- Maxoptix RXT800S internal full-height 5.25" drive
  - 800 MB Write Once, Read Many (WORM) Optical Drive
  - Customer returns, some work, some don't...
  - As-is, no returns or exchanges...perfect for experimenter
  - SCSI Interface, we have no other info.
  - Driver software available in Corel SCSI! package
  - Sorry, we don't have media yet, but we're looking!
- HSC# 15209 \$19.00

## Easy File Transfers!

- SmartSync Software by Nomadic Systems
  - Provides easy way to keep multiple computers in synch
  - Fast and efficient, transfers only the changes
  - Works with modems, cables or diskettes
  - Automatically updates multiple files, single and multi-user
  - Prevents accidental overwrites, can remotely copy
- HSC# 15305 \$19.95

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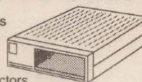
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## SCSI Disk Drive Case

- Low-profile case for 5.25" drives
  - Perfect for CD-ROM drives
  - 9.5" x 2.5" x 10.5" overall size
  - 50-pin SCSI daisy-chain connectors
  - Uses IEC power cord (not included)
  - Internal audio cable, RCA jacks on back
  - Features 40W power supply, fan, SCSI ID switch
- HSC#15243 Low-Profile 5.25" Drive Case \$39.95



## Multimedia Speakers

- Two styles to choose from, both new in OEM box
  - White plastic enclosures, grey grilles
  - MSS-1000 has Volume control, Bass boost switch, uses 3 C-cells per side, measures 3.5" x 3.5" x 5"
  - MSS-2000 has Volume control, Bass & Treble boost switches, uses 2 C-cells / side, measures 3.75" x 4" x 6"
- MSS-1000 HSC# 15127 Pair/ \$6.95  
MSS-2000 HSC# 15126 Pair/ \$8.95

## Network Cable Special

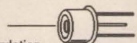
- Dual Workstation Installation Kit
  - Two high-quality 10' RG-58 coax BNC cables
  - Two BNC tee's
  - Two BNC 50Ω terminators
  - One BNC coupler
  - Enough to cable two Thin-net workstations to the wall-plate distribution point
- HSC# 14967 \$9.95

## CD-ROM Drive Deals!

- Just in...too close to ad deadline to sort!
  - We will have several brands, speeds and interfaces
  - Single, double and triple speed drives
  - From \$49.95 to \$139.95
  - Used, tested, guaranteed good, 90-day warranty
  - Proprietary and SCSI Interfaces
- CALL FOR INFO.... Save \$\$\$!

## Laser Diode

- Toshiba TOLD-9200
  - 3 to 4 mW at only 75 - 100mA of current!
  - 670nm wavelength (visible red)
  - Brand new prime
  - Uncollimated, needs current regulation
  - Application sheet with suggested circuit supplied
- HSC# 15163 \$17.95



## CD-ROM Starter Kit!

- Sony CDU-535 internal CD-ROM Drive (uses caddies)
  - Working drive pulled from multimedia systems
  - Single-speed half-height drive, Sony 40-pin interface
  - Front earphone/speaker jack, rear audio connection
  - New controller card, cable, drivers included (no caddy)
  - 90-day warranty
- HSC# 15191 \$49.95

## Back-up Tape Drive

- Summit Memory Systems "Express 120"
  - 120 Megabyte internal tape-backup unit
  - Bundled with Central Point Backup software
  - Interfaces like a floppy drive (34-pin conn. on back)
  - Brand new in box (includes AT mounting rails)
  - DOS, Windows, Novell compatible
  - 90-day warranty
- HSC# 15246 \$59.95

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## Computer Parts Specials!

- A. Teac half-height 5.25" 360K Floppy Drive  
♦ Black Faceplate, Used, 30-day warranty  
HSC# 14667 \$14.95
- B. Internal Fax/Modem Card, 2400data/9600fax  
♦ New OEM (no box, software) with spec. sheet  
HSC#15290 \$9.95
- C. 3.5" Floppy Drive Adapter Bracket for 5.25" bay  
♦ Includes hardware, faceplate, connector adapters  
HSC# 15124 \$1.95

## External Floppy Drive

- 5.25" half-height 360K floppy drive, beige face
  - Sturdy beige enclosure with power supply
  - IEC Power cord, 37-pin D cable included
  - Case size 6" x 2.25" x 12.5" (great for mounting other external drives, i.e. CD-ROM, etc.)
  - New in box, with manual
  - 90-day warranty
- HSC# 15138 \$24.95

## Transaction Terminal

- Used VeriFone Tranz 240 terminals
  - Vacuum-fluorescent alphanumeric 16-character readout
  - 12-key keypad ♦ Z-80 proc. ♦ CMOS program EPROM
  - Mag-stripe read-head (may have been disconnected)
  - Communicates over an RS-485 line
  - Needs 8.5 VAC adaptor
  - Quantity discounts available
- HSC# 14848 \$19.95

## New! QRP Kit Specials

- Popular QRP ham transceiver kits by Oak Hills Research
  - 1.5 Watt (Sprint) & 3 Watt (Explorer) models
  - 30, 40 Meter bands avail. for Sprint, 20, 30, 40 for Explorer
  - 100% complete kits with chassis, knobs, etc.
  - All coils prewound for assembly ease
  - QRP Wattmeter kit WM-1 available for \$79.95
- Sprint Transceiver Kit \$89.95  
Explorer Transceiver Kit \$129.95

## Aerial Dogfight Game

- Lucasfilm's "Their Finest Hour -- The Battle of Britain"
  - Historically accurate depiction of key WW II battle
  - "Fly" a Spitfire, Stuka or one of six other fighter planes
  - Realistic-looking cockpit instrument panel on screen
  - Instruction book has 45 page history of the war with period photographs, campaign maps, profiles and quotes
  - Turn on a "cockpit camera" to record your battle
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- HSC#14694 \$9.95

## Remote Control for your Computer!

- Infrared Remote operates your computer from 50 feet
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  - Serial Interface (IBM version) or ADB (Mac version)
  - Handheld remote is 7" x 2.5" x 5"
  - Included software provides screen pointer for emphasis
  - Keystroke mapping table can be customized, saved
  - Roam the room, make eye contact with your audience
  - Like using a TV set remote control (easy to set-up, use)
- HSC# 15240 IBM Remote Keyboard \$29.95  
HSC# 15241 Mac Remote Keyboard \$39.95

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- 16 segment RF bargraph
- Arm/Store button stores & recalls frequencies
- 250MHz direct count
- Digital Communications Port permits data logging with optional converter & software

### Model 3000A \$349.

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- High speed OE10
- Digital Filter greatly reduces random noise & oscillation
- Digital Auto Capture locks counter display on first reading to pass filter
- 6 Hour NiCad
- 10 Digit Backlit LCD display
- 16 segment RF bargraph
- Arm/Store button stores & recalls frequencies
- 250MHz direct count
- Digital Communications Port permits data logging with optional converter & software
- Multi-function: Frequency, Period, Ratio & Time Interval Measurement
- Dual High Impedance Inputs & Amplifiers
- Built In High Pass Filter

### Model 8040 \$679.

Bench Portable Counter

*With all the features of the 3000A plus:*

- Dual 50Ohm and 1Meg Ohm input amplifiers with AC/DC coupling,  $\pm$  Polarity, Trigger Level adjust, Low Pass Filter & Attenuator
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- RS-232 Serial computer interface
- Optional  $\pm 0.1$ ppm TCXO or  $\pm 0.05$ ppm KVG ovenized timebase

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## EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Nuts & Volts Magazine encourages article submissions and queries. Send a SASE for a copy of our writer's guidelines.

All submissions should be on 5-1/4 or 3-1/2 inch diskettes and include hard copy as well. If return of materials is requested, include a SASE with your submission.

Deadlines should be discussed in advance with the editor, but generally all material should be submitted by the 1st of the month for the next month's issue.

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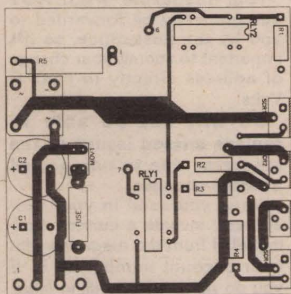
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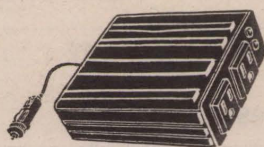
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# reader FeedBack

Dear Nuts & Volts:

I am a fairly new subscriber to *Nuts and Volts*, and The Laser Experimenter by, Anthony Charlton has already become a favorite of mine. The March '95 article on Phase Conjugated Light (PCL) is fascinating. I have seen some information on PCL and PCMs in literature written by Tom Bearden, as well as in a few other articles scattered over the years.

When I reached the end of the article, I eagerly searched for some additional "reference" information, as I would like to read up in more detail on this incredible area of research, but unfortunately no references were cited.

Would it be possible to mail me a few good specific reference items that I may research in more detail? The University of California experiment using barium titanate crystals looks reproducible by a competent experimenter, if more specific information could be found.

The intriguing item in Figure 5 is the "wedge shaped mirror." If this were a front surface mirror, as is usually the case with mirrors used in laser and holography work, the shape and thickness of the glass behind the aluminized surface would be immaterial. Because the "wedge" shape is mentioned, one is then led to conclude that this mirror is a back surface mirror. The wedge shape of the glass would induce two reflections: one from the surface of the glass, and one from the aluminized back surface (indeed, I suspect the front surface may have been lightly silvered and the back surface highly silvered). The angle of the wedge would affect the physical separation of the two wavefronts returning to the crystal, and the thickness and refractive index of the wedge material would affect the separation in the time of arrival of the two wavefronts back to the crystal, yes? In fact, the wedge shape would cause the reflection to arrive at the crystal in such a manner that one side of the reflection(s) would arrive before the other side. Quite intriguing.

It is my guess that this diagram is deceptively simple. One might think that acquiring the barium titanate crystal would be the single most difficult key acquisition, but that wedge shaped mirror is critical!

As a side note, I am thinking of building a nitrogen laser in the near future. Much of my technical

background has dealt with switching very high voltages at very high currents into a gaseous environment. After looking at some nitrogen laser plans, I believe I may have a way to replace the expensive thyatron switch with a vastly superior method of energizing the laser cavity. I believe it is possible to pump the cavity with at least one or two magnitudes of order more power, and at a fraction of the cost of an equivalent switching tube. There is really only one way to find out, I suppose.

**Bert Pool**  
Fort Worth, TX

Dear Nuts & Volts:

I am writing to you in opposition to the pacifist sentiments which were expressed, without serious rebuttal, in your April '95 Reader Feedback column. Writer Darryl Phillips, in complaining about a military aircraft simulator review, implied the moral equivalence of our military ("fly-by shootings") and drug gangs ("drive-by shootings") killing off their competition.

Such muddled thinking about the difference between right and wrong is probably more responsible for the great increase in murders, robberies, thefts, and drug addiction over the last 30 years than any media or video game "violence."

Electronics plays an important role in our national defense, and the spill over of important technologies such as GPS from military use into our daily lives occurs all the time. I sincerely hope you don't modify your coverage in these areas on the basis of Mr. Phillips', or any one else's, "Political Correctness."

**John P. Kontolefa**  
New York, NY

Dear Nuts & Volts:

In the March '95 Tech Forum, the answer to #2956 was not only rather disappointing, but flat WRONG on at least two counts. He is confusing technology with the little glass capsules being implanted into animals with the RF type anti-shoplifting tags. This is NOT how these things work. Also, if any stores automatically lock their doors upon activation of one of these readers, I'm sure the legal industry would like to know this. Violation of fire codes, etc.

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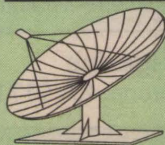
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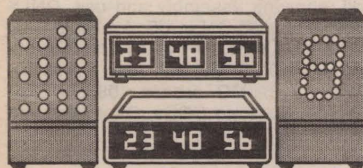


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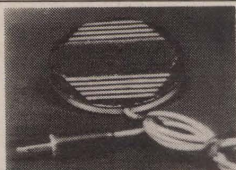
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
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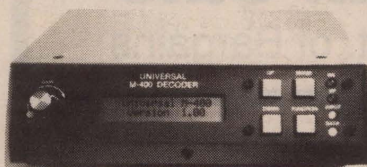
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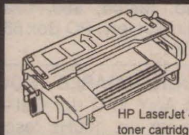
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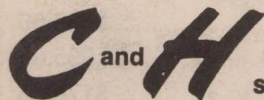
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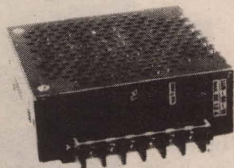
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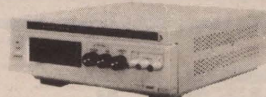
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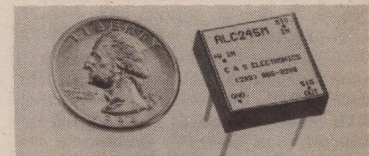
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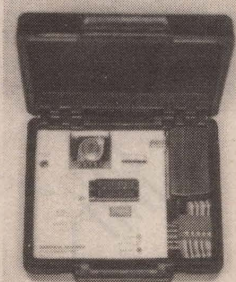
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# Far-Out DX Is Where You Find It



**T**his month is a change for the Open Channel column. Harry Helms is going to assume new chores in another Nuts & Volts column, so from now on I will be your monthly host. Who am I? I am Joe Carr K4IPV, and I've been writing books, columns, and articles on electronics and amateur radio for many years. If you wish to contact me with questions to be answered in this space, or suggestions for topics, then write to me at P.O. Box 1099, Falls Church, VA 22041.

The column will take on a somewhat different flavor than when Harry conducted it. Some of the same material will appear, but we'll also take a look at small construction projects, communications circuits discussions, amateur radio, CB, SWling, monitoring/scanning, receivers, and a host of other topics that you should find interesting. This month, for example, we will take a look at DXing the cosmos ("DX" is radio shorthand, so "light years" surely qualifies as DX).

We may also dabble into other areas of science experimenting (with an electronics or communications flavor), if readers are interested. That material will probably include small construction projects, instruments, and so forth.

## Amateur Radio Astronomers

Extraterrestrial radio signals are generated from sources as close as our own Sun, to pulsars and stars far enough into deep space that even Capt. Kirk and Scotty couldn't get there. In the early days of radio astronomy (late 1920s), many scientists scoffed at the idea of radio signals from outer space; astronomy was something you did with lenses and telescopes and cold, windy mountain tops. If you didn't freeze your fingers off on some dreary mountain top, then, to astronomers of that era you hadn't paid your dues . . . you hadn't "seen the elephant." But that changed.

In 1928, Bell Labs scientist Karl Jansky was tasked to study the level of background noise detected by maritime 15-meter band receivers. During his investigations, Jansky also studied noise picked up by undersea telegraph cables (undersea telephone cables didn't exist until the 1950s), and noise at wavelengths used for overseas shortwave radiotelephone service. Another scientist at Bell pointed out that the variation in noise strength could be explained by sources in the stars, rather than on earth. As a good scientist, Jansky published his work in a professional journal (*Proceedings of the Institute of Radio Engineers*, now IEEE). One observation pointed directly to the Milky Way as one source of radio noise. The result was a resounding silence as professional astronomers ignored Jansky's work.

One chap, however, didn't ignore Jansky. An amateur scientist named Grote Reber, from Wheaton, IL, was intrigued at the possibility of combining twin interests in radio and astronomy. In 1937, Reber patched together enough stuff to erect a 31-foot (9-meter) parabolic reflector in his backyard (it must be nice to have that much antenna space!). After initial failure, he changed his receiving equipment to listen to wavelengths of 33 cm (910 and 1.87 meters, 160.4 MHz). Hams and scanner operators who own VHF receivers can see solar noise increase dramatically as the sun comes up. Point a directional VHF antenna at the eastern horizon before sun-up, and tune in on the "hiss." As the sun slips above the horizon, the hiss level forces the S-meter to take a dramatic leap to the right.

Radio astronomy got a further boost during World War II, when the consequences were a lot more profound. The British pioneered the use of radar detection of aircraft just in the nick of time for the Battle of Britain. Their initial Chain Home radar system operated in the HF shortwave bands, but was soon augmented by models working in the high UHF (900 MHz) band. These new "centimetric radars" (as they were called because of the 33 cm wavelength of the signals) were more advanced, but suffered an interesting peculiarity.

Radar operators noted a periodic dramatic increase in received noise level that decreased the distance at which they could detect German bombers. It was found that the noise occurred whenever the Milky Way was

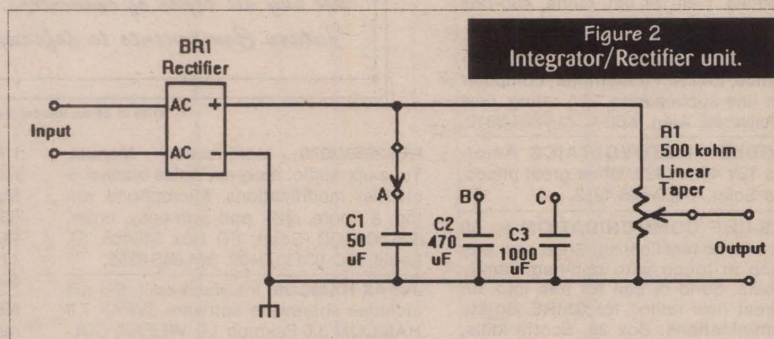
# Open Channel

by Joseph J. Carr  
K4IPV

above the horizon. I bet that was top secret during the war!

Today, radio astronomy is alive and well, and is well regarded both as a professional activity for astronomers and a hobby activity for amateurs. The British operate a massive radio astronomy observatory at Jodrell Bank, in England.

In the USA, The National Science Foundation operates (through academic contractors) the National Radio Astronomy Laboratory (NRAO, POB 2, Green Bank, WV 24944). A good history of radio astronomy is available from them for a modest cost. Ask for *Proceedings NRAO Workshop Number 7*, May 1983.



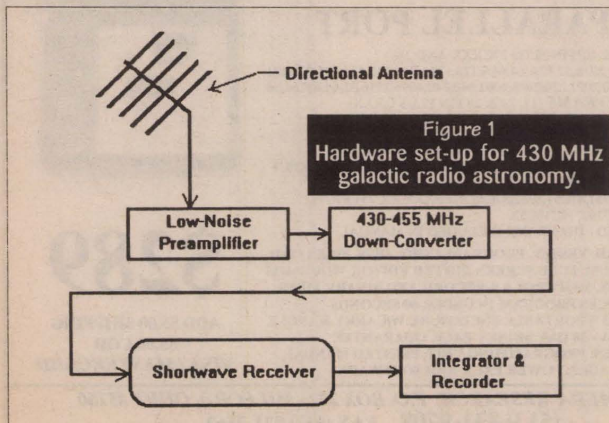
## What You Can Do

Okay, so you don't have a 30 foot parabolic antenna, never mind a huge professional dish . . . are you cooked? No, just because your antenna isn't 100-tons of steel that walks across the sky under the control of a three-phase, 440-volt AC industrial power system doesn't mean that you are out of business.

Figure 1 shows the block diagram to an amateur radio astronomy system that is based on using an HF shortwave receiver as a "variable IF" system. This system is designed to receive galactic signals in the 435 MHz region. This frequency is close enough to an amateur radio band to permit use of ham components.

The antenna should be a high gain, directional type such as a VHF/UHF Yagi. A lot of amateur astronomers have used high-gain television antennas for this function. In general, the rule to follow is: the more elements, the higher the gain. One with at least eight elements (and the more the merrier). The antenna can be mounted horizontally, but that is limited. It would be better to aim the antenna at the portion of the sky you want to "DX," or provide az-el mounting to be able to point it anywhere you want.

The low-noise 435 MHz preamplifier is used to boost the antenna signal, and it should be located as close to the feedpoint of the antenna as possible. Some TV antennas have preamplifiers built-on, but be sure that it is described as a "low-noise" amplifier before buying it. Kit-





# Open Channel

form preamplifiers can be obtained from Hamtronics, Inc., 65-D Moul Road, Hilton, NY 14468-9535.

The output of the preamplifier is passed through coaxial cable to a 430 MHz down converter that translates the UHF input frequency to a shortwave frequency in the 28 MHz to 30 MHz region (depending on which converter you buy). Suitable converters include the **Advanced Receiver Research**, (P.O. Box 1242, Burlington, CT 06013). Model R432V and the build-it-yourself kit converters sold by Hamtronics, Inc.

The integrator/recorder section of the radio astronomy system of Figure 1 rectifies the output of the receiver, and then integrates it and displays it on a recorder or computer. Figure 2 shows an integrator circuit that can be connected to the headphones output of the shortwave receiver.

The circuit of Figure 2 consists of a rectifier, a switch to select the integrator time constant, and a potentiometer to set the output level. Rectifier BR1 is any bridge rectifier pack with ratings of 1 ampere forward current at a peak inverse voltage (PIV) rating of 100 volts, or more. The two "AC" terminals (sometimes marked with a little "~" symbol) are connected to a plug that will mate with the headphone jack on your receiver. The negative (-) output of the rectifier is grounded, while the positive (+) output is connected to the integrator circuit.

An "integrator" can be built with a capacitor. If you dig into any decent basic electronics text you will find that a resistor-capacitor (R-C) network provides mathematical integration with a time constant equal to the product of the resistance (in ohms) and the capacitance (in

(add-on) A/D converter is used (some PCs have an internal A/D card).

The A/D converter can be almost any of the available models. I use a Pico Technologies, Ltd. model made in England. Others are easily available from USA manufacturers and importers. Two types seem to be generally available. One type connects to the serial communications port (COM1 through COM4 on PCs), while the other type connects to the parallel printer port. If the latter surprises you, then you know too much (the printer port is an output, after all). The standard PC parallel port can be used as a four-bit input port because of the four handshaking lines included on the standard Centronics interface used for the printer. It takes two "reads" to get an eight-bit word, but at the speeds these observations are made (one per second is overkill), that's not a problem.

An advantage of the computer is that it can store huge amounts of data in little space. For example, at one-byte per sample observation taken 24-hours a day, a standard 1.44 mbyte 3.5-inch floppy diskette will hold

nearly two weeks worth of data. And that data can be plotted on a laser or dot matrix printer in most cases. If the A/D that you select lacks a graphing program, then the file can be plotted on a package like Microsoft's Excel.

Just a note. If you store the date and time along with each observation, then three columns are needed for Excel to make sense of it. Write a BASIC routine that reads the data and reformats to include a comma between entry in the sequential file. The CHR\$(9) character will work nicely.

The system of Figures 1 through 3 are intended for use in the UHF band. Note that there are many different models of scanner and tunable receiver available that will tune the VHF/UHF range. Many such receivers operate in the 25 to 1,300 or 25 to 2,000 MHz range. Such receivers could easily be substituted for the system of Figure 1. The same integrator will work on those receivers as well.

A number of amateur radio astronomers use the microwave frequency 1,420 MHz (21 cm wavelength) for making observations. This frequency is the resonant frequency of hydrogen. Researchers interested in the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence (SETI) selected 1,420 MHz because it is theorized that intelligent, reasoning beings elsewhere in the universe would also know about the resonant frequency of the hydrogen atom. If they wanted to send messages to other civilizations, then they might think to transmit on or near this "universal calling frequency."

Television satellite dishes are sufficient for picking up 1,420 MHz signals (although a larger

dish would be nice). The receivers used for TV reception, however, may be too noisy for radio astronomy. Two issues are seen on those receivers, and both involve the noise level. First, the receivers typically do not have very good low noise amplifiers at the antenna feedpoint (the "LNA" is not "low" enough). Second, the bandwidth is too wide (6 MHz), so way too much noise is admitted to the system. Note, however, that a number of amateur radio preamplifiers and down-converters intended for the ham microwave bands can be modified for use at 1,420 MHz.

Figure 4 shows the basic equipment set-up for 1,420 MHz operation. At the antenna site several items are needed. First, of course, is the dish antenna. A 7 to 9 foot diameter standard TVRO (satellite TV) parabolic antenna is suffi-

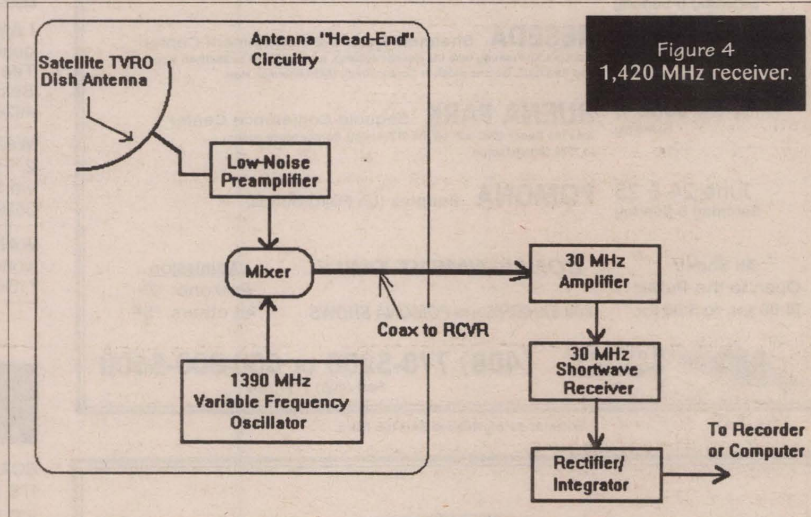


Figure 4  
1,420 MHz receiver.

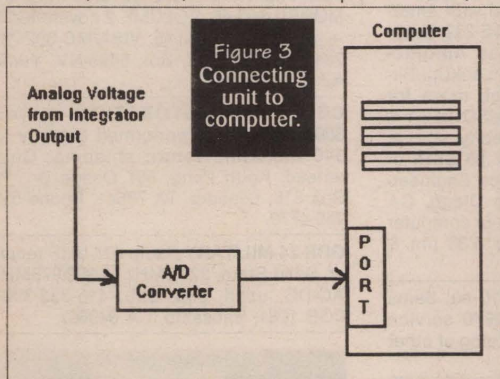


Figure 3  
Connecting unit to computer.

farads). Operating convenience requires three time constants, so C1, C2, and C3 are provided. All three capacitors should have a voltage rating of 35 WVDC or higher.

The rectified signal, at the output of BR1, will charge the capacitors to a voltage proportional to signal strength. This voltage is applied to potentiometer R1, which is used to set the level provided through the output to the recorder.

The "recorder" is not shown here, but can be any of several instruments. If you want to spend a fair amount of money, then look for a 0-to-1 milliampere or 0-to-5 milliampere paper strip chart recorder. But that's no longer necessary because computers can be pressed into service.

A computer doesn't normally like to see analog signals, such as those produced at the output of the integrator (Figure 2). However, if the computer is provided with an analog-to-digital converter (A/D), then it will digest the data that you collect. Figure 3 shows the connection of the integrator to a computer where an outboard

cient, but if you can obtain or build a larger diameter dish, then all the better. Some people have also been successful by stacking standard and ring Yagi beam antennas to form an array. The 1,420 MHz signal must be downconverted to 30 MHz. The step in the process is to use a very low noise amplifier (NF as small as possible, within the budget), which is mounted right at the antenna feedpoint. The output of the preamplifier is fed to the RF port on a mixer, where it is combined with the signal from a 1,390 MHz local oscillator (LO). The difference frequency (1,420-1,390) that appears at the output of the mixer is 30 MHz.

In order to provide some tuning around the operating frequency, it is common to use a voltage controlled oscillator (VCO) for the LO. Some designs use a varactor tuned crystal circuit, operating in the low-VHF region, which is then frequency multiplied up to 1,390 MHz. The output of the mixer is fed through coaxial cable to the receiver site. In some cases, a 30 MHz amplifier is used ahead of the receiver, although in some cases (especially where a good receiver is used), the signal is applied directly to the receiver.

## Conclusion

Amateur radio astronomy can be a very rewarding hobby, and need not be too terribly expensive (especially for a do-it-yourselfer). If you are interested in chasing this topic further, then you might want to contact the **Society of Amateur Radio Astronomers (SARA)**, at 247 North Linden Street, Massapequa, NY 11758. They publish *Radio Astronomy* monthly. NV



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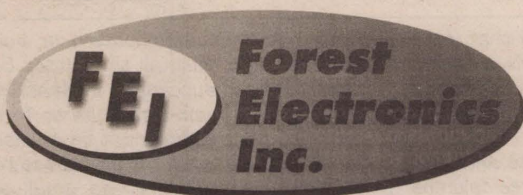
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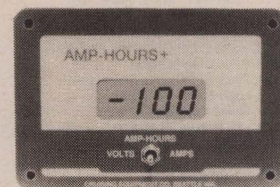
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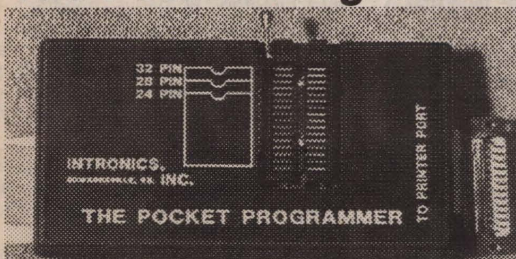
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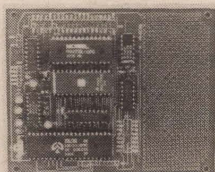
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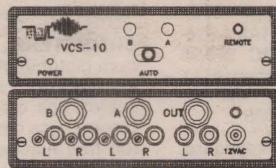


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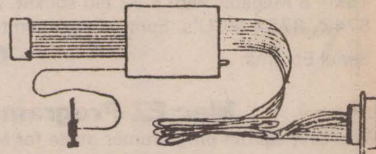
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**Domino-52 packs the equivalent of 8052, (E) EPROM and RAM chips — plus a 32-bit ADC and multistandard communication driver and receiver — into a rugged little block of epoxy.**

*I recently got my hands on one of the first production batch of Dominos, and this article summarizes what I found.*

## Hardware

Figure 1 is a block diagram of the Domino-52 hardware. Figure 2 is the pinout of its interface connector. The 80C52 processor is an Intel design, and a distant cousin of the Intel microprocessors that have been mainstays of PC-compatible computers since the beginning. Unlike the general-pur-

pose micros found in PCs, this 80C52 is factory-programmed to run a control-oriented flavor of the BASIC programming language.

The 80C52 has 65,535 bytes (64 KB) of memory, divided into 32 KB each of RAM and EEPROM. You may recall that EEPROM retains data even with the power turned off, but may be erased under the control of the processor. As we'll see in the software discussion, this makes storing and revising BASIC programs very convenient.

The 80C52 has a built-in serial port, through which it receives BASIC instructions, and to which it sends data, prompts, and error messages. Domino couples this port to the outside world through a versatile line-driver/line-receiver

arrangement that can be used for RS-232, -422, and -485 communication. Having these communication options built in is a subtly powerful feature, since it encourages you to choose the one that's right for your application. Table 1 summarizes the three standards.

With RS-422 and -485 capability built in, Domino is a natural for networking. Up to 32 Domino nodes (Dominodes?) could be distributed throughout a home, factory, or farm to monitor and control individual aspects of the operation. They'd report back to a central PC equipped with an RS-485 converter (\$50.00 and up), which would act as the nerve center for the system. The nodes could even be reprogrammed from the



## The Domino-52 Microcontroller at a Glance

**Power:**  
Requires regulated 5 Vdc at 15mA (plus loads on line driver, if applicable)

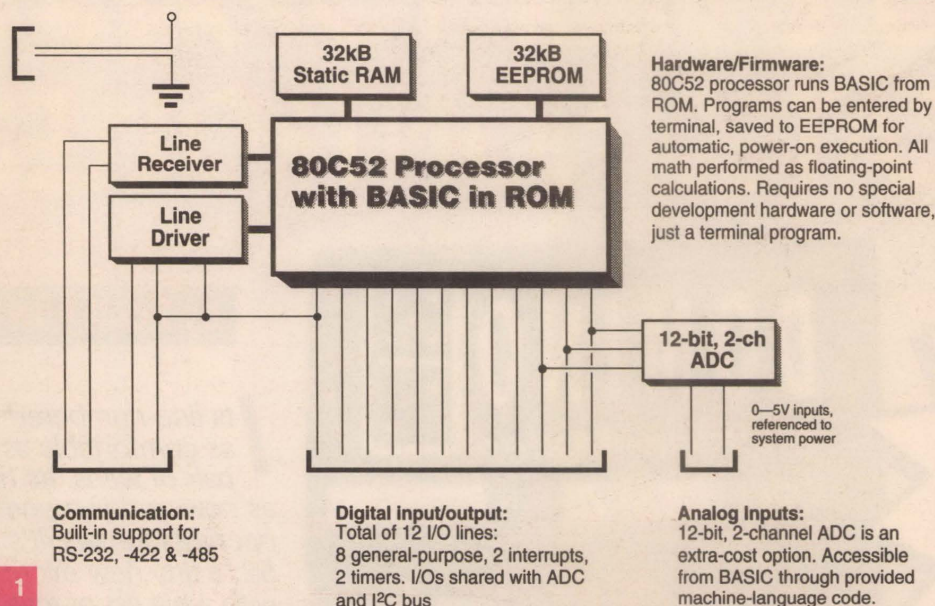


Figure 1

## Bottom view of Domino-52 header connector

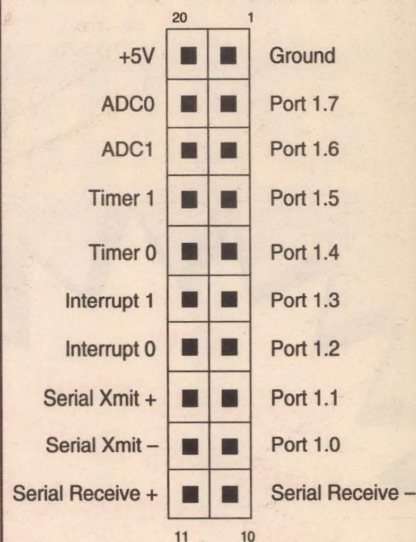


Figure 2

host PC.

Domino has 12 digital input/output lines (I/Os), including a general-purpose, 8-bit port. This The 80C52 directly reads and writes port, which is compatible with standard TTL logic levels.

Those of you who have experience with PIC and BASIC Stamp microcontrollers will find the electrical specs of these I/O lines to be Domino's least desirable aspect. PIC I/O lines can source 20 mA and sink 25 mA. With more modest loads, they can be counted upon to be within a few millivolts of +5 volts or ground when outputting 1 or 0, respectively. In their input mode, PIC I/Os leak less than 1 microamp (uA) into or out of external circuitry.

By contrast, the I/O lines of the 80C52 processor used in Domino typically source just 400 uA and sink 1.6 mA. Output voltages are not ideal either, with 2.4 volts representing a 1 and 0.45 volts a 0 (at typical current

ratings). The 80C52 has no input mode — you merely write 1s to the pins to be used as inputs, and the input voltage level overwhelms the 80C52's wimpy internal pull-up.

Although the 80C52's I/O characteristics are fully compatible with standard TTL logic, they aren't useful for lighting LEDs, or even driving some transistor switches. So interfacing Domino to many kinds of loads will require additional components such as buffers or latched high-current drivers. Fortunately, Domino's ability to communicate with peripheral chips serially through the inter-IC (I<sup>2</sup>C) bus makes interfacing such devices a snap. Table 2 lists a sampling of available peripherals.

Domino has four special-purpose I/O bits: two interrupts and two timers. Interrupts override the program in progress in order to take care of a high-priority task. Timers are hardware counters within the 80C52 that can be used to generate

or measure time delays.

In Domino, these capabilities work together to provide two valuable capabilities: pulse-width modulation (PWM) and frequency measurement. PWM can be filtered to generate variable voltages, used to control the duty cycle (and therefore speed) of a motor, or amplified and sent to a speaker to generate tones and music. Domino's PWM operates continuously as a background task; just set it and forget it.

The frequency-measurement function can be used to interpret data from devices that produce variable-frequency output, such as tachometers, humidity sensors, and voltage-to-frequency converters.

Domino uses standard 0.1" header stakes to connect to circuit boards, ribbon-cable connectors, or the optional development cradle.

The final hardware feature is an extra-cost option: an onboard LTC1298 analog-to-digital converter (ADC). The LTC1298 has 12 bits of resolution and two input channels. It is referenced to the controller's +5-volt supply. It can measure an input voltage to a precision of  $5 \text{ volts} / 2^{12} = 5/4096 = 1.22 \text{ millivolts}$ . ADCs are popular peripherals for microcontrollers, since they can measure any condition that can be converted to a voltage; light, temperature, position, battery condition, motor speed — you name it.

Table 1 Selection Guide for Serial Standards

Type	Description	Max Wire Length	Pros	Cons
RS-232	Ground-referenced signal: +3V to +15V: 0 -3V to -15V: 1 Need 3 wires for simultaneous 2-way communication.	50 feet	Compatible with virtually any type of PC or terminal.	Limited cable length. Vulnerable to noise. Only 1 sender and receiver.
RS-422	Differential signal pair (Tx+ and Tx-): Tx+ = 0, Tx- = 1: 0 Tx+ = 1, Tx- = 0: 1 Need 4 wires for simultaneous 2-way communication.	4000+ feet	Noise-resistant, long cables OK. Supports 1 sender and 10+ receivers.	Requires 4 wires. Not supported by all PCs.
RS-485	Same method as RS-422. Transmits and receives over 2 wires, but not simultaneously.	4000+ feet	Noise-resistant, long cables OK. Supports 32 senders and 32 receivers.	Requires software to tell senders when it's OK to talk.

A Sampling of I<sup>2</sup>C Bus Peripheral Chips

Table 2

Domino has built-in support for I<sup>2</sup>C components, which can be daisy-chained onto a specialized two-wire serial port. I<sup>2</sup>C peripherals have factory-assigned ID codes, which can usually be changed by writing to one or more address pins, so the bus acts like a small, high-speed network. Here is a sampling of I<sup>2</sup>C chips offered by Phillips Semiconductors, I<sup>2</sup>C's originator and biggest booster.

### Controllers and I/O Expanders

P82B715	I <sup>2</sup> C bus extender
PCF8574	Remote 8-bit I/O expander, 8 slave addresses
PCF8584	Parallel bus to I <sup>2</sup> C converter
SAA1300	I <sup>2</sup> C to 5 high-current (85 mA) outputs

### Computer Peripherals

PCF8573/83/93	Clock/calendar chips; '83 has 256 bytes RAM
PCF2114x/6x	LCD drivers
PCF8577C	LCD direct/duplex driver
SAA1064	4-digit LED driver
PCF8591	8-bit ADC and DAC

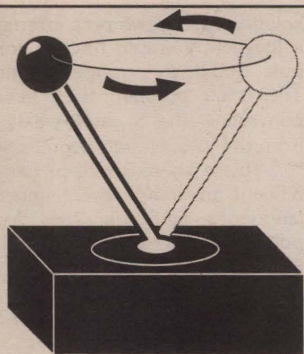
### Radio/Audio/Video

PCD3311C/12C	DTMF/modem/tone generators
TEA6100	FM/IF system for microprocessor-controlled radio
TSA6057/60	Radio tuning phase-lock loop frequency synthesizer
TEA6320/22/23/30	Sound fader control
TEA6360	5-band equalizer
SAA9051	Multistandard TV decoder
TDA46xx series	Picture enhancement and video processing
SAA5243E	Teletext

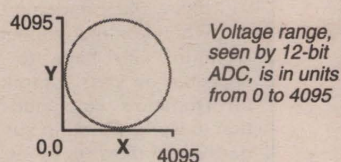
### Memory

PCA858x series	EEPROMs with 128 to 1024 bytes of storage (Other manufacturers offer I <sup>2</sup> C EEPROMs with up to 8KB of storage.)
----------------	---





Joysticks use a swiveling handle and two pots to track motions along two axes: left-right (X axis) and forward-back (Y axis). The joystick handle can move through a complete circle as shown at left. As the handle moves around the circular path, the resistances of the X- and Y-axis pots change. If the pots are wired as voltage dividers, a graph of voltage versus position would look like this:



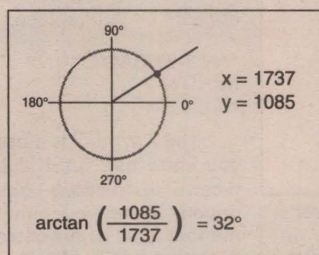
**Figure 3**

We can use the X-Y data provided by the pots to determine the joystick's angle on the circle. A little trigonometry will do the trick. First, we need to center the X-Y coordinate system on the circle by subtracting half the max value from each of the coordinates. Now we apply the formula:

$$\text{angle} = \arctan\left(\frac{y}{x}\right)$$

The result is the angle of the joystick.

**EXAMPLE**



Note: Two restrictions apply to this technique. (1) Programs that use it must catch cases in which  $x=0$  to avoid a divide-by-0 error. If  $x$  is 0 and  $y$  is positive, then the angle is  $90^\circ$ ; if  $x$  is 0 and  $y$  is negative, the angle is  $270^\circ$ . (2) Some calculators (and BASIC-52) work in radians, not degrees. Their results must be converted to degrees as shown in the program listing.

## Software

Although we discussed hardware first, it was only to set the stage for the software possibilities Domino-52 offers. And the neatest of those possibilities is rapid and painless application development through the use of Domino's built-in BASIC.

Domino runs BASIC-52, whose

instruction set appears in Table 3.

BASIC-52 is an interpreted language. If you're not familiar with the term "interpreter" and its counterpart, "compiler," let me illustrate. Suppose you're assigned to an embassy in a country whose language you don't speak. To communicate with the

A joystick, plus a little trigonometry, solves the weathervane problem

locals, you need someone to translate their strange gibberish.

When you go visiting, you take along an interpreter. He listens to a sentence of the foreign language, then interprets it for you in English. This is slower than normal conversation, but you can interact with the foreigners immediately.

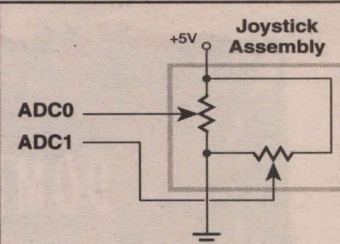
For written communication, translators read your foreign-language letters and compile English versions for you. You can read these compilations rapidly, without any help. The downside is that you can't interact directly with the writers.

That's the difference between interpreted and compiled programming languages. Let's apply the analogy to the 80C52 processor:

The BASIC-52 interpreter lets you type BASIC commands at the keyboard of a terminal (or PC running communication software, such as Procomm). Each time you press Return, BASIC-52 stores the instructions you

typed as abbreviated versions called "tokens." When you execute your program by typing RUN, BASIC-52 interprets the tokens and carries out the instructions they represent.

The advantage of interpreted BASIC-52 is that you can rapidly try



**Figure 4**

Hook up diagram for joystick/weathervane demo.

ideas, see the results, and make changes. The disadvantage is that each line of BASIC code you write must be interpreted while the program is executing. This makes interpreted BASIC-52 programs much slower than machine-language equivalents.

There are also compiled versions of BASIC-52. You submit your complete program to the compiler software, and it translates the BASIC instructions into clumps of machine-language code. To test your program, you download the compiled code to an 8052 controller. To make changes, you edit the original program, recompile it, and download again.

The advantage of compiled code is that it's generally much faster than interpreted code. The disadvantage is that the more cumbersome compile-and-download cycle works against beginners, who really need to test every small change they make in a program.

There's a final option in our stranger-in-a-strange-land scenario.

**Table 3**

## BASIC-52 Commands, Operators, and Instructions

ABS	absolute value
AND	logical AND
ASC	ASCII character to number
ATN	arctangent
BAUD	set printer-port serial rate
CALL	use a machine-language subroutine
CBY	read a byte from code memory
CHR	number to ASCII character
CLEAR	initialize memory
CLEARI	clear interrupts
CLEARs	clear stacks
CLOCKO	disable real-time clock
CLOCK1	enable real-time clock
CONT	continue after STOP
COS	cosine function
CR	carriage return
DATA	establish data table
DBY	read a byte from data memory
DIM	dimension an array
DO-WHILE	loop while condition is true
DO-UNTIL	loop until condition is true
END	terminate program
EXP	raise number to power
FOR-TO-STEP-NEX	loop specified number of times
FREE	report available memory
GET	retrieve a character from serial port
GOSUB-RETURN	use a subroutine
GOTO	jump to a line number
IDLE	wait for an interrupt
IE	read/write interrupt enable
IF-THEN-ELSE	perform an action if condition is true
INPUT	retrieve variable data from serial port
INT	integer conversion
IP	read/write interrupt priority
LD@	load data from memory location

LEN  
LET  
LIST(#,@)  
LOG  
MTOF  
NEW  
NOT  
NULL  
ON-GOSUB-RETURN

ON-GOTO  
ONERR  
ONEX1  
ONTIME  
OR  
PCON  
PGM

PHO. AND PH1

PI  
POP

PORT1

PRINT  
PROG

PUSH  
PWM  
RAM  
RCAP2  
READ  
REM  
RESTORE

RETI  
RND  
ROM

RROM  
RUN  
SGN  
SIN

get length of current program  
assign value to variable  
list current program  
natural log  
get maximum memory address  
erase current program  
logical inverse  
pad serial output with null data  
branch to one of several subroutines  
branch to one of several addresses  
specify error-handling routine  
specify interrupt-handling routine  
specify timer-interrupt routine  
logical OR  
serial data-rate register  
program an EPROM (not used w/Domino)  
(#,@) print data in hexadecimal format  
trig constant PI (3.14159...)  
take a value from stack and assign to variable  
retrieve or assign a value to the I/O port  
(#,@) print a value or string  
xsave to EPROM (Domino uses calls for EEPROM)  
put a value onto the stack  
output pulse-width modulation  
store program in RAM  
special-function register for timer  
retrieve value from DATA table  
begin a comment  
move pointer to beginning of DATA table  
return from interrupt handler  
compute random number  
switch to program stored in EEPROM  
run program from EEPROM  
run current program  
sign (positive/negative) of value  
sine function

SPC

SQR  
ST@  
STOP

STRING  
T2CON  
TAB

TAN  
TCON  
TIME  
TIMERO  
TIMER1  
TIMER2  
TMOD  
UIO

UI1

UOO

UOI

USING OR U.  
XBY

XFER

XOR

XTAL

## Manufacturer-Provided Calls

ADC

PWM

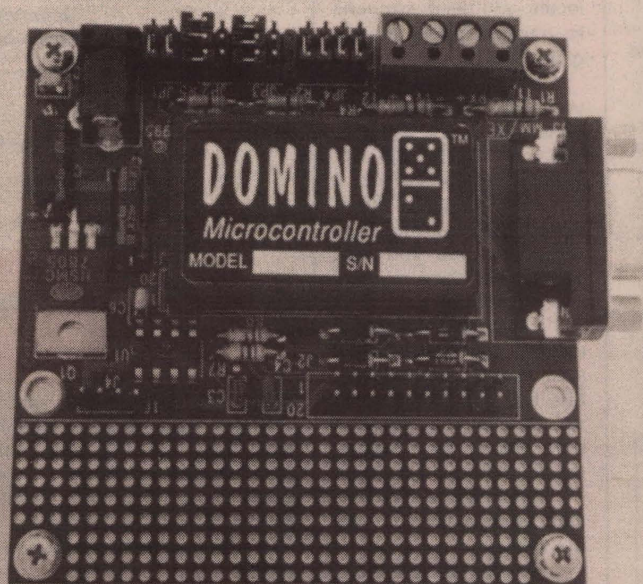
FREQ  
I2C

PROG1-4

insert space characters to format serial output  
square root  
store data to location temporarily halt program for debugging  
allocate memory for string storage  
timer-control register  
tab to next column to format serial output  
tangent  
timer-control register  
store/retrieve time  
store/retrieve timer 0  
store/retrieve timer 1  
store/retrieve timer 2  
timer-mode register  
switch to normal console input routines  
switch to custom console input routines  
switch to normal console output routines  
switch to custom console output routines  
set PRINT format  
store/retrieve byte from external memory  
move program from EEPROM to RAM  
logical exclusive-OR  
set crystal frequency

read 0- to 5-volt input on ADC0 or ADC1  
output one or two channels of continuous background PWM  
compute frequency of input signal  
communicate with inter-IC (I<sup>2</sup>C) bus peripherals  
save auto-executable programs to EEPROM





Domino-52 in its development cradle, which includes a power supply, configuration and I/O headers, and serial connector.

You could learn the foreign language yourself. In terms of programming, that would mean learning 8052 assembly language. Although this is more difficult than BASIC, it can pay dividends even if you stick with a BASIC-52 controller like Domino. You can write the majority of your program in BASIC, then code the time-critical sections in assembly language. To execute an assembled routine from BASIC-52, you just supply the instruction CALL with the starting address of routine.

CALLs also let you use manufacturer-provided routines that access Domino's special features, like I<sup>2</sup>C, frequency measurement, ADC, and

PWM. The manufacturer's routines are stored in Domino's 32K EEPROM,

so they can be replaced or modified at any time. Your Domino can be updated for the latest firmware features by downloading new code from a disk.

A quick summary: Domino has a built-in BASIC-52 interpreter, but it can also execute machine-language code generated by a compiler or assembler. Using machine-language routines from BASIC-52 is just a matter of inserting a CALL instruction.

Programming in BASIC-52 is a blast from the past. The language resembles those line-numbered dialects of BASIC that were built into the early "home computers" like the Commodores, Apple IIs, TI-99/4s, etc.

Although BASIC-52 lacks some of the prettier features of newer BASICs like QBASIC, it has everything you need to write decently structured programs: DO-WHILE, DO-UNTIL, and FOR/NEXT loops; ON-GOTO and ON-GOSUB for faking a SELECT-CASE instruction; and a data stack for passing parameters between subroutines. In fact, for the relatively small programs used in control applications, the primary differences between BASIC-52 and more modern counterparts boil down to convenience and aesthetics.

To program in BASIC-52, you connect Domino to a PC or other computer running terminal software. I used several different machines to talk to Domino: a desktop PC running Procomm, an old Radio Shack Model 100 laptop with built-in "TELCOM" software, and desktop and laptop Macintoshes running Z-Term, the communication program shipped with many Mac modems.

When you first connect power to Domino, you have to press the spacebar on your computer in order for Domino's auto-baud-rate detection to work. (Domino supports standard serial rates up to 19,200 baud.) After a moment, this message appears on your screen:

```
*MCS-51 BASIC V1.1*
READY
>
```

The > symbol is a prompt, letting you know that BASIC-52 is ready to receive instructions. You have two options here: you can type a line number and begin entering instructions that BASIC-52 will remember as part of your program, or you can type an instruction without a line number. The un-numbered instruction will be executed immediately. For example, typing

```
PRINT PI
```

followed by the return key causes BASIC-52 to respond with:

```
3.14159
>
```

Since Domino has no screen of its own, it directs PRINT instructions to the current "console" device, which is whatever is connected to the serial port. You can redirect this I/O to other devices, like LCDs and keypads, with routines supplied by Domino's manufacturer.

### Demo Application

Here's an application that demonstrates some of the strengths of Domino and BASIC-52. Suppose you want to precisely measure the pointing angle of a windvane as part of an electronic weather station. If you attach the vane to a potentiometer shaft, you're going to run into trouble. The pot rotates through about 270 degrees, then hits a mechanical stop. Even if you take the pot apart and remove the stops, the resistive element doesn't provide 360 degrees of travel.

Even if you used a 10-turn pot, you would eventually run into an end-of-travel problem. What to do? You could use a digital absolute-position encoder at a cost of \$100.00+. Or you could cobble together some arrangement of mechanical or magnetic switches. Yuck!

Figures 3 and 4 show a

solution. Using two pots arranged as a joystick, you can track a continuous, 360-degree range of motion. The main problem then becomes converting the x- and y-axis data from the joystick into degrees.

This is where BASIC-52 has a significant advantage over integer-only languages. BASIC-52 uses floating-point numbers, which are stored and processed internally in a scientific notation format consisting of a signed number and a fraction multiplied by 10 raised to a power, e.g., -1.5793 x 10<sup>3</sup>, meaning "-1579.3." BASIC-52 also includes the fundamental trig functions SIN, COS, TAN, and ATN (sine, cosine, tangent, and arctangent) in its instruction set. Although floating-point math isn't always essential in control applications, our demo would be nearly impossible without it.

### Endless Possibilities

I've only scratched the surface with this introduction to Domino and BASIC-52. The demo application emphasizes the advantage of Domino's floating-point math capabilities, but its most exciting applications are likely to be those in which many Dominos use the built-in communication features to establish networks of intelligent sensors and controllers. **NV**

### Sources

The Domino-52 controller evaluated for this article was the "A" model with built-in 12-bit analog-to-digital converter. It retails for \$99.00. The basic model (no internal ADC) is \$79.00. The development cradle is \$49.00.

A reference book, *BASIC-52 Programming* by Systronix Inc., is \$15.00. For more information on Domino-52, contact the manufacturer:

#### Micromint, Inc.

4 Park Street  
Vernon, CT 06066  
Phone (800) 635-3355

For additional insights into BASIC-52 applications, check out *The Microcontroller Idea Book* by Jan Axelson. This book contains circuits for homebrew 8052-BASIC controllers and peripheral circuits, as well as many programming examples. Available for \$31.95 plus \$3.00 shipping and handling from:

#### Lakeview Research

2209 Winnebago Street  
Madison, WI 53704  
Phone (608) 241-5824

For information on RS-422/485 conversion hardware suitable for use in PC-to-Domino networking applications, contact:

#### R.E. Smith

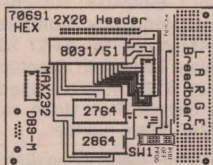
4311 Tylersville Road  
Hamilton, OH 45011  
Phone (513) 874-4796

### Program Listing: Converting Joystick Data into Pointing Angle

```
1  REM This program converts joystick data
2  REM into weathervane heading. Unlike
3  REM the example in Figure 3, 0 degrees
4  REM is due North (straight up)
5  REM Put ADC channels 0 & 1 onto stack
10  CALL 0F000H: CALL 0F008H
15  REM Move ADC data from stack into X, Y
20  POP X: POP Y
25  REM Center x/y coordinates on circle
30  LET X=X-2047: LET Y=Y-2047
35  REM Prevent division by zero
40  IF X <> 0 THEN GOTO 70
45  REM X=0: if Y>0, A=180; if Y<0, A = 0
50  IF Y < 0 THEN A = 180 ELSE A = 0
55  REM Go directly to printing A
60  GOTO 110
65  REM Compute the angle
70  LET A=ATN(Y/X)
75  REM Convert from radians to degrees
80  LET A=A*(90/(PI/2))
85  REM Change +/- angle to 0-360 heading
90  IF X>0 THEN A = 90-A:
100 IF X<0 THEN A = 270-A
105 REM Print the results to nearest 0.1 degree
110 PRINT USING(###.#),A," degrees"
115 REM Slow things down with a do-nothing loop
120 FOR I=1 TO 100: NEXT I
125 REM Do forever — or until cntl-C at terminal
130 GOTO 10
```



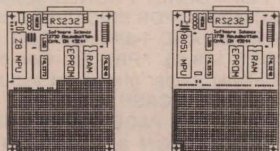
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**TANDY/RADIO SHACK** Model 1/3/4, 1000 Support. Monthly magazine, software, parts, repair. Computer News, POB 680, Casper, WY 82602. 307-265-6483.

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8-Conductor 50' (15.2 m) junction box cable 7881-P .....	\$24.95
8-Conductor 100' (30.5 m) junction box cable 7882-P .....	\$44.95
Modem Adapter 25-pin for communications port 7870-P .....	\$9.95
Car/Bat/RV Lighter Cord 7873-P .....	\$9.95
2400 baud modem for Weatherlink MEXT-P .....	\$39.95
Talking weather card - Call 313-994-9000 for demo IT1-P .....	\$474.95
Weatherlink language disks: Francaise, Deutsche, Italiana, Española 7863-P .....	\$24.95
Barometer, Indoor Hygrometer & Thermometer, Clock/Calendar RA888-P .....	\$99.95
Indoor-Outdoor Thermometer/Barometer & Hygrometer by OSI RA213-P .....	\$79.95
Thermometer with transparent calendar & clock display by OSI TC188-P .....	\$19.95
Thermometer with AM/FM clock radio by Oregon Scientific CB388-P .....	\$39.95
Indoor-Outdoor Thermometer with Jumbo Display by OSI JB888EX-P .....	\$24.95

**Bearcat® 9000XLT-P Radio Scanner**  
Mfg. suggested list price \$769.95/CE Special \$374.95  
500 Channels • 20 banks • Alpha numeric display  
Turbo Scan • VFO Control • 10 Priority channels  
Auto Store • Auto Recording • Reception counter  
Frequency step resolution 5, 12.5 & 25 KHz.  
Size: 10-1/2" Wide x 7-1/2" Deep x 3-3/8" High  
Frequency Coverage:

25,000-549,995 MHz., 760,000-823,995 MHz.,  
849,0125-868,995 MHz., 894,0125-1,300,000 MHz.  
The new Bearcat 9000XLT gives you pure scanning satisfaction with amazing features like TurboSearch™ to search VHF channels at 300 steps per second. This base and mobile scanner is ideal for surveillance professionals because it has a selectable attenuator to help eliminate annoying intermodulation from adjacent frequencies in highly populated areas and selectable AM, Wide FM and Narrow FM modes that allow you to change the default receiving mode of the BC9000XLT. Other features include **Auto Store** - Automatically stores all active frequencies within the specified bank(s). **Auto Recording** - This feature lets you record channel activity from the scanner onto a tape recorder. **Hi-Cut filter** to help eliminate unwanted static noise. You can even get an optional **CTCSS Tone Board** (Continuous Tone Control Squelch System) which allows the squelch to be broken during scanning only when a correct CTCSS tone is received. For maximum scanning enjoyment, order the following optional accessories: **PS001** Cigarette lighter power cord for temporary operation from your vehicle's cigarette lighter \$14.95; **PS002** DC power cord - enables permanent operation from your vehicle's fuse box \$14.95; **MB001** Mobile mounting bracket \$14.95; **BC005** CTCSS Tone Board \$54.95; **EX711** External speaker with mounting bracket & 10 feet of cable with plug attached \$19.95. The BC9000XLT comes with AC adapter, telescopic antenna, owner's manual and one year limited warranty from Uniden.

## CB/GMRS Radios

The new Maxon GMRS 210+ transceiver is a PLL synthesized 10 channel radio on General Mobile Radio Service frequencies. Two repeater channels are programmable and one channel (462.675 MHz) is set aside for emergency and safety communications. The seven remaining interstitial frequencies 462.5625, 462.5875, 462.6125, 462.6375, 462.6625, 462.6875 & 462.7125 MHz are all-purpose GMRS radio channels. 2 watts of RF power for exceptional transmitting range. Up to 5 watts when used with the supplied 12 volt vehicular DC power cord. CTCSS built-in. Includes 450mAh Ni-cad rechargeable battery pack, AC/DC wall battery charger, owner's manual, FCC license application, belt clip, antenna. Order today.  
Maxon GMRS210+3-P GMRS transceiver \$199.95  
Cobra 148FGTL-P CB with freq. counter \$209.95  
Cobra 29LTDWX-P CB/Weather Alert .... \$114.95  
Cobra HH40-P CB 40 ch. Handheld ..... \$99.95  
Ranger RC12950-P 25 watt 10 meter ..... \$239.95  
Uniden GMRI100-P GMRS Handheld ..... \$144.95  
Uniden WASHINGTON-P SSB CB Base ... \$189.95  
Uniden GRANTXL-P SSB CB Mobile ..... \$139.95  
Uniden PRO538W-P CB & Weather ..... \$59.95



## Digital Barometer

The Oregon Scientific B888-P forecasting barometer displays rising, falling and constant barometric trends. Other features include 6-line advanced liquid crystal display, weather forecast shows sunny, cloudy, slightly cloudy or rainy, "C" or "F" selectable, indoor relative humidity, indoor temperature, barometric pressure bar graph shows trend for past 24 hours, clock/calendar/alarm.

**Special \$99.95**

## VHF Transceiver

**RELM® WHS150-P Transceiver**  
Mfg. suggested list price \$481.67/CE price \$339.95  
Severe weather spotters depend on the RELM WHS150 transceiver for direct two-way communications with their police or fire department, civil defense agency or ham radio repeater. The WHS150 is our most popular programmable five watt, 16 channel handheld transceiver that has built-in CTCSS, which may be programmed for any 39 standard EIA tones. Frequency range 148,000 to 174,000 MHz. Will also work 144,000-148,000 MHz with slightly reduced performance. The full function, DTMF compatible keypad also allows for DTMF Encode/Decode and programmable ARI. Weighing only 15.5 oz., it features dealer programmable synthesized frequencies either simplex or half duplex in both 5.0 and 6.25 KHz increments. Other features include scan list, priority channel, selectable scan delay, selectable 5 watt/1 watt power levels, liquid crystal display, line-out timer and much more. When you order the WHS150 from Communications Electronics Inc., you'll get a complete package deal including antenna, battery, belt clip and user operating instructions. Other accessories are available. A leather carrying case with pinned belt part #LCWBS is \$49.95; rapid charge battery charger, part #RP007 is \$59.95. The radio technician maintaining your radio system must obtain programming instructions part #P1150 for \$18.00 to activate this radio. FCC license required for United States operation.

## Other neat stuff

Soundtronic AC101-P digital portable shortwave receiver - 20 memory .....	\$39.95
Grundig Yaesu Boy 400-P digital portable shortwave receiver - 40 memory presets .....	\$179.95
Grundig Yaesu Boy 250-P digital portable shortwave receiver .....	\$109.95
Sangean AT800P-P portable 20 memory shortwave receiver .....	\$69.95
Sangean AT800AP-P portable shortwave w/AC adapter - 9 memory presets .....	\$129.95
Sangean AT800SP-P portable 45 memory shortwave receiver with cassette recorder .....	\$149.95
Sangean AT818CP-P portable shortwave receiver with cassette recorder .....	\$209.95
Uniden DP2950P-P 900 MHz 1 or 2 line cordless phone .....	\$289.95
Bogen F2110-P Digital Fax/Fax-on-demand system & answering machine .....	\$399.95
Bogen F2100-P memory expansion module for Fax Friday/Up to 36 minutes .....	\$99.95
Bogen F2000-P Digital two-line advanced voice mail system & answering machine .....	\$279.95
Bogen F8001P-P memory expansion module, doubles recording time to 36 minutes .....	\$79.95
FANS P1619-P 60 name/number caller ID, unwanted call blocker, automatic paging .....	\$149.95
SHI D200-P Router name/number caller ID, call reject, forward to machine .....	\$89.95
ICOM GP22-P handheld global positioning system (GPS) .....	\$494.95
WX70-P weather radio with National Weather Service storm alert .....	\$39.95
RELM WHS150P VHF handheld 5 watt, 16 channel transceiver .....	\$339.95
RELM WHS600P VHF 25 watt, 16 channel synthesized transceiver .....	\$289.95
Ranger RC2950P 25 watt 10 meter ham radio transceiver .....	\$239.95
Cobra KDL125W-P Safety Alert receiver & Super Wideband laser/radar detector .....	\$119.95
Uniden XL10900SW-P Super Wideband Laser/Radar Detector - VIG undetectable .....	\$139.95
ME2P Map Expert CD Rom for IBM PC by Delorme Mapping .....	\$299.95
AT17-P VHF scanner/VHF transmitting antenna PL259 connector .....	\$29.95
ANTHMP-P magnet mount scanner antenna w/ BNC connector .....	\$29.95
ANTHMPOT-P magnet mount scanner antenna w/Motorola plug .....	\$29.95
ANTHMP-LP magnet mount scanner antenna with PL259 connector .....	\$29.95
ANTHGRN-P glass mount scanner antenna with BNC connector .....	\$29.95
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It's easy to order from us. **Mail orders to:** Communications Electronics Inc., Emergency Operations Center, P.O. Box 1045, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106 U.S.A. Add \$15.00 per radio or telephone product for U.S. ground shipping and handling in the continental U.S. unless otherwise stated. Add \$10.00 shipping for all accessories and publications. Add \$10.00 shipping per antenna. For Canada, Puerto Rico, Hawaii, Alaska, P.O. Box, or APO/FPO delivery, shipping charges are two times continental U.S. rates. Michigan residents add state sales tax. No COD's. No returns or exchanges after 31 days. 10% surcharge for net 10 billing to qualified accounts. All sales are subject to availability, acceptance and verification. Prices, terms and specifications are subject to change without notice. We welcome your Discover, Visa, American Express or MasterCard. Call 1-800-USA-SCAN to order toll-free. Call 313-996-8888 if outside the U.S.A. FAX anytime, dial 313-663-8888. For technical assistance to solve your communications problem, call the Communications Electronics technical support hotline for \$2.00 per minute at 1-900-555-SCAN. Scanner Distribution Center and CEI logos are trademarks of Communications Electronics Inc. Sale dates 5/95/95 4/30/95 4/30/95 Copyright © 1995 Communications Electronics Inc.

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**HEWLETT PACKARD** Plotters. HP 7475A \$199.95, HP 7550A \$299.95. Both do up to 11x17 Drawings, and work with all popular CAD and graphics programs. Comes with pens too! Stewart & Associates. 314-240-6500.

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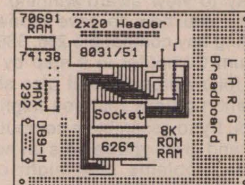
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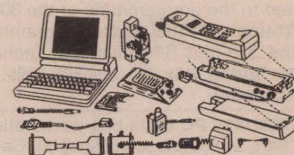


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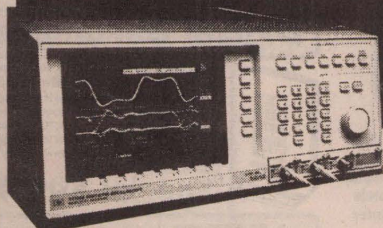
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**Hewlett-Packard 54100A Digitizing Oscilloscope**

1 GHz bw, 350 ps rise time, 100 ps/div time base, 40 ms/sec maximum digitizing rate, pre-trigger viewing, logic triggering, includes 3 HP 54002A 50Ω BNC input pods.

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**Hewlett-Packard 1725A Oscilloscope**

275 MHz bw, 10 mV/div to 5 V/div vertical deflection factor, 10 nS max sweep rate, expandable to 1 nS/div. Special includes 2 new Probe Master probes.

**\$725.00**

**Hewlett-Packard 8569B Spectrum Analyzer**

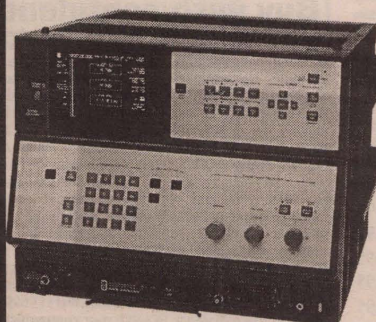
.01 to 22 GHz, can be extended to 115 GHz using external mixers (not supplied). Internal preselection, 1.7 to 22 GHz, wide resolution range 100 Hz to 3 MHz, simple three knob operation.

**\$9500.00**

**Wandel & Goltermann TSA-1 Transmission System Analyzer**

Frequency range 100 Hz to 180 MHz, spectrum analysis, selective level, demodulation and phase jitter.

**\$2250.00**



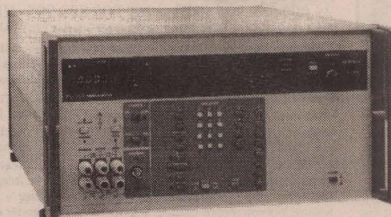
Above unit with Network Analyzer.

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Multifunction calibrator for analog and digital multimeters to 4 1/2 digits, direct or alternating voltage or current plus resistance. Has options 03, 05.

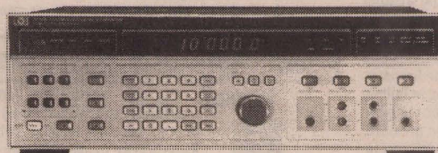
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This level generator is an excellent precision source from 10 Hz to 20.9 MHz, frequency resolution of .001 Hz, level accuracy within .15 dB over full range, AM and phase modulation. Fully programmable over HP-IB, harmonics down more than 5 dB.

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50 kHz to 21 GHz, 80 dB dynamic range, amplitude comparison in 0.25 dB steps. Options 01, 02, & 03.

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Frequency range, .02 Hz to 25.5 kHz, dual-channel, band selectable analysis for 0.02 Hz resolution, sensitivity -120 dBV, digital trace storage. Option 01.

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**Tektronix 492 Spectrum Analyzer**

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100 pF to 1.11μF in steps of 100 pF. Value can be adjusted on the lower 4 decades and will be known to an accuracy of ±0.01% accuracy.

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Frequency range is 10 MHz to 18 GHz, high sensitivity (-125 dBm), 100 Hz resolution.

**\$900.00 Special**



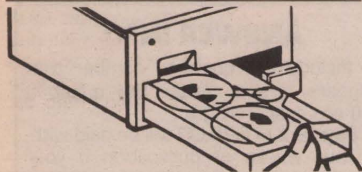
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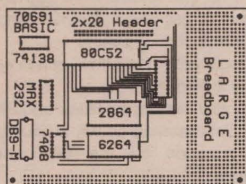


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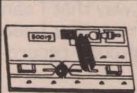
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INCLUDES  
2 AAA Batteries  
Pen Size: 5 1/2" x 1/2"

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NEW LOW PRICE  
\$59.95**



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We haven't seen a smaller phone transmitter than the MMPT2 kit. Powered by the phone, it requires no

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**MMPT2 \$29.95**



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Do you need an attention getter, warning light, or flashing light for model

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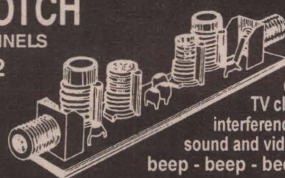
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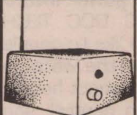


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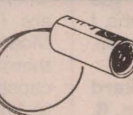
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# Questions & Answers

# TECH FORUM

This is a READER TO READER Column. All questions AND answers will be provided by *Nuts & Volts* readers and are intended to promote the exchange of ideas and provide assistance for solving problems of a technical nature. All questions submitted are subject to editing and will be published on a space available basis if deemed suitable to the publisher. All answers are submitted by readers and **NO GUARANTEES WHATSOEVER** are made by the publisher. The implementation of any answer printed in this column may require varying degrees of technical experience and should only be attempted by qualified individuals. Always use common sense and good judgement!

## QUESTIONS

I would like to know how I can obtain a hard drive defect Media table with diagnostic software when the original Media Track that comes with the hard drive is removed. I have several hard drives without the media track list. Please let me know.

**5951** **Monroe D. Watkins**  
Sacramento, CA

I have a 286 16MHz motherboard with a built-in IDE hard drive, floppy, printer, and serial controllers. It has two eight-switch DIPs, I have no documentation on how to set these switch's, any information on how to set these switch's and their functions would be very helpful.

**5952** **Gregg Luther**  
West Allis, WI

I'm looking for a simple circuit to fire a flash assy randomly, to be used as a lightning simulator for a Halloween display or a circuit that will take one side of a stereo to be used as a trigger. The other side would be a delay with thunder. This would be a nice addition to last Halloween's project which I am going to build this year.

**5953** **Kevin Kosobucki**  
Sayreville, NJ

Wanted: wiring diagram and parts list for a speed control, to replace the one on a trolling motor. It should be a foot control, either in the positive or negative lead. Capable of 20-25 amp.

**5954** **Virgil Gochee**  
Shaddona, IL

My Duofone TAD-220 telephone answering system (Radio Shack 43-318) cannot find messages it has logged. Radio Shack Repair Service says that they cannot make repairs because the required replacement component, IC 502 (TMS 1024), no longer exists. What do I do now?

**5955** **R.J. Matusik**  
Malden, MA

Re: switching power supplies as used in computers. Many are available in salvage, cheap. Output voltages are mostly incompatible with Radio amateur requirements. Surely the output circuitry could be modified to other voltages. I have been unable to find schematics. Perhaps someone knows where these can be found.

**5956** **Elmo Black**  
Oklahoma City, OK

Can anyone tell me how I can adapt my Corrotor II Plus to receive the circular polarization or intelstat satellites, and where I can get a PAL to

NTSC converter cheaply?

**5957** **Gary Gretzinger**  
Salem, OR

I am trying to use a RCI 2950 10m radio in my 1989 Lincoln Towncar with a Wilson 1000 trunk mount antenna Sur 1.1701. I must run the radio with the receiver turned all the way off to the left in order not to get the computerized dash computer noise in the radio. I don't have a low receiver and very low volume.

**5958** **Earl Hawkins**  
Oklahoma City, OK

I have a NEC PC 8023A-C 9-pin dot matrix printer that works just fine with Geoworks software and also most software written for DOS. I need a print driver or some way to make this printer work (print out) from Windows 3.1 software!

**5959** **Alfred Gavenas**  
San Jose, CA

I am interested in building an inverter for 12VDC to 120VAC. I have the schematics, but would like to use two large transformers, but have no way of knowing the internal wiring. They are: (1) ITT North 6124808; Burroughs 24712788. (2) ITT North 6124807; Burroughs 24718124.

**59510** **Joe Dickerson**  
Jasper, TX

I'd like to monitor a number of the functions of my car using my laptop computer. (I think that speed, tachometer (RPM), oil pressure, coolant temp., volts & amps would do it.) Seems to me that I could access the car's computer too — for better control of service & maint. Which computer port & how? If you could give me the circuit/schematic, I can make it, dealer's don't have this, and they'd want thousands.

**59511** **Chris Rickard**  
Dixon, IL

A SW. REG. PS rated @ 5VDC, 8A & 12VDC, 4A requires a min load of 10%. When my computer sys is SW off temporarily (computer or disk drive reset) the load goes below 10% causing loss or regulated voltage. How can zener diodes be used to clamp this voltage at 5.6VDC and 13VDC? Is there a simpler way?

**59512** **D.L. McCree**  
Pasadena, MD

I own a pair of Motorola HT440s. These 5 watt handhelds utilize a 12.5 volt nicad battery pack. Motorola wants a small fortune for a cigarette lighter adapter that will run the radios from 13.8 volts. Can I simply connect 13.8 volts from the vehicle system to these radios without causing damage?

(Charging voltage is 17-22 VDC for the battery packs.)

**59513** **Steven Kaye**  
San Diego, CA

I own a Sony minidisc player/recorder Model MDS-101 serial number 800868. It utilizes a copy protection system called Serial Copy Management System (SCMS). The player will not permit a digital recording from a pre-recorded minidisc. It will only permit one copy from a digitally written blank disc. No more sequential digital copies may be made from the copied disc. My dilemma is that I need to record mixes digitally and want to make copies, but I would have to go through the same motions for each identical disc. Is there a way that I can disable the SCMS system so that I can have unrestricted digital copy recording ability?

**59514** **Gregg Stansbery**  
Jonesboro, GA

I would like to know of any sources of information and parts, etc., for Heathkit robots and robots in general. One of my HEROs has a power supply problem and the other is missing the power supply and a few other boards.

**59515** **Fred H. Ennenga**  
Mankato, MN

I need an interface cable and software to test a TRC-6000 coin changer from Mars Electronics International, by using an IBM PC or compatible, and if possible to test all TRC-Series changer and bill acceptors.

**59516** **Rene Rodriguez**  
Orlando, FL

I have two identical power inverters (12VDC to 110AC DOC TECH Model DAC-201). I would like to couple them together for double the wattage capability. May I simply connect hotline to hotline and neutral to neutral, and wire an outlet to this configuration or is some kind of external circuit required?

**59517** **Bill Green**  
Albany, NY

Does anyone have any technical information on a Maxoplix WORM. Write once, read many, optical drive, Maxtor Model, RXT-8005.

**59518** **Paul Garrett**  
Detroit, MI

Is it possible to link together my car phone to a particular line in the telephone system at my office. If so, please give details and gear suppliers. I'm looking for an alternative to call-forwarding on that office line.

**59519** **Gerry LaBorde**  
Gretna, LA

## ANSWER INFO

- Include the question number that appears directly below the question you are responding to.
- Payment of \$25.00 will be paid within four weeks of publication if your answer is printed.
- Only one answer per question will be printed.
- If you do not want your name, address, or phone number available to the reader please so indicate or it will be assumed that you have no objection.
- In the event that more than one person submits the same solution, the choice will be made at the discretion of the publisher.
- Due to space limitations, we can not reprint the original questions with the answer. The question number and the issue it appeared in are printed above the answer.

## QUESTION INFO

### TO BE CONSIDERED FOR PUBLICATION

All questions should relate to one or more of the following:

- 1) Circuit Design
- 2) Electronic Theory
- 3) Problem Solving
- 4) Other Similar Topics

### INFORMATION/RESTRICTIONS

- No questions will be accepted that offer equipment for sale or equipment wanted to buy.
- Selected questions will be printed one time on a space available basis.
- Questions may be subject to editing.

### HELPFUL HINTS

- Be brief but include all pertinent information. If no one knows what you're asking, you won't get any response (and we probably won't print it either).
- Write legibly (or type). If we can't read it, we'll throw it away.
- Include your Name, Address and Phone Number. Only your name will be published with the question, but we may need to contact you.

1) I purchased a dozen UNISYS/SPERRY 286-8 computers, type 3137-00. These units have 2 DIP switches (an 8 and a 4 position) to provide set-up information to the motherboard similar to those used on XTs I would like to get a list of what each switch is for on these units.

2) I use Borland's "READ.COM" to display 132 column text files on my 386SX after setting the display to MODE 55 (my VGA Board has 512K RAM). On all of the 286 machines I have tried, the top 2/3 of the display changes color, but no text is displayed.



Is my problem being caused by the ROM Bios not supporting all VGA modes or should I look for another cause?

59520

Bob Bayliss  
Viola, WI

I have a dead flyback transformer in the monitor of a Cordata Model CS-40 computer. It has a Serial Number 2GTAD09437, and was manufactured in Korea in Aug. '87. The information shown on the original flyback transformer is TMF-2500A; Totoku; TMF-2523; T-CF1319 (or) T-CFB19. The CRT is an Orion, R12DPGB-DH.

The flyback circuit has a very strong similarity to the 12 inch, Apple II Monitor; Model A2M2010. I have searched the usual sources such as SAMs Photofact, Philips ECG, NEC, etc., and have had no success. I did purchase a TMF-2500B, but it does not have the correct connections. Any assistance in locating a replacement flyback transformer would be greatly appreciated.

59521

Ronald D. Clevon  
Huntertown, IN

I am building an electronic device which uses a Bar Code Laser scanner which reads a bar code and enters the value into my PC computer. I need a schematic for a "wedge-controller," which will decode the output of the laser scanner. Commercial wedges are available to do this, but I want to use a special bar code that would not be readable on a commercial wedge. I have not been able to see a circuit diagram for a wedge in any circuit books and would like to find such a circuit and theory of operation somewhere.

59522

Roger A. Newlander  
Los Altos, CA

## ANSWERS

### ANSWER TO #49515 - APRIL 1995

Marianne Randak describes a fairly typical problem in attempting to upgrade her XT-clone computer by installing new high-density 3.5" and 5.25" floppy drives. She reports that her system is unable to properly access the drives and seeks a solution.

The solution is unfortunate because it does not make economic sense. The problem here is that Ms. Randak is hoping to get her 8088-based XT computer to recognize and communicate with hardware that had not even been invented when her computer was manufactured. She is correct in assuming that the problem lies within her machine's BIOS — a set of hard-coded instructions controlling the basic input/output functions of the system's motherboard. High-density floppy drives came along after the design of a 16-bit ISA bus.

With XT machines, the BIOS is simply incapable of instructing the high-density drives to function. The system designers never anticipated connection of any drive other than the standard 360K 5.25" floppy drive of the time.

There are several companies that sell replacement BIOS EPROM chips for older computers — such as American Megatrends, Inc. at 404-

263-8181 — and I believe there is an "intelligent" floppy controller card that can support the current type of drive in an old machine, probably with some help from a software driver loaded during the boot process. I attempted to locate a source for such a controller in several catalogues, but without success. Perhaps there isn't such an animal. In any case, the real downside to these solutions is that they cost more than the computer itself is worth.

IBM XT computers are often for sale at hamfests and electronic swap meets. At the LARK-sponsored swap meets in Livermore, CA, an XT rarely fetches more than \$75.00 and that includes a monitor. Although I advocate upgrading and reusing hardware to its fullest, in the case of XT systems, it does not make economic sense.

The two new drives Ms. Randak would like to add to her XT probably cost her about \$80.00. That same \$80.00 would have bought her a new motherboard with an 80386DX-40 CPU. With new motherboards and CPUs costing so little and offering such a drastic increase in compatibility and performance, it's almost masochistic to spend money upgrading an XT.

Since we've upgraded a number of 80386-based systems in our office, we'd be happy to give Ms. Randak one of the motherboards we've outgrown.

Damien Thorn  
Stockton, CA

### ANSWER TO #29512 - FEB. 1995

Use a high speed counter to reduce the frequency from 90 MHz to 30 MHz. Design a circuit to generate pulses at count zero, 10 Meg count, and 20 Meg count. This circuit must revert to count zero after counting 29,999,999. Design three phase locked generators. One synchronized to pulses generated at count zeros, one to pulses generated at count 10 Meg and one more for pulses generated at 20 Meg count.

Eiichi Takarada  
Rockford, IL

### ANSWER TO #4956 - APRIL 1995

You can use either RF or IR to control your stereo or other equipment. Holtek transmitter and receiver chips are popular in these applications, and are available from **DIGI-KEY (800) 344-4539**. They carry the chips and data book, and also Holtek's ready-made RF transmitter and receiver boards.

*Circuit Cellar* INK has had several articles on RF and IR control. The May '94 issue shows both RF and IR using the Holtek chips. The RF version uses a Ming transmitter and receiver which can be found in several N&V ads. An RF controller would have the advantage of working through walls!

The *Cellar's* June/July '91 issue describes an IR transceiver with RS232 input/output for linking two computers or controllers together. This would have the advantage of allowing an unlimited number of control functions to be used VS the fixed number of codes with the Holtek chips, and could allow two-way communications between the remote and the stereo control.

The DEC '94 *Electronics Now* has

a construction article on an IR receiver and "trainer" to teach a commercial LEARNING controller to talk to the receiver. Both the receiver and trainer boards use Holtek chips.

*Electronics Now* may be available at your library. **Circuit Cellar** carries back issues, and may be reached at (203) 875-2751. If you have problems locating the issue, drop me a line on C\$ERVE, or regular mail.

Gary Drummond  
71477,2037  
2206 N 121st St.  
Omaha, NE 68164

### ANSWER TO #49511 - APRIL 1995

The problem Mr. Carter describes with his BOCA modem working fine under DOS and Windows NT, but not functioning under Microsoft's Windows 3.1 sounds like a fairly classic problem that arises with Windows.

Because of space limitations we'll avoid the technical discussion of exactly how serial communication devices exchange data with the PC's internal bus. It will suffice to say that each COM port has two characteristics that identify it to the system: a "base address" and an "IRQ" (interrupt request line).

The base address is the location in a standard "memory map" where data intended for the port can be sent, and data expected from the port can be received. The IRQ line is essentially used to "interrupt" the system's CPU and let it know that it needs attention. The PC continually scans the IRQ lines in order to determine what hardware device requires processor time.

In a standard AT-class computer, the standard base address (in hex) and IRQ line for the four serial ports are as follows:

Port	Base Address	IRQ
COM 1	03f8	4
COM 2	02f8	3
COM 3	03E8	4
COM 4	0238	3

The controller card within most PCs can be set to use any one of these base addresses, and often the IRQ can be set, as well. Internal modems have jumpers or DIP switches to allow one to set the base address and IRQ, thus causing it to show up as a particular COM port to the hardware and your communications program.

The frustrating thing about Windows 3.1 is that it will only recognize serial ports in sequence. This means that if COM 1 and COM 2 are present in your system, and you set your modem to COM 4, Windows will either report it as COM 3 or fail to see the device at all. Unfortunately, with many computers shipping with a COM 1 and a COM 2 port pre-configured, this means you would need to set your modem to COM 3 in order to have it recognized by Windows.

This would pose no problem except that mice are usually attached to COM 1. Because COM 1 and COM 3 share in IRQ line, the mouse and modem will interfere with each other. The PC is unable to tell which of the two devices is requesting an interrupt. Because of this contention, it makes perfect sense to configure the modem as COM 4 and let it share IRQ 3 with COM 2, making sure nothing is attached to COM 2. This works fine under DOS, but Windows becomes

unhappy.

There are ways of fooling Windows 3.1 into believing that a COM port exists, even though there is no device physically present, but these types of software shims and .ini file tweaking do not always provide reliable results.

The best method of solving the problem is to identify the current COM ports in the system, and set the modem to the next available port address. When doing so, check the list above and make sure your mouse is not plugged into the port that shares in IRQ with the port you have just selected for the modem.

Resolving IRQ conflicts sounds complicated at first, but it's really fairly simple. Understanding the basics of port addresses and IRQs can be mandatory for anyone adding peripherals such as a sound card or CD-ROM drive. It's the odd software quirks that can get you, much like this oddity with Windows 3.1.

Damien Thorn  
Stockton, CA

### ANSWER TO #4954 - APRIL 1995

By far, the best way to get "on the air" is with the wireless transmitter kit (#K-488) available from **Antique Electronic Supply, 6221 S. Maple Ave., Tempe, AZ 85283, 1-800-706-6789**. The kit, which costs \$19.95 is easy to build and is modeled after a 1939 Zenith "wireless record player."

The next best way would be to buy Radio Shack's Engineers' Mini-Notebook titled *Communications Projects*. On page 45 there is an excellent schematic of a transistor AM transmitter that uses common parts, and is simple to construct. The Radio Shack part number for the booklet is 276-5015A.

Finally, as you mentioned, radio servicemen had quite commonly used AM signal generators at their workbench. Most of these had an input for a high level audio source, such as a tape recorder line output. These signal generators are widely available at hamfests, and through the used test equipment classifieds in *Nuts & Volts*. The downside to using a test signal generator is that its output is tiny, and even with a good antenna, the signal would have trouble making it across a large room.

One of these suggestions should get you on the air in no time.

Robert P. Kramer  
Aurora, IL

### ANSWER TO #39510 - MARCH 1995

Compared to other two meter transceivers of its day, the TR-33C is easier to modify for frequency synthesizer operation, because only the receiver LO frequency must be generated.

I designed a synthesizer circuit for this transceiver that I use to this day. It fits into a 5-1/2 x 3 x 1-1/4 inch aluminum box and connects to the transceiver with a single coax cable that carries DC power in and local oscillator signal out.

Complete construction details for this project are in an article I wrote for the April 1978 issue of *73 Magazine*, page 72. It should be noted that the

Continued on page 125



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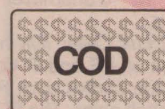


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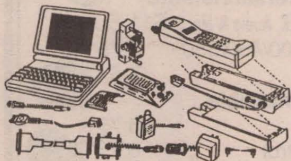
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1000uF - 50V	.30	330uF - 63V	.14
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# Understanding and Using Multiplexed LED Displays

by Thomas Henry

In order to provide information to the user, a digital or microprocessor-based circuit must employ an output device of some sort. This could be as simple as a single light bulb, or as complex as a color video monitor. Somewhere in between is the well-known seven-segment LED display. Such a device is excellent for representing numeric data. Of course, several of these can be grouped side-by-side to depict numbers composed of more than one digit. This article explains a convenient method for interfacing a

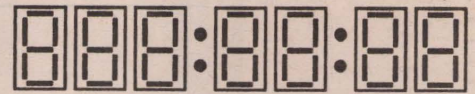
multi-digit LED display to a microprocessor circuit.

Seven-segment LED displays come in two basic varieties: common-cathode and common-anode. In either case, seven bar shaped LEDs are distributed on a single block to form a universal pattern. By lighting various combinations of the LEDs, one can form the digits 0 through 9, as well as some upper- or lowercase letters of the alphabet (such as A, b, C, d, etc.). As the name suggests, with a common-cathode device, the cathodes of the seven LEDs are connected to a sin-

gle pin, while each individual anode is brought out to its own private pin. This is reversed in the case of a common-anode unit. Since the working is similar in either instance, this article concentrates on the former arrangement.

So, each seven-segment display has a total of

PB0 through PB6. (These names correspond to the data ports on the microcontroller used by the author in his prototype.) Notice the 14 wires alluded to previously. If you wish,



▲ Figure 1. Customized LED displays are easy to implement once you understand the concept of multiplexing. A seven-digit display like this could be used to show time, longitude, coordinates, etc. Even some limited alphabetic characters are possible since a microcontroller handles the segment decoding.

eight functional pins, one for the common cathode and the other seven for the anodes. Suppose we wish to design a display capable of representing a seven digit number. See Figure 1. Does this mean that we will have a total of seven times eight, or 56 wires emanating from the unit? Not necessarily! By utilizing a technique known as multiplexing, we can bring this unwieldy number of wires down to a much more manageable group of only 14.

think of this arrangement as a matrix made up of columns and rows. The P1 lines each select a separate column (i.e., an individual seven-segment device), while the PB lines each select a row, that is, an individual segment LED within that device. By choosing a row and column, the LED at that intersection can be lit.

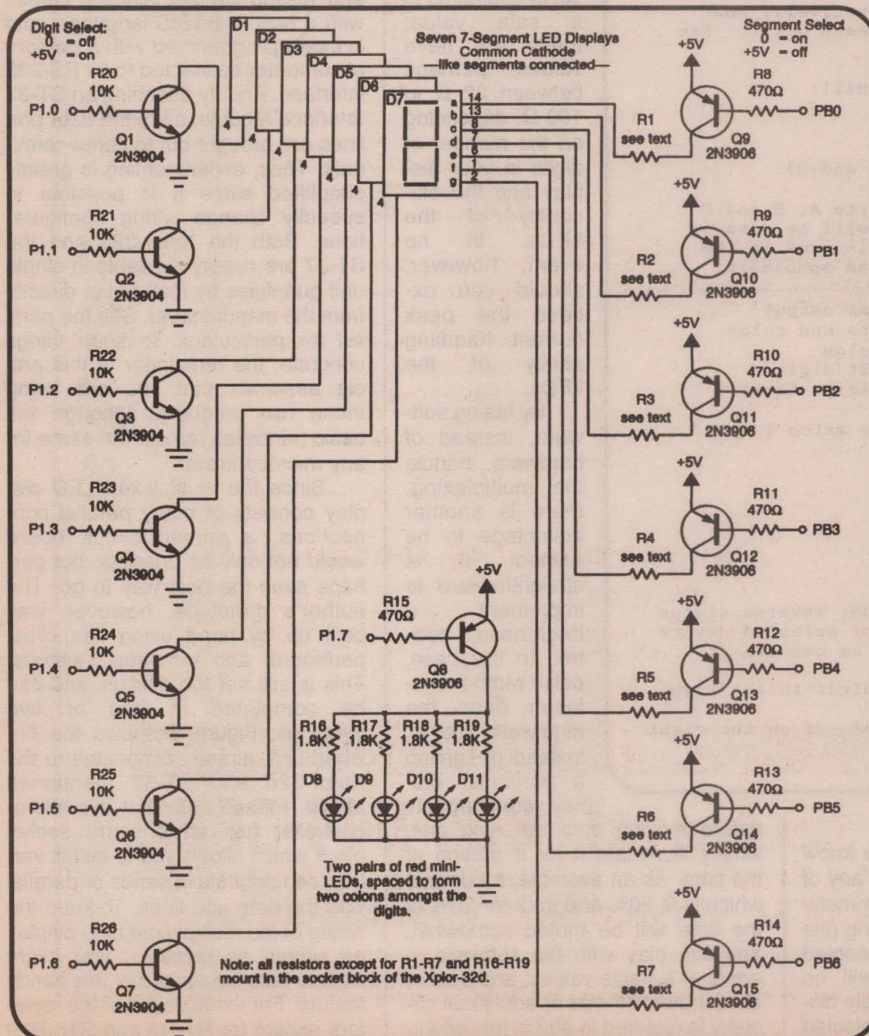
This circuit was designed to be driven by a microcontroller, and since most microcontrollers have limited output current capabilities, inputs P1.0 through P1.6 are buffered by transistors Q1 through Q7. Notice that applying +5V to any one of the inputs turns on the associated transistor, which then grounds the cathode of its seven-segment display. In terms of logic, then, a 1 enables a display, while a 0 disables it.

## A Practical Example of Multiplexing

Refer to Figure 2. This schematic shows a complete circuit for displaying a seven-digit number, with optional colons as separators. Although the circuit looks complex, it really isn't, since many portions of it are merely repeated. Notice that there are two groups of seven control inputs; these are labeled P1.0 through P1.6, and

For the same reason mentioned above, control inputs PB0 through PB6 are also buffered via transistors Q9 through Q15. In this case, grounding an input (a logical 0) causes current to flow through the transistor to the segment, while applying +5V (a logical 1) impedes the current flow.

It is a fairly standard convention to label the seven segments a through g, although the actual pinouts for the device may vary from



▲ Figure 2. Schematic for a seven-digit LED display with a pair of colons.

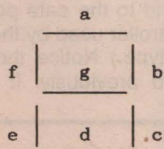


**Test Program to Drive the  
Seven-Digit LED Display with Colons**  
Author: Thomas Henry

Explanation: This program demonstrates the principle behind a multiplexed display. Performing at a slowed down rate, the multiplexing action is clearly visible. It simply lights the seven 7-segment displays one at a time, while blinking the colons on alternate counts. It can be used to confirm that all of the segments and discrete LEDs are functional. Later, you can strip out parts of the code and modify them to perform practical tasks in your own project, or use the BASIC program as an outline for a fully functional assembler routine.

Once you start the program, which is a never-ending loop, type CTRL-C to stop and exit to the command mode.

The 7-segment common cathode LED devices are labeled in the following fashion. The binary weight for each segment and the decimal code required to show each of the ten digits are listed in the accompanying tables. (Note: A zero to each segment turns it ON in this circuit).



Segment	Weight
a	1
b	2
c	4
d	8
e	16
f	32
g	64

Digit	Code
0	64
1	121
2	36
3	48
4	25
5	18
6	2
7	120
8	0
9	24

It is assumed that the LED Display is connected to a Blue Earth Research Xplor-32d Personal Digital Controller. The connections are made to the ports in the following way. Segments a through g are connected to Port lines PB0 through PB6 respectively. Counting from the leftmost digit of the LED display, digits 1 through 7 are connected to P1.0 through P1.6 respectively, and the colons are connected to P1.7. A one enables each digit. See the schematic for further details.

Required Port Addresses of the Xplor-32d (in decimal):

Port 1	144	(digit select)
Port B	8448	(segment select)
Control Word	8960	(configures Ports A, B and C)

By writing the number 128 to the Control Word, Ports A, B and C will all be configured as outputs. This is what will be done in the BASIC program below, even though only Port B is used in the application. Port 1 does not need to be configured specially.

```

10 XBY 8960 = 128      ~ configure Port B as output
20 DBY 144 = 128       ~ shut off all digits and colon
30 C=128               ~ flag: status of colon
40 S=1                 ~ S now aims at first digit
50 FOR I=1 TO 7        ~ count through 7 digits total
~
60 GOTO 60+I           ~ encode segments to match I
61 D=121:GOTO 70       ~ 1
62 D=36:GOTO 70        ~ 2
63 D=48:GOTO 70        ~ 3
64 D=25:GOTO 70        ~ 4
65 D=18:GOTO 70        ~ 5
66 D=2:GOTO 70         ~ 6
67 D=120:GOTO 70       ~ 7
~
70 S=S OR C:C=C XOR 128 ~ factor in the colon; reverse status
80 XBY 8448=D:DBY144=S ~ turn on segments of selected device
90 FOR J=1 TO 200      ~ kill some time so we can see it
100 NEXT J
110 S=2*S AND 127      ~ prepare for next digit to the right
120 NEXT I             ~ do next one
130 GOTO 40            ~ start all over again if on the right
999 END

```

manufacturer to manufacturer. In this circuit, all seven of the a segments are tied together; in a similar fashion all of the b segments are connected, and so on, up to the g segments. By choosing various combinations of segments to light at once, the numerals 0 through 9, as well as some letters and symbols, can be

displayed.

So, at this point, we now know how to generate a pattern on any of the seven devices. To put the multiplexing into action, the following rule is obeyed: Only one unit is enabled at a time. The software will be designed so that it successively displays a segment pattern (as selected

by PB0 through PB6) on D1, then a new pattern on D2, and so on up to D7. After this, the process starts all over again. If the rotational sequence is carried out fast enough, in the range of 400 Hz to 1000 Hz, then persistence of vision leads you to believe that all of the numeral displays are on at once! This is the secret of multiplexing.

Since each digit, in this case, is only lit for one-seventh of the time, its brightness must be increased to compensate. This implies that you will run the LEDs on a higher current than usual. Note that resistors R1 through R7 restrict the current flow through each set of segments to a safe value; these will have values perhaps between 22  $\Omega$  to 100  $\Omega$ , depending on the number of digits in your display and the efficiency of the LEDs. In no event, however, should you exceed the peak current handling ability of the LEDs.

By letting software, instead of hardware, handle the multiplexing, there is another advantage to be gained: it is straightforward to implement a brightness control. In this case, pulse width modulation does the dirty work. That is, instead of lighting a particular display continuously

ness function.

Before proceeding, refer to Figure 2 once more. For outputting time, longitude, latitude, and similar quantities, it is attractive to break up things with delimiting colons. These are easily implemented from scratch with pairs of mini-LEDs spaced appropriately. Control input P1.7 feeds R15, which switches Q8 on and off. A 0V input turns on the transistor, which then causes current to flow through LEDs D8-D11. Resistors R16-R19 keep the current at a reasonable level.

## Building the Circuit

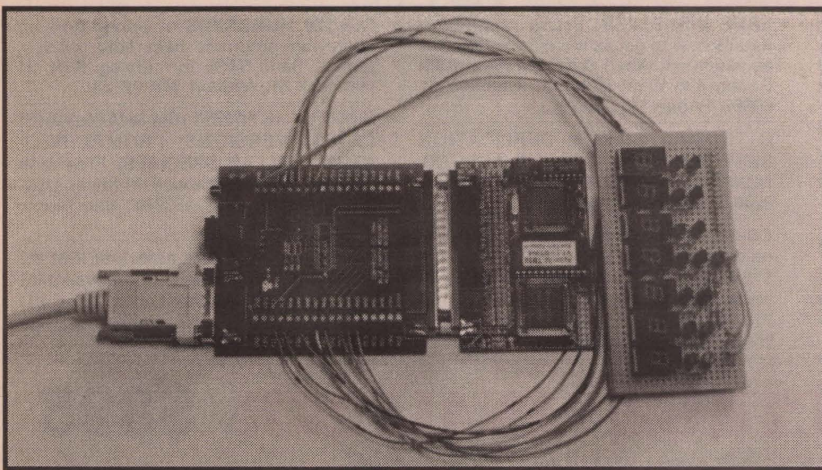
The first step in building the multiplexed LED display is to procure all of the parts. This should be quite simple, since only common, garden variety components are used. In fact, your junk box may provide a good proportion of them. Any remaining ones can be obtained at Radio Shack. See the *parts list* for complete details.

Of course, in order to test and use the circuit, you will need some sort of computer or microcontroller. The author's prototype was designed around the Xplor-32d Personal Digital Controller, manufactured by Blue Earth Research. This single board microcontroller is extremely convenient for designing and testing circuits, since it comes with a built-in BASIC language, and is easily programmed with a personal computer connected to its RS-232 interface. And by attaching an ST-37 Interface Module, all of the data port lines are brought out to screw terminals. Thus, experimenting is greatly simplified since it is possible to speedily change wiring configurations. Both the Xplor-32d and the ST-37 are readily available in single unit quantities by mail order, directly from the manufacturer. See the *parts list* for particulars. To keep things concrete, the remainder of this article assumes that you are using these two products, although the basic principles remain the same for any microcontroller.

Since the multiplexed LED display consists of many parallel connections, a printed circuit board would not only be possible, but perhaps even the best way to go. The author's prototype, however, was built up by hand using flea clips, perfboard, and wirewrap methods. This is still not too difficult, and can be completed in one or two evenings. Figure 3 shows the finished unit, already connected to the Xplor-32d and ST-37 mentioned above. Please note that this microcontroller has an onboard socket block which allows you to install various components in series or parallel with the data port lines. To keep the wiring of the multiplexed LED display as simple as possible, you might wish to take advantage of this handy feature. For example, all of the resistors except for R1-R7 and R16-R19

before moving onto the next one, simply illuminate it for a portion of the time. As an example, a numeral which is lit 80% and dark for 20% of the time will be muted somewhat. You can play with the software to arrive at suitable values, and best of all no potentiometer or additional circuitry is required to add in this bright-





▲ Figure 3. The seven-digit LED display has been attached to the Xplor-32d personal digital controller, by means of the ST-37 interface module. The white cable visible on the left connects the whole affair to a personal computer for programming and debugging.

can be mounted on the socket block, greatly reducing the circuit board complexity.

### Bring on the Controller and Software

As implied above, the multiplexed LED display is not an intelligent device; it depends upon a microprocessor and software to put it through its paces. Refer to the program listing now. This demonstration program has been written in the language TB52, a dialect of Tiny BASIC. Although the code was created especially to run on the Xplor-32d, it can probably be modified for other controllers and single board computers.

There are numerous program comments and explanations in the listing; these are indicated by the ~ (tilde). When typing in the program, you can ignore these comment lines, since the BASIC interpreter passes over them anyway. Thus, punching in the demonstration program should only consume several minutes. But do take the time to study the explanations. You will learn how the numeral codes are created, how data is written to the output ports, and how the different seven-segment displays are addressed. Remember, this is a demonstration program to be used for educational purposes or testing the unit. Any serious real-world application of a multiplexed display would have to be written in assembler, since the BASIC interpreter is far too slow. Recall that the modus operandi of this circuit is persistence of vision; if the scanning isn't fast enough, then the display will flicker, cause eye fatigue, or may simply be unreadable.

The manner in which you load the program depends upon what sort of microcontroller you are using. The Xplor-32d, exploited here, is easily programmed interactively by means of an RS-232 link to your personal computer. See the *Xplor Series User's Manual* (Mankato, MN, Blue

Earth Research, 1994) for details, should you be duplicating the author's approach exactly.

Assuming that you entered the code as described above, and have finished up all of the electrical connections, you are ready to test the multiplexed LED display. Start the program running. What you will see is a greatly slowed down multiplexing process; each digit will light for about one second before moving on to the next. And the colons will blink on alternate seconds to confirm their operation. As mentioned above, to implement this as a practical circuit, you will want to recode the software in assembler. If this type of programming isn't

up your alley, then help is at hand. As a service to readers, Blue Earth Research has agreed to post the assembler source and object code for a practical LED display driver on their BBS. The software is quite flexible, being usable with two to eight digits, and sports a dimming function as well. This service is available free of charge. See the *parts list* for details.

As we've seen, a multiplexed LED display has many advantages as an output device. It can be customized for specific applications, uses commonly available and inexpensive parts, requires very few connecting wires, and its operation can be readily modified through software. With all of these benefits at your disposal, why not try one in your next microcontroller project? NV

## Parts List

### Resistors

R1-R7	see text
R8-R15	470Ω
R16-R19	1.8K
R20-R26	10K

### Semiconductors

μC — Xplor-32d Personal Digital Controller and power supply (see source below)

D1-D7 — seven-segment LED display, common cathode  
Radio Shack 276-075

D8-D11 — red mini-LED  
Radio Shack 276-026

Q1-Q7 — 2N3904 or equivalent, NPN transistor  
Radio Shack 276-2016

Q8-Q15 — 2N3906 or equivalent, PNP transistor  
Radio Shack 276-2023

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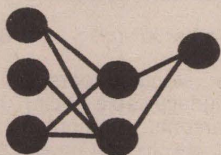
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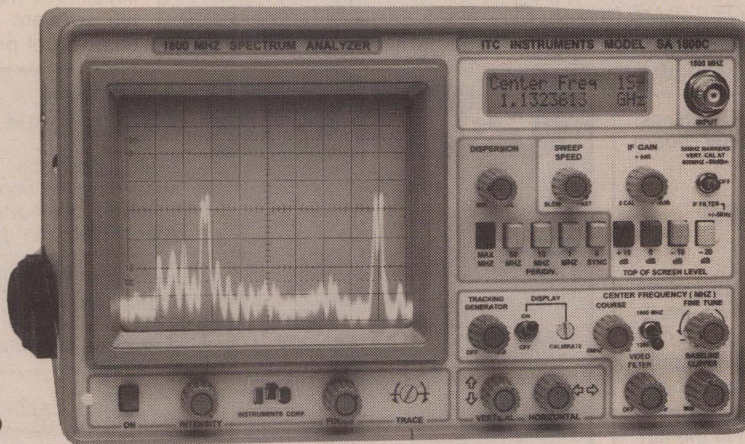
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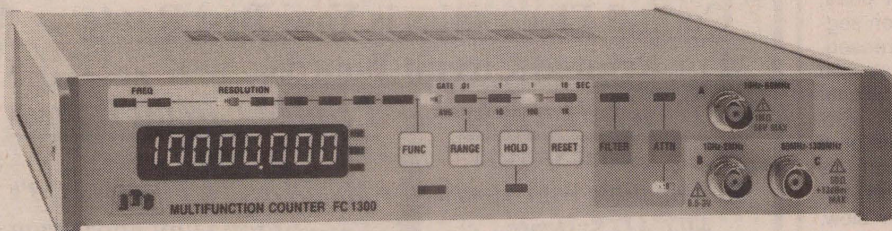
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# Stamp Applications:

**New Feature!**  
Puts the Spotlight on  
BASIC Stamp Projects,  
Hints, and Tips

by Scott Edwards

This month's applications make an off-the-shelf numeric keypad for PCs do double duty: first as a serial data-entry terminal for the Stamp, then as a sneaky software method of getting Stamp data into your favorite PC applications, like spreadsheets and word processors.

## Adapt a Keypad for Pro-Quality Data Entry; Included Software Lets the Stamp "Type" on Your PC

### Hacking a Commercial Keypad

I've wanted to manufacture a Stamp-compatible keypad, but the cost of starting from scratch is daunting. A decent keypad requires good switches and a sturdy enclosure, both of which are very expensive in the small quantities that the Stamp aftermarket might use. There are occasional surplus bargains, but there's also the risk that the supply will dry up on the very day that Ultra-Mega Industries Inc. places a big order.

I recently found an accessory keypad for laptop computers — an ORTEK MCK-18S/N, made in Taiwan. It communicates with and is powered by a PC's serial port. Included software redirects data from the keypad to the keyboard buffer, so that it functions just like keys on the standard keyboard. The pad has 18 buttons, consisting of the numbers 0 through 9, decimal point, Escape,

Num Lock, Enter, and the math operators (/, \*, -, +). The keys are quality Alps switches with standard PC-style keycaps. The unit is enclosed in a nice flat-black case.

At \$59.00 (see the source list), the keypad isn't cheap, but it's not unreasonably expensive either. So I bought one and proceeded to hack it. Here's what I found:

The heart of the keypad circuitry is a PIC microcontroller, just like the Stamp's own processor. This one runs at a leisurely 38.4 KHz; less than 1/100th the speed of a Stamp. This limits current draw to the 10s of microamps. It also helps the keypad meet FCC limits on radio interference.

When you press one of the pad's keys, its PIC sends a one-byte code (generally a lower-case letter) to the PC via an AT-style DB-9 serial connector. The serial data is sent at 1200 baud, with no parity, eight data bits, and one stop bit (N81). If you hold down a key, the PIC waits a moment, then transmits a string of the same one-byte key code in rapid-fire fashion to simulate the "typeamatic" response of the standard keyboard. When you release a key, the PIC sends a different one-byte code (generally the upper-case version of the key-down code). Table 1 summarizes the codes.

From an electrical standpoint, the keypad is wired to derive

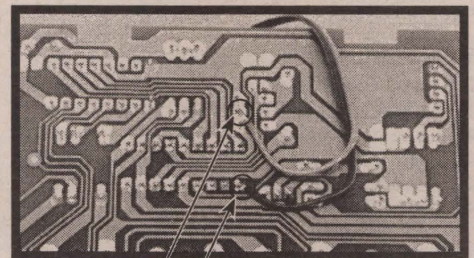
Carefully desolder and remove the original PIC from the board. Replace with the custom "Stamp Pad" PIC, using a socket if desired.

Figure 2

Install a piezo beeper (Radio Shack no. 273-074) for a "bink" response to each keypress. Attach hookup wire close to the body of the beeper, then trim excess lead length. Glue the beeper in place.

Details of the "Stamp Pad" modification.

Connect the beeper wires to pin 10 of the PIC (+) and circuit ground (-) as shown.



Beeper - lead.

Beeper + lead.

Connecting the serial keypad to a Stamp for data entry requires just one I/O pin, plus a few microamps from the Stamp's power supply.

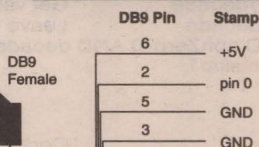


Figure 1

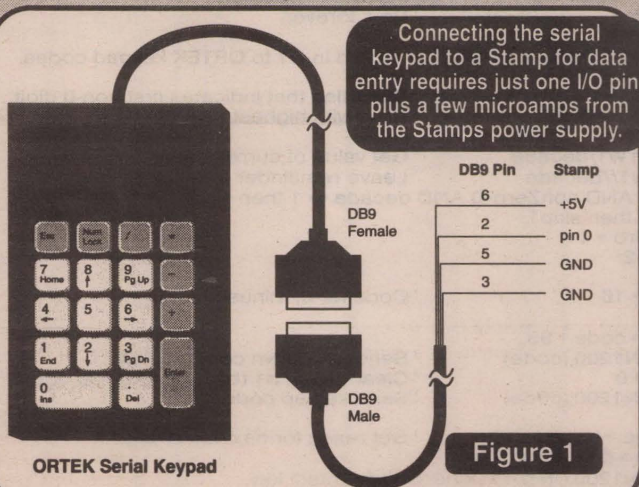
## PC Keypad + Custom PIC Program = "Stamp Pad"

The SERIN command can convert strings of ASCII text like "123" into equivalent numbers without the additional programming effort of Listing 1. If only the keypad generated terminal-style output.

Instead of wishing, I picked up a soldering iron and removed the keypad's PIC controller. I probed the remaining keypad circuitry and determined the following:

> Like most keypads, this one is wired as a matrix of row and column connections. When a key is pressed, it shorts one row to one column. The processor looks up the row and column coordinates of the short in a table stored in ROM to translate it to a key code.

> The pad's column connections go to the four bits of PIC port RA, which are configured as



ORTEK Serial Keypad



**Table 1. Key Codes Used by Unmodified ORTEK Keypad**

Key	Key-Down Code (ASCII value)	Key-Released Code (ASCII value)
1	' (96)	@ (64)
2	a (97)	A (65)
3	b (98)	B (66)
4	c (99)	C (67)
5	d (100)	D (68)
6	e (101)	E (69)
7	f (102)	F (70)
8	g (103)	G (71)
9	h (104)	H (72)
Esc	i (105)	I (73)
/	j (106)	J (74)
*	k (107)	K (75)
-	l (108)	L (76)
+	m (109)	M (77)
. (point)	n (110)	N (78)
0 (zero)	o (111)	O (79)
Enter	t (116)	T (84)
Num Lock	y (121)	Y (89)

inputs. (On the Stamp, RA is used to communicate with the PC and manage the EEPROM. It isn't accessible to the user.) When no key is pressed, all bits of RA are pulled high (reading 1s) by four resistors.

> The pad addresses the row connections with the outputs of a 74HCT138 eight-channel multiplexer. This chip accepts a three-bit address from the lower bits of PIC port RB, and outputs a low on one of its eight outputs. Another bit of RB is used to activate and deactivate the '138. Bit RB.7 serves as the serial output. The remaining three bits of RB are unused.

Based on these observations, I coded a replacement PIC in assembly language. Thanks to the clever design of the hardware, this was extremely easy to do. Most of the effort went into preparing tables that unscrambled the row/column coordinate system of the pad, which was apparently designed to permit an inexpensive, one-sided circuit-board layout.

In addition to changing the data format with my new program, I added a hardware feature; a key-acknowledgment beeper. If an inexpensive piezo beeper is connected between pin RB.4 of

' Listing 1: OR\_KEYS.BAS (interpret ORTEK MCK-18S/N keypad codes)  
' This program accepts serial data from the ORTEK MCK-18S/N numeric keypad and converts it into a 16-bit value in variable w1. Users must be careful not to hold keys down, or they will activate the pad's autorepeat function, causing entry errors.

' Main program loop.

```
Loop:
gosub GetKeys      ' Getkeys does all the work.
debug w1           ' Show the result on the PC screen.
goto Loop          ' Do it forever.
```

' Subroutine to receive the serial data, filter out extraneous key-up codes, and convert received data bytes to a 16-bit value. GetKeys will keep accepting and interpreting digits until the user presses a non-numeric key, like <Enter>. The routine takes advantage of the fact that the key codes for the numbers 1-9 are sequential; subtracting 95 from them leaves you with the number itself. Although 0 (zero) is out of sequence, an additional IF/THEN statement recognizes its code ("o").

```
GetKeys:
let w1 = 0          ' Clear w1 to start.
Again:
Serin 0,N1200,b0    ' Get code from the keypad.
if bit5 = 0 then Again ' Bit5 is 0 in key-up codes; ignore em.
if b0 <> "o" then skip ' Change 0 code from "o" (111) to 95.
let b0 = 95
skip:
if b0 > 104 then done ' Non-numeric key pressed; we're done.
let b0 = b0 - 95      ' Otherwise convert to 0-9, multiply
let w1 = w1 * 10 + b0 ' old total by 10, add new value, and
goto Again           ' get the next digit.
done:
return               ' Done: return to main program.
```

# Stamp Applications:

**Table 2. ORTEK Keypad Wiring**

DB-9 Pin	Color Code	PC Function	Stamp Connection
2	orange	receive data	I/O pin (serial input)
3	yellow	transmit data	ground
6	white	handshake (DSR)	+5 volts
5	black	ground	ground

**Table 4. Stamp-to-PC Connections for Listing 2**

Stamp Pin	DB9-type Serial Connector	DB25-type Serial Connector
pin 0	2	3
GND	5	7

the PIC and circuit ground, the beeper will make a short "bink" sound to acknowledge each key press. For applications that lack a display to confirm the numbers being entered, this is a tremendous help.

The modified keypad acts like a micro terminal that transmits one ASCII character per key-press (as shown in Table 3). The characters correspond to the Stamp's internal table of the ASCII character set. That is, the following line of Stamp code will respond to the code sent by pressing the \*\*\* key:

```
IF theKey = *** THEN Asterisk
```

My keypad PIC program has a strict debounce function that requires keys to be pressed and released in a deliberate manner. Speed isn't compromised, as long as users don't roll from one key to the other. The first key has to be released before the next will register.

You can make your own Stamp Pad. Figure

2 shows details of the modification. To use the modified

pad, connect it to the Stamp as shown in Listing 1, then use Serin to collect the data. If, for in-stance, you want a 16-bit number to be stored to variable w1, use:

```
SERIN 0,N1200,#W1
```

The # symbol before the variable name tells the Stamp to interpret up to five keystrokes as a number ranging from 0 to 65,535 (the range of a 16-bit number). The user must press Enter or any

**Table 3. Key Codes for Modified "Stamp Pad"**

Key	Transmitted Text (ASCII value)
1	1 (49)
2	2 (50)
3	3 (51)
4	4 (52)
5	5 (53)
6	6 (54)
7	7 (55)
8	8 (56)
9	9 (57)
Esc	<ESC> (27)
/	/ (47)
*	* (42)
-	- (45)
+	+ (43)
. (point)	. (46)
0 (zero)	0 (48)
Enter	<RETURN> (13)
Num Lock	<SPACE> (32)

Listing 2: FAKE\_PAD.BAS (imitate the ORTEK keypad codes)  
' This program mimics the codes produced by the ORTEK keypad, allowing a PC running the ORTEK software to receive Stamp data to its keyboard buffer. The Stamp "types" directly into programs that are incapable of normal serial input. To demonstrate this capability, the Stamp will count upward by 1 and type the result of each calculation to the PC. Remember that the keypad software must be installed on the PC for this to work. Before running this program, make sure that this program is saved, since the Stamp may begin typing numbers into it, if the keypad software is active.

```
SYMBOL nonZero = bit0
SYMBOL code = b1
SYMBOL decade = w2
SYMBOL count = w3
```

' Main program loop.

```
Loop:
let w1 = count
gosub typeData
pause 100
let count = count + 1
goto Loop
```

' Subroutine to convert the value stored in w1 to ORTEK keypad codes.  
typeData:  
let nonZero = 0  
let decade = 10000  
nextDigit:

```
let code = w1/decade      ' Get value of current digit.
let w1 = w1//decade       ' Leave remainder in w1.
if code=0 AND nonZero=0 AND decade <> 1 then skip3 ' No leading 0s.
if code=0 then skip1
let nonZero = 1
goto skip2
skip1:
let code = 16             ' Code for 0, minus 95.
skip2:
let code = code + 95
serout 0,N1200,(code)     ' Send key-down code of digit.
let bit13 = 0             ' Clear bit5 of b1 (bit13) for key-up code.
serout 0,N1200,(code)     ' Send key-up code.
skip3:
let decade = decade/10   ' Get ready for next lower digit
if decade > 0 then nextDigit
serout 0,N1200,("t")     ' Done. Send <Enter> key.
return
```



other non-numeric key to finish the entry. If you just want to know which key was pressed, use a byte variable without the #:

SERIN 0,N1200,B2

After the instruction executes, B2 will contain the ASCII value of the key pressed, as shown in Table 3. If you have used SERIN before to accept data from a PC or other computer, this stuff is old hat by now.

You can obtain the Stamp Pad PIC from me, either by buying it outright, or by obtaining the source code free with purchase of my *PIC Source Book*. This is a collection of assembly language routines for the PIC that mimic the functions of the BASIC Stamp, helping users to move their programs into faster, more efficient PIC hardware. See the source box elsewhere in this column.

### But Wait, There's More!

## Sources

The ORTEK keypad is available from Jameco (part no. 114841) for \$59.95, plus applicable shipping and handling charges. To order or request a catalog:

#### Jameco Electronic Components

1355 Shoreway Drive  
Belmont, CA 94002-4100  
phone 1-800-831-4242 or 415-592-8097

For more information on the BASIC Stamp, contact:

#### Parallax Inc.

3805 Atherton Road #102  
Rocklin, CA 95765  
phone 916-624-8333; fax 916-624-8003  
BBS 916-624-7101

The Stamp Pad PIC required to modify the keypad is \$10.00 postpaid from Scott Edwards Electronics. Source code for the Stamp Pad PIC

is free with purchase of *The PIC Source Book*, a cookbook of assembly language PIC routines based on the instruction set of the BASIC Stamp. Prototype your ideas with the Stamp, then convert them into fast, professional, one-chip solutions with the help of the cut-and-paste routines from the Source Book. Price is \$39.00 postpaid. Order from:

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# Stamp Applications:

There's an expression about sausage makers using "every part of the pig except the squeal." In that spirit, I couldn't ignore the software that came with the keypad. It redirects codes from the serial port to the keypad buffer, allowing you to use numeric input from the pad in any DOS or Windows application.

It occurred to me that if the Stamp was programmed to mimic the key codes, and the keypad software was installed, then the Stamp could "type" data at the keyboard. Think about it — Stamp-collected data magically appears in your spreadsheet, database, or word processor document. No fumbling with terminal software or file transfers.

There are general-purpose software utilities and hardware devices sold for this very purpose, with prices from \$100.00 to \$500.00. They accept

any kind of serial input, not just numbers. But if numbers are all you need, check out Listing 2. To use the program, install the keypad software according to the instructions that come with the pad. Temporarily disable the keypad driver by typing "KEYPAD OFF" at the DOS prompt. Connect a Stamp programmed with Listing 2 as shown in Table 4, but don't connect power to the Stamp yet. Next, turn on the keypad driver by typing "KEYPAD" at the DOS prompt.

You're ready to go. For a test drive, boot the BASIC Stamp host program STAMP.EXE, but don't load a program. Reconnect power to the Stamp. A column of numbers will be typed onto the screen. That's the Stamp, communicating with your keyboard buffer through the keypad software. Now you can write data-acquisition programs for the Stamp that can communicate directly with any piece of PC software you own!

By the way, the reason for the somewhat round-about set-up procedure above is to avoid trashing your work. When I wrote the program in Listing 2, I already had the keypad driver resident in my PC's memory, and the Stamp connected to the serial port. As soon as I ran the program, it began typing into my just-finished Stamp program listing. I had to quickly disconnect the Stamp, and erase all of the numbers it had added to the listing.

### Conclusion

If you're interested in other keypad solutions for the Stamp, make sure to get Parallax application note no. 3, which shows how to connect a 74C922 16-key pad and an LCD to the Stamp. Looking for an interesting application for our serial keypad? Try Parallax application note no. 6, a stepper-motor driver that accepts serial inputs that can be entered directly from the Stamp Pad. To contact Parallax, see the listing in the Sources box. NV

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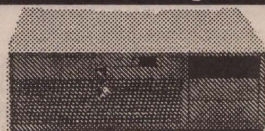
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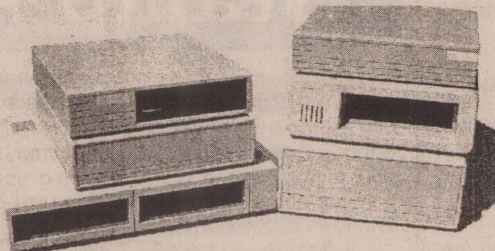
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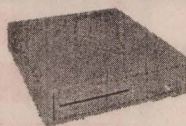
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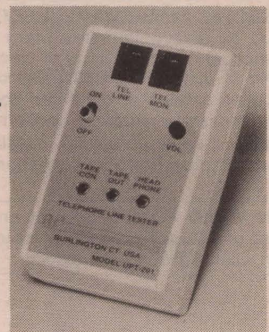
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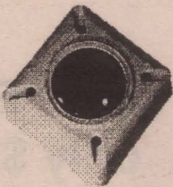
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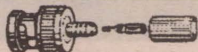
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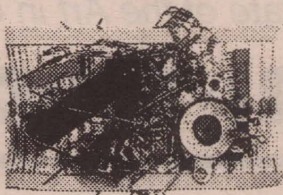
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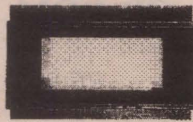
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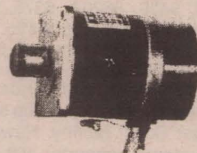
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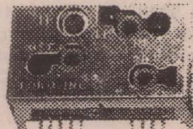
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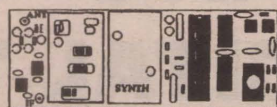
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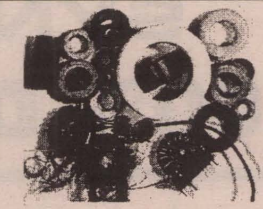
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# New Column!

# SOFTWARE WIZARDRY

by  
Harry Helms

If you're interested in getting involved with "visual" object-oriented programming (OOP), Microsoft's Visual Basic is the ideal place to start. In fact, I consider it to be the equivalent of a Swiss army knife for Windows programming — there are better

tools for certain applications (like Asymetrix Multimedia ToolBook for multimedia development or Visual C++ for graphics programming), but Visual Basic can be used in a pinch for almost any Windows programming task. It's easy to learn, inexpensive, extensible through custom controls, and has powerful debugging and other development aids. Although I do most of my current programming using other tools (mainly Multimedia ToolBook), if I were stuck on a desert island and could only have one Windows programming tool, I would choose Visual Basic!

If you're familiar with a character-based BASIC for MS-DOS, like the GW-BASIC or QBasic supplied with different versions of MS-DOS, you might be surprised at how different

Visual Basic is from them. Very little of your experience with MS-DOS versions of BASIC will be useful with Visual Basic. The truth is that Visual Basic is really an entirely new programming language that has little in common with MS-DOS versions of the language. The name "Visual Basic" is somewhat unfortunate, since it is a far more powerful and versatile programming tool than MS-DOS versions of BASIC.

## The Heart of Visual Basic: Objects, Projects, and Controls

The key to understanding Visual Basic (or any other visual programming tool) is to under-

stand the concept of *objects*. All Visual Basic programs must have at least one form, and most have several. Other common objects include command buttons, "radio" buttons, list boxes, labels, text boxes, scroll bars, and graphics. All objects can be associated with Visual Basic code that determines how they respond to different events. Figure 1 shows how common Visual Basic objects look.

Objects have various properties. Properties are attributes of the object, including such things as its color, its size, its location, the name it is referred to within Visual Basic, type font, and color of any text appearing within the object, the text of any caption appearing on the object, whether the object is visible within a Visual Basic program, whether a border surrounds the object and the appearance of that border, and whether the object is functional, or *enabled*, on a form. The initial properties of an object are set by using menus while creating a Visual Basic program and can be altered during the program, if desired. For example, the color of an object and whether it is visible can be altered by events occurring during the program.

A Visual Basic program is known as a *project*. A project consists of all forms, objects, and other files necessary to make a Visual Basic program work as intended. As you add more forms and objects to a Visual Basic project, a separate "project window" in the Visual Basic development environment will keep track of those various forms and controls. When you've finished your programming, you can produce an executable file (one carrying an .EXE suffix) so your software can be used by those not having a copy of Visual Basic on their Windows PC.

To distribute Visual Basic application programs to users without Visual Basic on their PC, you need to include a "run time" file for Visual Basic along with the .EXE file for your program. The "run time" file is actually a dynamic link library (DLL) file (as discussed in last month's column). A DLL is a collection of subroutines designed to let your applications program interface with Windows. The current "run time" file for Visual Basic is known as

vbrun300.dll, with the ".dll" suffix indicating it is a dynamic link library. All this might seem complicated, but Visual Basic comes with a tool called "Set-Up Wizard." This tool prepares your application for distribution by converting all of your project's forms, objects, and files into a single .EXE file, adding the necessary "run time" file, and automatically including a simple installation program to let users painlessly install the application on their PC's hard drive.

Once an object has some "intelligence" added to it through Visual Basic code, it becomes a *control*. A control is anything that can be placed on a form, even if it is not always visible to users (like a timer control). Controls are identified by file names ending with a .VBX suffix. Several controls are supplied with Visual Basic, and a cottage industry has sprung up around the creation of additional controls. Through these so-called "custom controls," Visual Basic's capabilities can be greatly extended. Among the custom controls currently available are complete spreadsheets, animation routines, text editors, data encryption and decryption tools, and a wide array of database access and manipulation controls. Custom controls are usually stored in a DLL and can be

# Exploring Visual Basic

stand the concept of *objects*. All of the items you see in a Windows application, such as buttons, scroll bars, labels, and graphics, are all objects. The objects you see are all independent bundles of data and programming code. A program in Visual Basic or other visual programming environment does not consist of hundreds or thousands of lines of sequential code, nor does such a program execute in a linear fashion from a "start" to a "finish." Instead, visual programs are *event driven*. This means nothing happens in a visual program until something is done, as when the user clicks a button or selects an item from a list. The event does not always have to be generated by the user; for example, the expiration of a specified period of time is also an event. When an event happens, it generates a *message* that the Visual Basic program or Windows will respond to.

Figure 1 shows some of the objects available in Visual Basic. The window itself is an object called

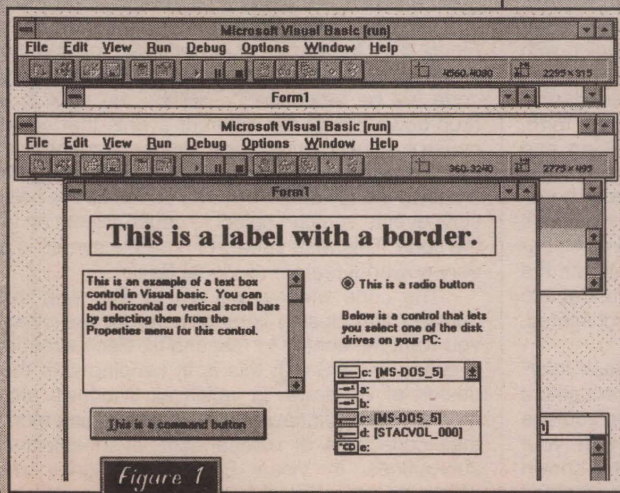


Figure 1



# SOFTWARE WIZARDRY

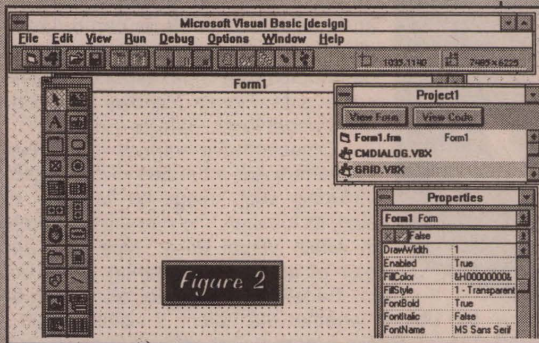


Figure 2

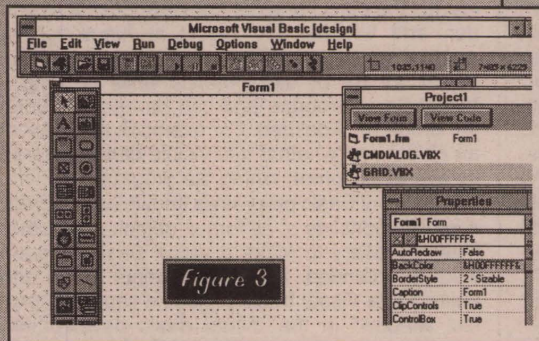


Figure 3

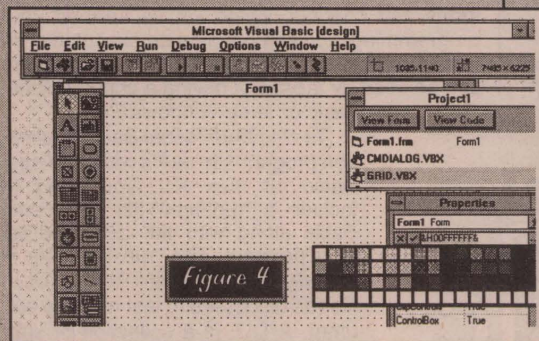


Figure 4

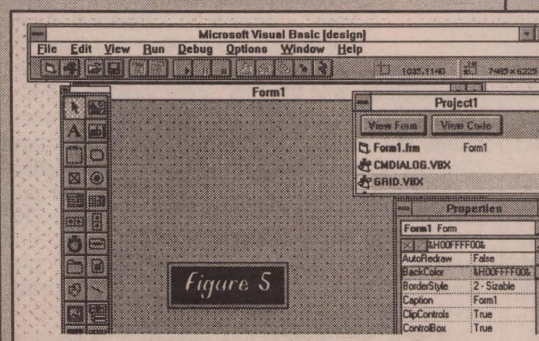


Figure 5

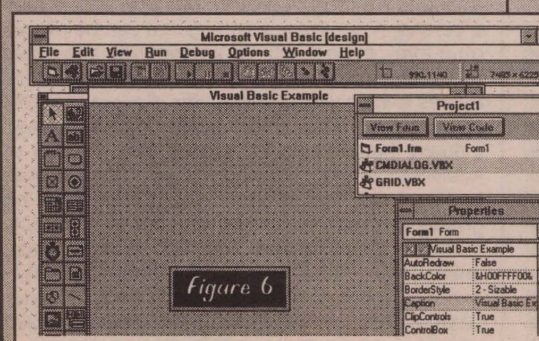


Figure 6

used like any other Windows subroutine in a DLL.

(While we're on the subject of custom controls, custom controls are typically created using C or C++ and can also be used by other visual programming tools like Microsoft's Visual C++ or Borland's Delphi. We'll discuss the entire subject of custom controls in greater detail in a future column.)

Figure 1 shows some of the controls that come supplied with Visual Basic. As you can see, a rich variety of controls are already available. All of these controls have properties that you can define and the behavior of all controls can be determined through Visual Basic code you can write and "attach" to each control.

## Visual Basic in Action

Since Visual Basic is "visual," the best way to understand and appreciate its advantages is by looking at how we can develop a real application in Visual Basic.

When you launch Visual Basic from Windows, you'll see a screen display similar to that shown in Figure 2. This is the "development environment" in which you create Visual Basic applications. You start with a window, which is called a form in Visual Basic. Notice that the form has a caption, "Form1." At the top of the form is a *tool bar* providing drop-down menus used to save, run, and debug Visual Basic programs. To the left of the form is a vertical *tool box* consisting of two columns of tool icons. By pointing to one of the tool icons and double-clicking, you can place a command button, list box, text box, radio buttons, a label, etc., on the form. You can also draw simple graphics using the appropriate tool icons or draw a container to hold graphics prepared using other software. To the upper right of the form is a *project window*. The project window keeps track of all the forms and custom controls used in your project; you can see many of them or their code by double-clicking on the desired form or control. (Note that a couple of controls, CMDIALOG.VBX and GRID.VBX, are automatically part of any Visual Basic project.) Finally, there is a properties window to the lower right of the form. Since the only thing you see at the moment is Form1, the properties listed are those belonging to it. By clicking and dragging with your mouse, you can re-arrange the tool bar, tool box, and various windows as you desire.

Note there is a grid pattern on the form. This is supplied to aid you in placing and aligning various controls on the form for a pleasing appearance. The default background color of a form is white. Let's suppose you want to change this. Using the scroll bar at the right of the properties window, find the "BackColor" (background color) item. Point to it and click once; the item will be highlighted, as shown in Figure 3.

When you double-click on the "BackColor" item, you will see a palette of different colors appear, as shown in Figure 4. When you see the color you want, point to it with your mouse and double-click. The result is shown in Figure 5; the background color is changed

to the one you selected from the palette. Take a look at the alphanumeric code opposite the "BackColor" item in the properties window of Figure 3 and 5. These codes represent the different background colors seen in Figures 3 and 5. You can change the background color of a form while a program is executing by writing Visual Basic code to change the alphanumeric code.

One of the properties of a form is the caption that appears on it. So far, it's been simply "Form1," as shown in previous illustrations like Figure 5. It's simple to change the caption on our form using the properties window. Figure 6 shows how this is done. You can scroll the properties window until you reach the "Caption" item. When you double-click it, you will see the default caption ("Form1") displayed on the line at the top of the properties window. You can edit this line like any other text, including cutting and pasting text. In this example, let's cut "Form1" from the line and type in "Visual Basic Example" in its place. When we do so, the new caption appears at the top of the form, as shown in Figure 6.

## Writing Actual Code

So far, we've seen how easy it is to get a Visual Basic application to "look" the way we want it to. But how do we actually program in Visual Basic?

Perhaps the most commonly-used control in Visual Basic (other than a form, of course!) is the *command button*. A command button is an area, looking like a pushbutton, that will cause some action to take place when it is clicked or otherwise activated. It's easy to place a command button on a form. All you have to do is point to the command button icon in the tool box, double-click, and a command button appears on the form. Figure 7 shows this process. The command button icon is the third one from the top in the right column of the tool box; note that it is highlighted to indicate it has just been clicked. The command button will appear in the middle of the form. Note that the properties window has now changed; it is a properties window for the command button. You can switch back to the properties window for the form by clicking once on the form. To switch back to the properties window for the command button, click the command button once.

A command button needs some Visual Basic code before it can do anything useful. To "program" the command button, double-click it. When you do, you'll see a *code window*, like the one in Figure 8. At the top left of the window, you see the name of the object ("Command1" in this case) the code will be "attached" to. At the top right is a drop-down box of the different events that could cause execution of the code. For a command button, the default event is a click. However, Figure 8 shows the full drop-down menu and all the possible events you can select to cause execution of the code. This wide variety of possible events is a very powerful feature of Visual Basic.

The code window will supply you with the opening and closing lines of code for the event you want the control to respond to. Each event is a subroutine ("Sub"); this is in keeping with the design of Windows, in which all Windows programs — like Windows itself — are nothing more than collections of independent, event-selected subroutines. In Visual Basic, subroutines are known as *procedures*. In this case, the opening



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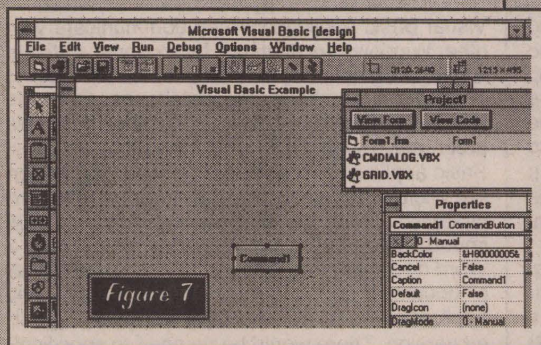


Figure 7

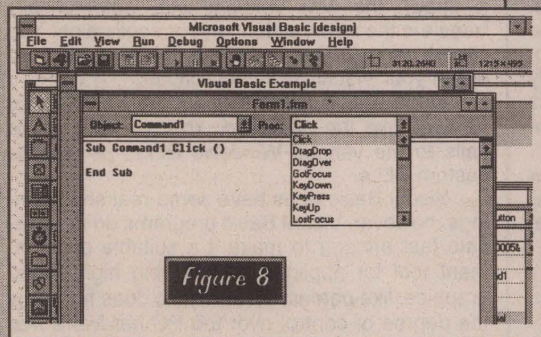


Figure 8

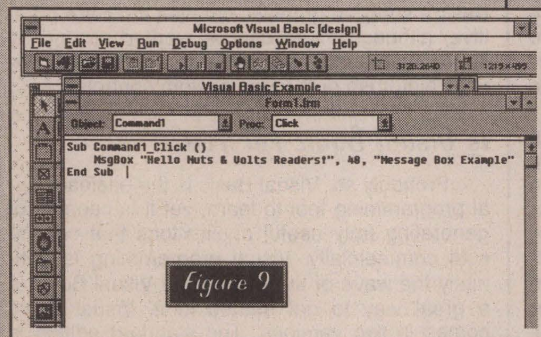


Figure 9

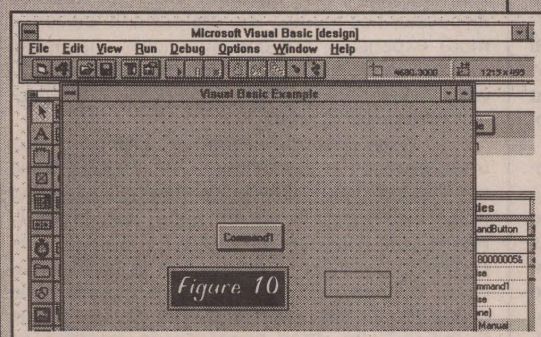


Figure 10

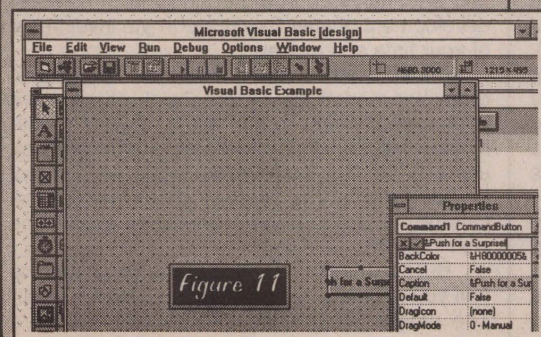


Figure 11

line "Sub Command1\_Click ( )" indicates the code that follows is a procedure executed when command button "Command1" is clicked. The "End Sub" line simply marks the end of the subroutine. Visual Basic procedures (subroutines) are not called from a main program, as in GW-BASIC or other character-oriented languages; there is no "main program" in Visual Basic. Perhaps the best way to think of a Visual Basic program is a large collection of small, independent programs that can work together and communicate with each other.

For our example, let's program Command1 to display a message box with a desired message and caption. Message boxes are a familiar part of any Windows application; they display information and require the user to click an "OK" button before execution of the application can resume. Message boxes are one of the controls supplied with Windows and available to all Windows applications (like Visual Basic). We don't have to program the look and functionality of a message box in Visual Basic. Instead, all we need to do is specify what we want a message box to display and pass that information along to Windows from Visual Basic. Windows will then return a message box with that information to our Visual Basic application.

Figure 9 shows a line of Visual Basic code we could enter to display a message box. "MsgBox" tells Windows to return a message box when this procedure is executed. The first line of text in double quotes following MsgBox is the information we want displayed in the message box. The number 48 following the first set of quotes is a code that tells Windows what symbol or icon (if any) we want displayed in the message box. In this case, the "48" code will cause an exclamation point to be included. The second line of text in double quotes is the caption we want the message box to have. We close the code window after entering this line of code.

Suppose we want the command button to be in a different location on the form. We can move any object on the form by pointing to it and holding the mouse button down as we move it around. Figure 10 shows the original position of the command button and a rectangle representing the new position of the command button. When the command button is in the desired location on the form, release the mouse button and the command button will now be located at the new position.

The default caption for the command button is "Command1," which is not very informative for users. To change it, we click the button to show its properties window and select the "Caption" item. We can then enter the new caption in the space provided at the top of the properties window, as shown in Figure 11. Notice that we place an "&" symbol at the start of the caption. The "&" symbol means the user can press the "Alt" key plus the first letter of the caption ("P" in this case) and accomplish the same result as clicking the button with a mouse. Letting users access a button from the keyboard is a good feature to include in case the user doesn't

have access to a mouse, which is often true for notebook computer users.

Our new caption is too long to fit within the current size of the button. However, it's easy to re-size the button. Note in Figure 12 that the button has "dots" on its vertical and horizontal borders. The dots are sizing "handles." To change the size of a button (and many other objects in Visual Basic), point to one of the sizing handles, click, and hold the mouse button down as you "drag" the vertical or horizontal border to re-size the button. When you've moved either border to the desired position, release the button. A re-sized command button that "fits" the caption is shown in Figure 12.

Now it's time to see our application in action. To run the program, we go to the "Run" menu in the tool bar at the top of display and select the "Run" item from the drop-down menu. The result will be the display shown in Figure 13. The application is "running," even though nothing seems to be happening; it is awaiting an event it can respond to. By the way, the elements of the development environment (like the partially visible project and properties windows at right) would not be visible in any final version of an application you would distribute to others.

Figure 14 shows what happens when the user clicks the button or presses the "Alt" and "P" keys together. The message box with our desired information and caption is displayed; the exclamation point is also included. When this message box is displayed, execution of the program is halted until the user clicks the "OK" button on the message box. When that happens, the display again looks like that shown in Figure 13. Message boxes are often used to alert users to certain information or to caution them before taking certain actions. For example, message boxes can be used to alert users that certain actions cannot be reversed (like deleting a file) or that some desired action is not possible.

Let's suppose that you don't like the exclamation point and want something more emphatic, like a stop sign. Figure 15 shows how this could be done. All that's necessary is to change the number code to 15. When you do this, the result is shown in Figure 16.

## Something Incredible

At this point, we should stop and reflect on something incredible.

Here's what we did in our example: we put a window on screen, changed its background color, gave it a caption, put a command button on the window that can be accessed by the mouse or keyboard, gave the button a caption, moved the button to a desired location, created a procedure where a message box can be called from Windows, and that message box had the message, caption, and symbol we desired.

We did all of that, and we had to write just ONE LINE of Visual Basic code to do so.

One line of code. That's all. To do an equivalent Windows program in a character-based version of C or Pascal would take hundreds of lines of code and at least a couple of days of serious effort. And those hundreds of lines of code would be tough to write and debug, a contrast to the trivial single line used in this example.

This is what the software revolution I discussed in last month's column is all about. If



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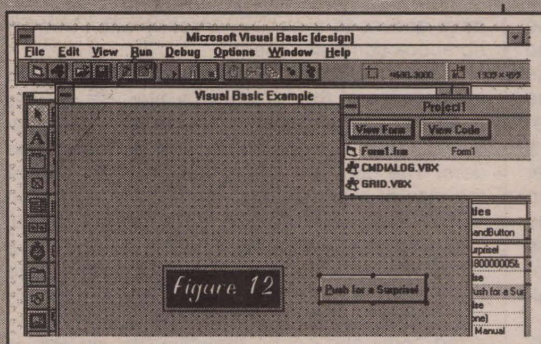


Figure 12

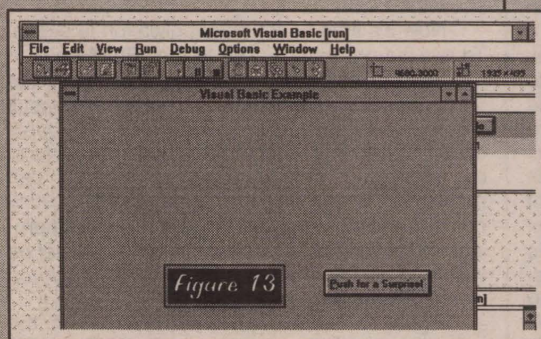


Figure 13

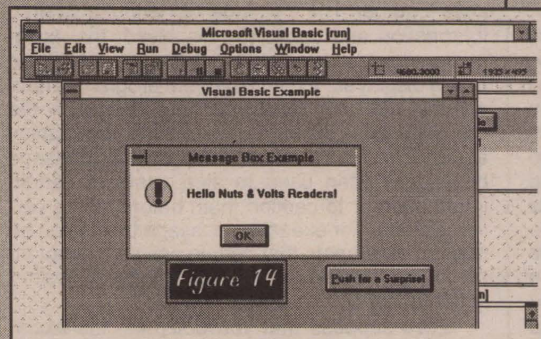


Figure 14

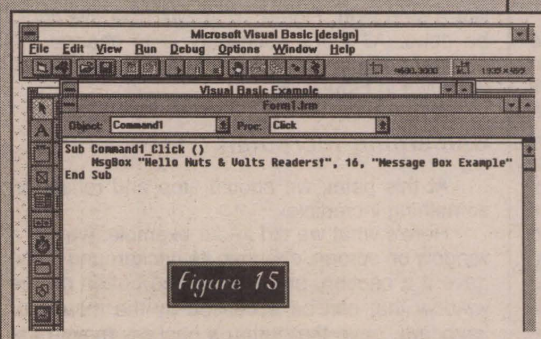


Figure 15

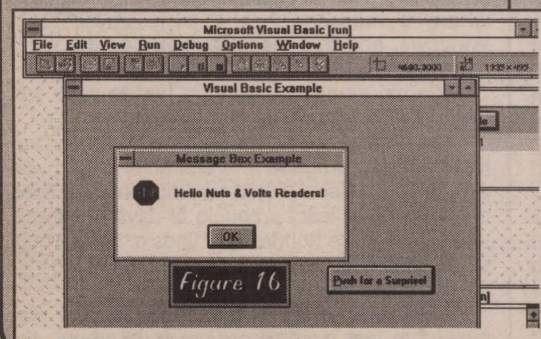


Figure 16

you're trying to develop with character-based programming tools, you're dead. There's no way you can be as productive or develop applications as rapidly as someone using a visual programming tool. Back in 1992, the ability to write C code that drew windows and called message boxes from Windows was a hot, in-demand skill. Today, that "ability" is nothing special; it's built into tools like Visual Basic!

This progression really isn't that surprising. In the early days of microcomputers, the ability to program in the assembly language of a specific microprocessor (like Apple II's 6502) was all-important in developing applications. When the first compilers (like Borland's Turbo C and Turbo Pascal) became available, assembly language programming gradually became a niche specialty. Now the process is repeating itself as character-based programming languages give way to visual ones.

If you're not spending a big chunk of your programming time these days pointing, clicking, and dragging instead of writing code, you're probably doing something wrong.

## "Specifications" of Visual Basic

While Visual Basic does a lot of the "dirty work" of programming for you, it is still a full-featured programming language. You'll have to put some time and effort into mastering all of its features and learning how to apply them to programming tasks.

Variable names in Visual Basic can be up to 40 characters long. Variables don't have to be declared before use (although they can be, and good programming practice calls for doing so). Variables can be local (recognized only within a single subroutine) or global (recognized by and available to any subroutine on any form). Data types for variables include integer, long integer, single precision real, double precision real, and string. Two special data types unique to Visual Basic include currency (8-byte numbers with a fixed decimal point) and variant, which can hold double precision and string values. You can define your own data types as needed. Arrays of variables can be declared.

Visual Basic includes several control structures, including *If...Then* statements, *If...Then...Else* statements, *Select Case* Statements, and *Do* and *For* loops. There's even a *Go To* statement that you can use within a procedure. Control structures can be nested and procedures can contain other subroutines that can be called as necessary. Visual Basic has a full set of arithmetic and logical operators along with mathematical functions such as *Sqr* (returns square root), *Rnd* (generates random numbers), *Atn* (returns arctangent), *Cos* (returns cosine of an angle), *Sin* (returns sine of an angle), and *Tan* (returns tangent of an angle). There's also several string manipulation functions allowing string comparison, formatting, taking or adding characters to strings, converting from upper case letters to lower case and vice-versa, and comparing two strings.

Visual Basic supports dynamic data exchange (DDE) and object linking and embedding (OLE). DDE is a method by which

Visual Basic applications can communicate with other Windows applications; for example, a Visual Basic program could share data with other Windows applications, like databases. OLE lets you set up interactive links with other Windows programs. Using OLE, you could link a Visual Basic application to another Windows application like Microsoft's Excel spreadsheet or Word's word processor. Your Visual Basic application could import part of an Excel spreadsheet or text from a Word document and display it. If the spreadsheet or document is changed, then your Visual Basic application would automatically display the updated version. There would be no need to specifically import the new version; OLE automatically transfers the new version to your application. You can also manipulate such imported versions from within your Visual Basic application.

Visual Basic gives you access to Windows features like the clipboard. You can also make calls to the various Windows DLLs, as well as custom DLLs.

Visual Basic does have some real shortcomings, however. Visual Basic programs do not execute fast enough to make it a suitable development tool for applications involving high speed graphics, like games. Visual Basic does not allow the degree of control over the PC hardware that C or an assembly language does. And Visual Basic's supplied graphics creation tools are primitive, although these can be worked around by importing graphics created with applications like PC Paintbrush or through custom controls.

## Is Visual Basic For You?

Probably so. Visual Basic is the easiest visual programming tool to learn, yet it is capable of generating truly useful applications that can be sold commercially. Visual programming is definitely the wave of the future, and Visual Basic is a great way to get started in it. Visual Basic comes in two versions. The standard edition is less expensive and contains all of the features discussed this month. The professional edition is more expensive, but contains numerous useful custom controls and tools for professional software developers. Both versions come with effective interactive tutorials.

A more powerful visual programming tool from Microsoft is their Visual C++. I wish I could say this tool makes C++ programming simple, but that's not true; it makes C++ less painful. However, it does relieve you of the drudge work of writing repetitive lines of code to create windows, buttons, and other common objects while giving you the full power of C++. If you are willing to put forth the effort necessary to master C++ and are interested in professional-level software development, Visual C++ is worth the investment of your time and money.

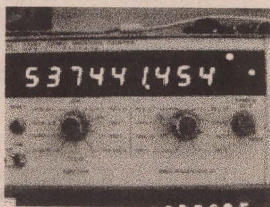
Borland has finally entered the visual programming market with Delphi. Delphi should have been called "Visual Turbo Pascal," as that is what it essentially is! While I haven't used this product, users of Borland's character-based versions of Turbo Pascal tell me it's great, so you should look carefully at Delphi if you have some experience with Pascal.

But regardless of which visual programming tool you decide to go with, the message is clear: The programming world of the future will be a visual one. Adapt or die! NV



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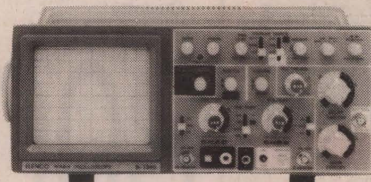


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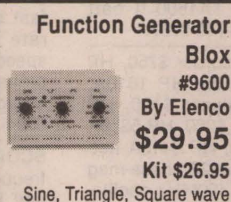
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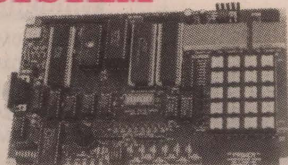
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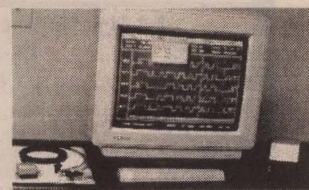
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A few months ago, we described how to interface a scientific instrument (Geiger counter) to the IBM printer port. We created a simple interfacing circuit consisting of a single CMOS op-amp and a few resistors. This

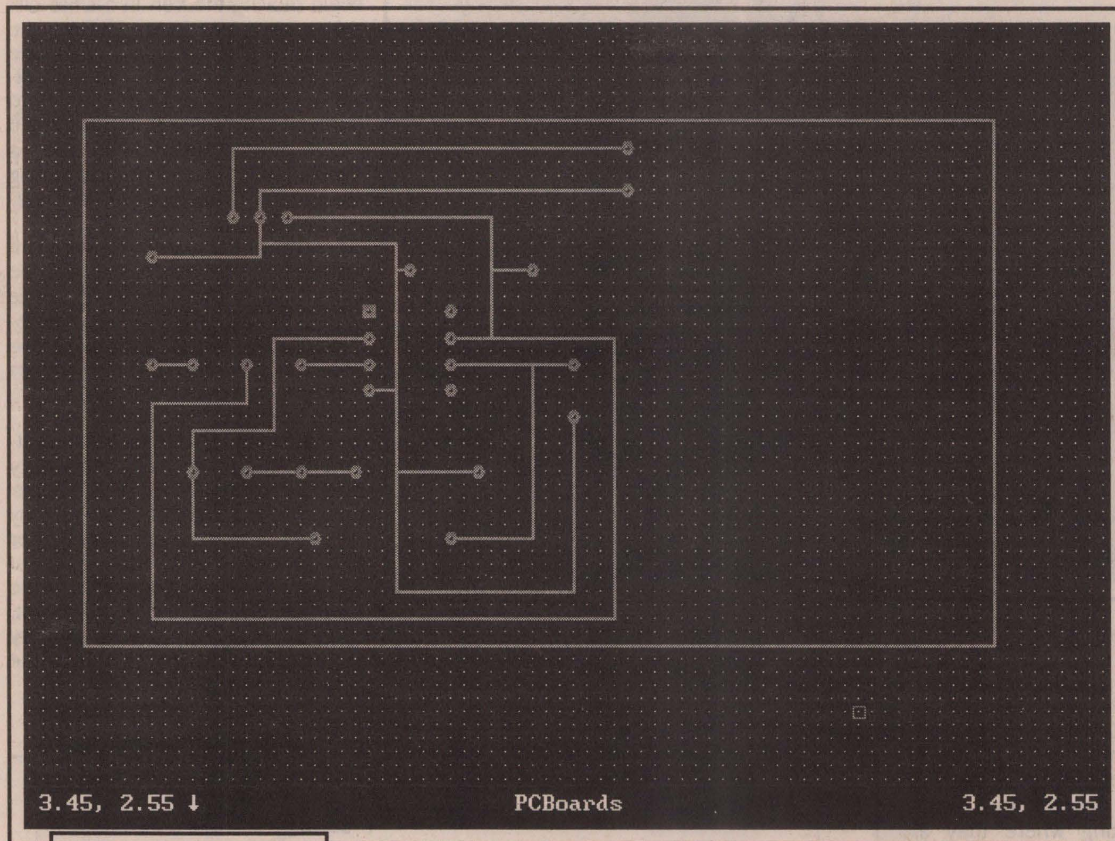
ago. New materials are available from DynaArt Designs (see parts list) that reduce the amount of work and skill required. Just about anyone can successfully make high quality PCBs.

DynaArt supplies specially coated paper sheets. PCB patterns are

excellent etch-resist that protects the copper laying underneath it. This allows one to etch an accurate board design on a copper clad board. Once the design is transferred onto the board using the household iron, the board is placed into a dish of warm

toresist can then be removed using a steel wool pad and soap.

If you have a PCB design program see (Figure 1) like PC Boards or Pro-Board and a laser printer, you can print the design directly onto the specialty paper. This eliminates the pho-



**Figure 1**

month, we will use that interfacing circuit to illustrate making a basic single sided printed circuit board (PCB).

A PCB will give your homemade electronic projects a professional look. In addition, wiring errors and subsequent trouble shooting headaches are sharply curtailed.

Printed circuit boards are easier to make today than a few years

ago. The specialty paper allows one to transfer the etch-resist patterns directly from the paper onto copper clad boards. The PCB etch-resist pattern is transferred from the paper onto a copper clad board using a household iron. The paper is placed onto the copper board and pressed with an iron. The iron is set to about 300 degrees, typically a "cotton" fabric setting.

The toner used in photocopiers and laser printers is heat sensitive. The heating iron fuses the toner onto the copper board. The fused toner makes an

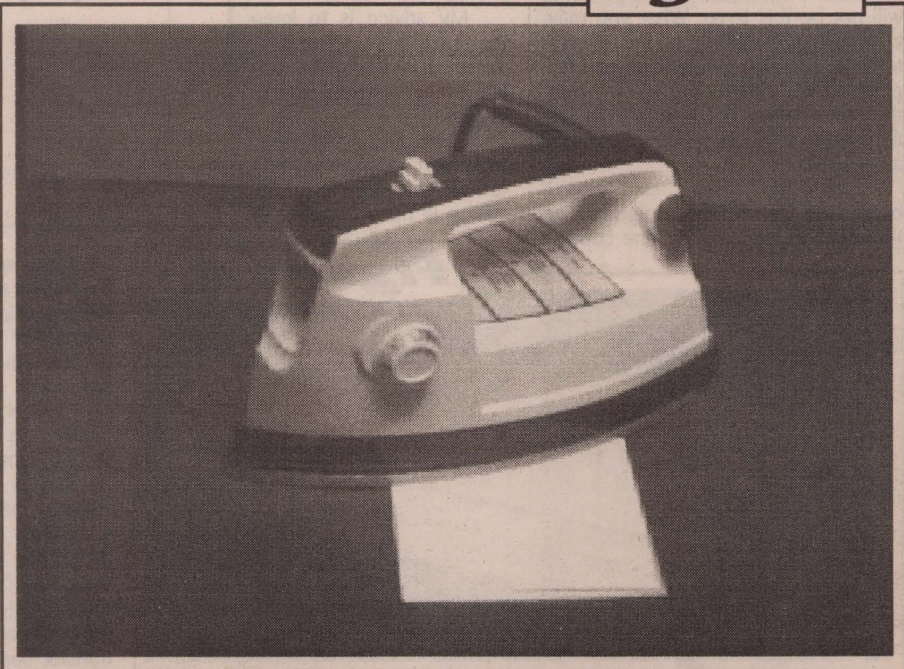
water.\*

The water causes the paper to separate from the copper clad board, leaving behind the PCB pattern. The board is removed from the water and allowed to dry completely before etching.

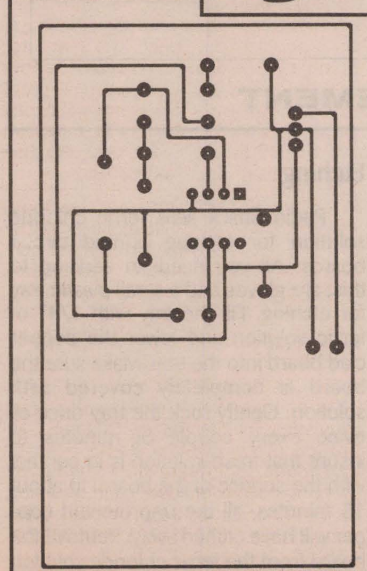
Next, the copper clad board is etched then drilled. The toner pho-

tocopying step. For our project, however, I'll assume you will be using a PCB pattern published in a magazine, such as the PCB pattern accompanying this article and using a plain paper photocopier.

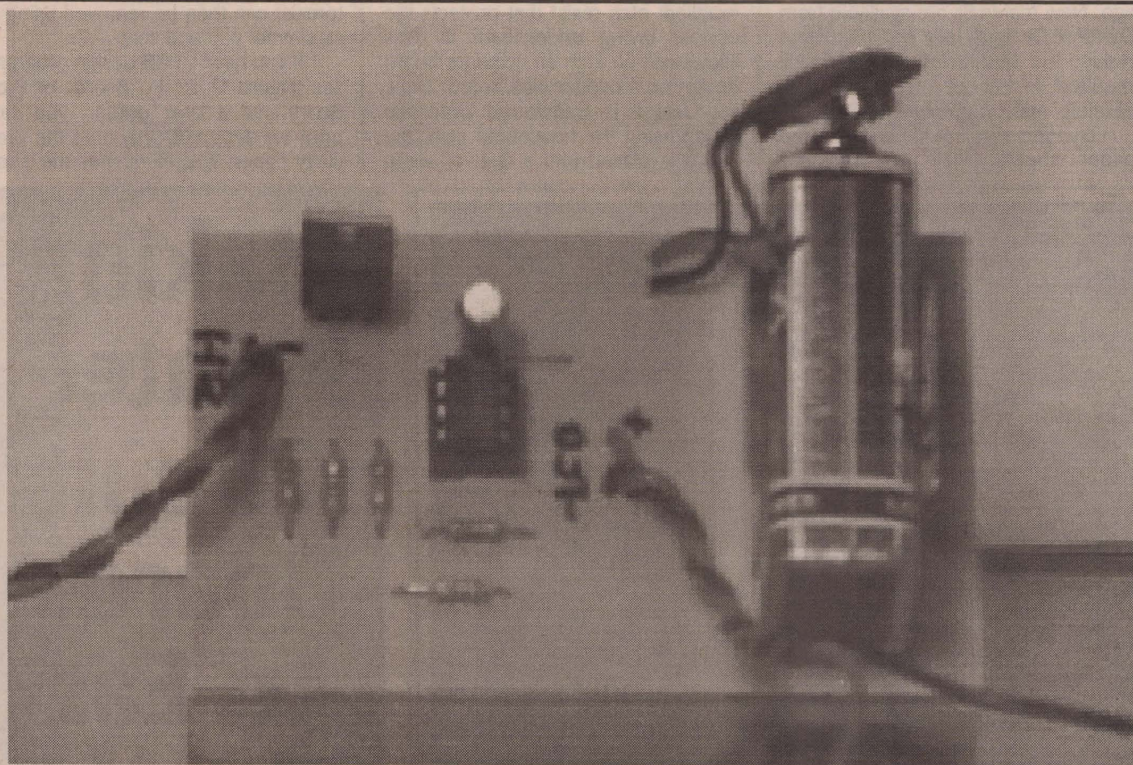
**Figure 3**



**Figure 2**







**Figure 5**

### Interface Adaptor

To get our feet wet using this new technique we will make a simple, but practical project. Figure 2 is a PC foil pattern for the interface circuit.

### First Step

The first step is to copy the PCB design onto the transfer paper using a photocopier. As stated previously, many local printers and photocopying services will photocopy the design onto the specialty paper for a nominal fee. The specialty paper comes in a standard 8.5" x 11" paper size. Chances are that your PC foil patterns will not be this large. What you may want to do is double up on the foil pattern. Or you may combine several PC patterns for different projects onto the same paper. The idea is to utilize the sheet of specialty paper as much as possible.

Clean the copper clad board before you transfer the design to it. If there is any dirt or oil on the copper

surface, it may prevent the toner pattern from adhering to it. To clean the board, use a fine wet and dry sandpaper to remove every trace of dirt and oil. Once the surface is clean, handle the board by its edges only, fingerprints are "oily" and will prevent the pattern sticking where they are present.

### Transferring the Image

Preheat a clothes iron to its "cotton" setting (approximately 300 degrees). While the iron is heating, we have three factors to consider: heat, pressure, and time.

My advice is to keep the iron's heat setting consistent at the "cotton" setting every time you use this process.

Regarding pressure, too much pressure will flatten out the trace lines. My advice is not to apply any

pressure when transferring the design. Just allow the weight of the iron itself to press down on the pattern.

Well, so far we eliminated two of

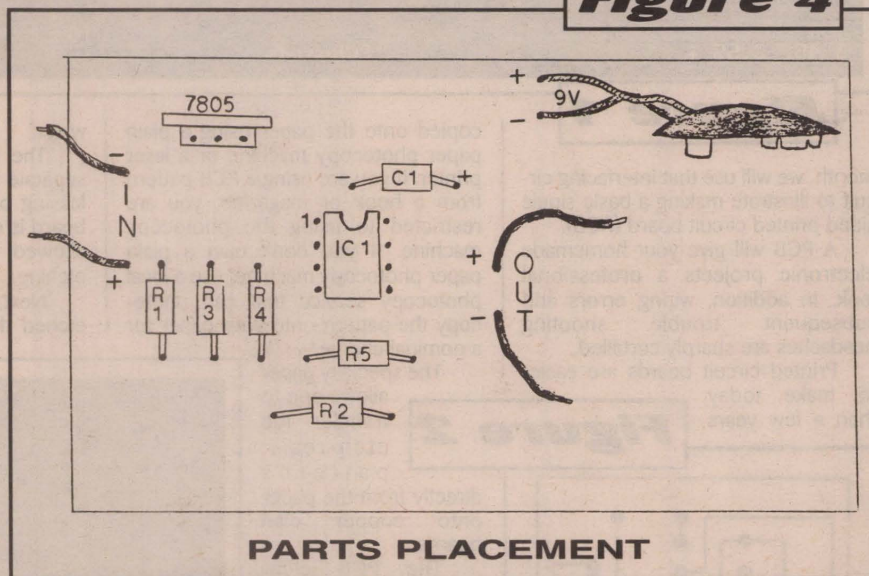
cent sheet. Place the translucent sheet over the transfer paper. This sheet protects the transfer sheet's backing from becoming chaffed and provides a good sliding surface for the iron. Start timing and bring the iron straight down on the pattern and begin moving the iron in a small circular motion (see Figure 3). Keep the iron moving at all times. When the time is up, remove the iron immediately. Carefully pick up the board (remember it's still very hot) and slip it into a dish of water. After about a minute, the paper will slide off leaving the pattern (fused toner) on the copper board.

Remove the board and inspect it (do not touch the toner pattern). If the pattern is not good, try to determine what is the cause. Some typical problems are the pattern adheres in one area and not others, flattened lines and pads that may be caused by too much pressure or over-heating.

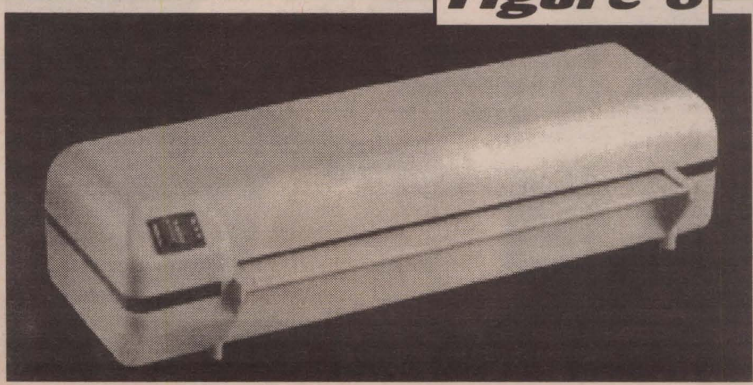
Minor imperfections in the pattern can be repaired using a specialty marker from Radio Shack. The black marker's ink is an etch resist and may be used to add or repair the toner PCB pattern.

If the pattern is okay, move to the next step: etching the board. If not, clean the board with fine wet and dry sandpaper to remove all traces of the pattern and start over.

**Figure 4**



**Figure 6**



the three variables, this leaves "time." For a small pattern such as the one we are using in this article, 1.25 to 1.5 minutes of heating with the iron is all that is required. This is assuming you are using an equally small copper board. A large board will require additional time due to its greater heat-sinking capacity.

Find a flat surface to work on. Place a small cloth towel on the work surface to protect it from the iron's heat. Place the copper board onto the work surface. Next, place the specialty paper, toner side down onto the copper board. Included with this kit of transfer paper is a protective translu-

### Etching

Radio Shack sells ferric chloride solution for etching printed circuit boards. All you need, in addition to this, are gloves and a small plastic tray for etching. Fill the tray with 1/4" of ferric solution and lower the copper clad board into the tray. Make sure the board is completely covered with solution. Gently rock the tray once or twice every couple of minutes to insure that fresh solution is in contact with the surface of the board. In about 15 minutes, all the unprotected copper will have etched away. Remove the board from the ferric chloride solution



and rinse under running water for five minutes. Discard the spent solution left in the tray.

### Alternate

Radio Shack also sells small etching kits that contain the ferric chloride solution, a few single sided copper clad boards, and a plastic tray for etching. Buying this kit will simplify your material purchases (see parts list).

### Clean & Drill

After you have rinsed the board in running water, remove the toner/resist using steel wool. You

should now be looking at a bright copper pattern. The next step is to drill all the holes you need. Radio Shack sells an inexpensive plastic hand drill made just for drilling printed circuit boards.

The drill bit supplied with the drill is a little too large for our design (and most other designs found in magazines and books). This drill bit is made for drilling chunky pads and patterns, the type that are laid out in resist tape by hand (lots of work using tape). I advise to purchase a .015 inch diameter drill bit from a local hardware store and use it for all your PCB drilling.

### Stuffing

After you've finished drilling the

board, it's time to add your components (called stuffing). This PCB project requires just a handful of components, (see parts list). Figures 4 and 5 illustrate the parts placement on the PCB.

### Going Further

As you can see, making a quality PCB is no longer the onerous task that it used to be. You can use PCBs whenever you have the chance now, instead of hand wiring.

DynaArt also sells more advanced equipment for producing PC boards. The DynaArt Fuser is a heat laminator that automatically fuses the paper to the copper clad

board (see Figure 6). This eliminates using the household iron. The Fuser allows one to produce high-quality foil patterns on copper clad boards consistently.

Beyond this, DynaArt sells equipment for producing double sided PC boards.

### Decals

There is one last facet to the DynaArt system I would like to mention. The same materials can be used to make high quality black and white or color decals for project face plates. The instructions to make decals are included with the package from DynaArt Designs. NV

## Parts List

### Toner Transfer System \$28.95

Package Includes:  
10 Sheets 8.5" x 11"  
Protector Sheet  
Full Instructions

DynaArt Designs  
3535 Stillmeadow Lane  
Lancaster, CA 93536-6624  
(805) 943-4746

Shipping for one transfer package \$4.00  
Shipping for each additional package \$1.50  
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### PC Board Kit \$10.95

Kit Includes:  
Two 4.5" x 3" copper clad board  
Resist ink pen  
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Tank  
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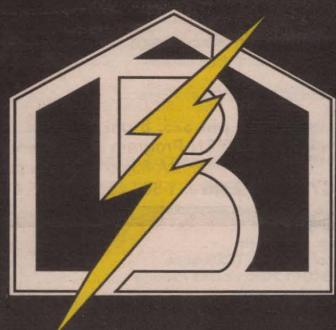
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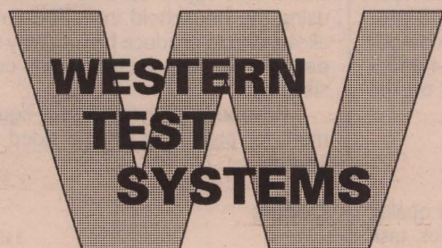
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TEK 5A18N 2 MHz Dual Trace Amplifier	\$125.00
TEK 5A19N 2 MHz Differential Amplifier	\$175.00
TEK 5B10N 2 MHz Time Base / Amplifier	\$100.00
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### STORAGE

TEK 5441 50 MHz 4-Trace Storage System, w/(2)5A48, 5B42	\$850.00
TEK 7633 100 MHz 4-Trace Storage System, w/(2)7A26, 7B53A	\$1,000.00
TEK SC503 10 MHz Dual Trace Storage Oscilloscope, TM500 series	\$700.00

### DIGITAL

TEK 2201 20 MHz Analog & Digital Oscilloscope, 20 MS/s	\$1,300.00
TEK 468 100 MHz Analog / 10 MS/s Digital Oscilloscope	\$1,500.00
TEK 7200R/7603 Programmable Digitizer w/frame, 10 MHz 1-shot/70 MHz rep	\$1,300.00

### SAMPLING

TEK 7854 400 MHz Waveform Processing frame, GPIB	\$1,500.00
TEK 7S11 Sampling Unit	\$450.00
TEK 7S14 1 GHz Dual Channel Sampling Unit	\$700.00
TEK 7T11 Sampling Sweep Unit	\$950.00
TEK R7603 1 GHz Dual Trace Sampling system, w/7S14	\$750.00

### PROBES

TEK 1101 Accessory Power Supply, for FET probes	\$250.00
TEK P6201 900 MHz 1X/10X/100X FET Probe	\$500.00

### CALIBRATION

TEK CG551/AP/TM506A Oscilloscope Calibrator, with pulse head & power module	\$3,500.00
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## WAVEFORM & GENERATORS

### FUNCTION

HP3310A 5 MHz Function Generator	\$325.00
HP3310B 5 MHz Function Generator, monocyte & burst operation	\$425.00
HP3312A 13 MHz Function Generator, sweep, AM, FM	\$850.00
SYNTEK SI-102 TTL Clock Synthesizer, 0.1 Hz-16 MHz, 6 decade resol.	\$150.00
TEK DD501 Digital Delay & Burst Gen., for function & pulse gen's	\$375.00
TEK FG502 11 MHz Function Generator, TM500 series	\$325.00
TEK FG504 40 MHz Function Generator, TM500 series	\$875.00
TEK RG501 Ramp Generator, TM500 series	\$225.00
WAVETEK 132 2 MHz VCG / Noise Generator	\$600.00
WAVETEK 135 2 MHz Lin/Log Sweep/Function Generator, tone burst	\$275.00
WAVETEK 142 10 MHz Function Generator	\$275.00
WAVETEK 148 20 MHz Function Generator, AM/FM/PM modulation	\$700.00
WAVETEK 166 50 MHz Pulse/Function Generator	\$1,250.00
WAVETEK 188 4 MHz Sweep/Function Generator, 20 Vp-p	\$275.00

### PULSE

HP214B 10 MHz Pulse Generator, 50 V/50 Ohms, auto duty cycle	\$2,250.00
HP8004A 10 MHz Pulse Generator, double pulse & offset	\$250.00
HP8007B 100 MHz Pulse Generator	\$650.00
HP8080A/81A/82A/83A 300 MHz Word Generator	\$900.00
HP8080A/91A/92A/93A 1 GHz Dual Channel Pulse Generator	\$1,650.00
HP8080A/91A/92A/93A 1 GHz Single Channel Pulse Generator	\$1,400.00
HP8080A/91A/93A 1 GHz Clock Generator	\$900.00
HP8082A 250 MHz Dual Output Pulse Generator	\$1,400.00
PHILIPS PM5785B 125 MHz Dual Output Pulse Gen., burst mode, 1 nS Tr	\$1,100.00

TEK 284 Pulse Gen., 70 pS Tr, +200 mV/50 ohms, trigger output	\$500.00
TEK PG501 50 MHz Pulse Generator, TM500 series	\$300.00
TEK PG502 250 MHz Pulse Generator, Tr<1nS, TM500 series	\$700.00
TEK PG505 100 kHz Pulse Generator, 80V, TM500 series	\$275.00
WAVETEK 801 50 MHz Pulse Generator	\$550.00

### PROGRAMMABLE

HP3325A Synthesizer / Function Generator, 1 uHz-21 MHz	\$2,500.00
HP8165A Programmable Signal Source, 1 mHz-50 MHz	\$2,600.00
TEK AWG5102 Arb.Waveform Gen., 20 MS/s, 12 bits, 50ppm synthesis <1MHz	\$1,800.00
TEK AWG5105 Arbitrary Waveform Generator, 50 MS/s, 12 bits	\$2,200.00
TEK AWG5105-opt.02 Arbitrary Waveform Generator, dual channel option	\$3,000.00
TEK PFG5505 Programmable 12 MHz Pulse/Function Generator	\$1,275.00
WAVETEK 278-opt.02 12 MHz Programmable Synthesized Function Gen., GPIB	\$1,500.00

## VOLTAGE & CURRENT

### VOLTMETERS

HP3456A 6-1/2 digit Voltmeter	\$850.00
HP3457A 7-1/2 digit Voltmeter	\$2,000.00
HP3458A-001 5-1/2 digit Multimeter, battery power option	\$375.00
KEITHLEY 181 6-1/2 digit Nanovoltmeter, 10 nV sensitivity, GPIB	\$1,500.00
SOLARTRON 7150 5-1/2 16-1/2 digit Multimeter, GPIB	\$550.00
TEK DM511-opt.02 4-1/2 Digit DMM, w/P6802 Temp. BOXED) Probe, TM500 (NEW/	\$395.00

### CALIBRATION

FLUKE 332B/AF DC Voltage Calibrator, 0-1111 V, 0-50 mA, 7 decades	\$675.00
FLUKE 343A DC Voltage Calibrator, 0-1100 V, 7 decades, 20 ppm acc.	\$1,375.00
FLUKE 510A AC Reference Standard, 10 VRMS, 19.2 kHz, <0.1% acc.	\$450.00
FLUKE 752A DC Reference Divider	\$2,500.00
VALHALLA 2500-EAC/DC Current Calibrator, DC-5 kHz, 100 uA-10 A f.s	\$1,250.00
VALHALLA 2703 AC Voltage Calibrator, 0-1200 VRMS, 10 Hz-100 kHz	\$2,200.00

### VOLTAGE SOURCES

HP6114A Precision Dual Range Power Supply, 20 V 2 A / 40 V 1 A	\$875.00
HP6115A Precision Dual Range Power Supply, 50V 0.8A / 100V 0.4A	\$875.00

### CURRENT METERS & SOURCES

DRANETZ 665A/(3)TR2019A Current Demand Analyzer, w/(3) current probes 300A max.	\$5,000.00
HP6177C DC Current Source, to 50V, 500mA	\$600.00
HP6181C DC Current Source, to 100 V, 250 mA	\$675.00
HP6186C DC Current Source, to 300V, 100mA	\$750.00
KEITHLEY 225 Current Source, 1 nA-99.9 mA, 10-100 V compliance	\$450.00
KEITHLEY 642 Electrometer	\$3,900.00
LEEDS & NORTHRUP 4360 Precision Current Shunts, 15-500 Amp.	\$650.00
TEK CT-5 High Current Transformer for P6021/A6302, to 1000A	\$650.00

## IMPEDANCE & COMPONENT TEST

### L.C.R.

BALANTINE 3205A 4 digit Micro-Ohmmeter	\$875.00
BOONTON 62AD 1 MHz Inductance Meter, 2-2000 uH	\$700.00
BOONTON 72BD 1 MHz Digital Capacitance Meter, 2-2000 pF	\$700.00
E.S.I. 296V 4-1/2 Digit LCR Bridge, 120 Hz & 1 kHz	\$850.00
HP4275A Multi-Frequency LCR Meter, 10 kHz-10 MHz	\$6,250.00
HP4328A-001 Milliohmeter, 0.001-100 ohms f.s., battery option	\$1,350.00
HP4329A High Resistance Meter, 500K ohm-2x10E16 ohm, 10-1000V	\$1,350.00
HP4342A Q Meter, 22 kHz-70 MHz, Q=5-1000	\$2,250.00
MEGURO MQ-171 VHF Q Meter, 20-230 MHz, Q=10-500, freq. readout 100 Hz	\$1,100.00

### STANDARDS

E.S.I. RS-9259-Decade Resistor, 0.01 ohm-1.2 Megohm	\$2,000.00
E.S.I. SR1010 Resistance Transfer Standards, 1 ohm-100 K/step	\$800.00
FLUKE 5450A Programmable Resistance Standard, 2 & 4 wire	\$2,750.00
GR 1409-SERIES Standard Mica Capacitors, 0.05% accuracy	\$150.00
GR 1432-N 5-Decade Resistor, to 11,111 ohms, 0.1 ohm res.	\$275.00
GR 1432-U 4-Decade Resistor, 0-111.1 ohms, 0.01 ohm resolution	\$175.00
GR 1433-X 8-Decade Resistor, to 111,111 ohms, 0.1 ohm res.	\$550.00
GR 1434-G 7-Decade Resistor, 0-1,111,111.0 ohms, 0.1 ohm res.	\$500.00

### CURVE TRACERS

TEK 577D11/177 Storage Curve Tracer, with standard test fixture	\$2,250.00
TEK 577D21/177 Curve Tracer, with standard test fixture	\$1,950.00
TEK 7CT1N Curve Tracer, to 0.5V, 7000 series	\$500.00

### T.D.R.

TEK 1502-opt.04 Time Domain Reflectometer, 0-2.000 feet, chart recorder	\$2,250.00
TEK 1503-opt.04 Time Domain Reflectometer, 0-50,000 feet, chart recorder	\$2,000.00

## POWER SUPPLIES

### SINGLE OUTPUT

GLASSMAN PS/EG-05R06 5KV CV/CL Power Supply, to 6mA	\$500.00
HP6002A-001 Programmable Power Supply, 0-50 V / 0-10 A / 200 Watts	\$875.00
HP6023A Autotracking Power Supply, to 20 V / 30 A / 240 Watts	\$1,000.00
HP6207B 160 V at 200 mA CV/CC Power Supply	\$300.00
HP6260B-027 10V at 100A CV/CC Power Supply	\$675.00
HP6261B-027 20 V at 50 A CV/CC Power Supply	\$675.00
HP6263B 20 V at 10 A CV/CC Power Supply	\$400.00
HP6267B 40 V at 10 A CV/CC Power Supply	\$550.00
HP6268B 40 V at 30 A CV/CC Power Supply	\$850.00
HP6299A Bipolar Power Supply/Amplifier, to 50 V, 1 A	\$250.00
HP6384A 4.0-5.5 V at 8 A CV/CL Power Supply	\$175.00
HP6434B 40 V at 25 A CV/CC Power Supply	\$800.00
HP6438B 60V at 5A CV/CC Power Supply	\$375.00
SORENSEN DCR 110-45T 110 V at 45 A CV/CC Power Supply	\$2,200.00

### MULTIPLE OUTPUT

HP6227B Dual 25 V at 2 A CV/CC Power Supply	\$650.00
HP6253A Dual Output 20 V 3 A CV/CC Power Supply	\$500.00
HP6255A Dual Output 40 V 1.5 A CV/CC Power Supply	\$500.00

### MISCELLANEOUS

ACME PS2L-1000 Programmable Load, 0-75 V / 0-150 A / 1000 Watts max.	\$450.00
HP59501A HP1B Isolated DAC/Power Supply Programmer	\$175.00
HP6824A Bipolar Power Supply/Amplifier, to 50 V, 1 A	\$400.00
HP6827A Bipolar Power Supply/Amplifier, to 100 V, 500 mA	\$800.00
KEPCO BOP-100-4M 100 V, 4 A Four Quadrant Bipolar Supply / Amplifier	\$1,000.00
KEPCO BOP-15-20M Bipolar Amplifier / Power Supply, to 15 V, 20 A	\$875.00
KEPCO BOP-36-5M Bipolar Op Amp/Power Supply, to 36 V, 5 A	\$550.00

## TIME & FREQUENCY

### UNIVERSAL COUNTERS

HP5314A 100 MHz/100 nS Universal Counter	\$225.00
HP5315A 100 MHz/100 nS Reciprocal Counter, high res. audio	\$550.00
HP5315A-001 100 MHz/100 nS Universal Counter, TCXO reference	\$650.00
HP5316A 100 MHz/100 nS Universal Counter, HP1B	\$750.00
HP5316A-003 100 MHz/100 nS Universal Counter, HP1B, 1.0 GHz C-chan.	\$1,000.00
HP5370B-001 100 MHz Univ. Time Int. Counter, 20 pS single shot, OCXO	\$2,250.00
HPE1420A-010,030 VXI card 200 MHz/ 2 nS Univ. Counter, TCXO & 2.5 GHz C-ch	\$1,500.00
PHILIPS PM6654/056 120 MHz/ 2 nS Programmable High Res. Counter, OCXO, GPIB	\$950.00
TEK 7015 225 MHz Universal Counter/Timer, 7000 series	\$275.00
TEK DC5004 Programmable 100 MHz/100nS Counter/Timer, TM5000 series	\$475.00
TEK DC5009-opt.01 Programmable 1 35 MHz Univ. Counter/Timer, TCXO, TM5000	\$750.00
TEK DC5010 350 MHz/3.125 nS Univ. Counter, TM5000 series	\$1,200.00
TEK DC503A 125 MHz Universal Counter/Timer, TM500 series	\$500.00
TEK DC509 135 MHz High Resolution Universal Counter/Timer, TM500	\$700.00
TEK DC510 350 MHz/3.125 nS Universal Counter, TM500 series	\$900.00

### FREQUENCY COUNTERS

EIP 545-opt.05,08 1.3 GHz Frequency Counter, OCXO and GPIB	\$1,875.00
FLUKE 7220A-opt.111 1.3 GHz Communications Counter, TCXO option	\$650.00
HP3505B/5300B-001 1.3 GHz Counter Package w/TCXO ref., high res. audio	\$450.00
HP3540A-001,011 18 GHz Frequency Counter, OCXO reference, HP1B	\$1,900.00
HP3542A-01,04,05,11 24 GHz Frequency Counter, B OCXO, DAC, and HP1	\$3,900.00
HP5345/5355/5356A-005 Pulsed/CW Frequency Counter, 0.4-18.0 GHz, 75 nS pulse	\$3,500.00
HP5361A-006 20 GHz Pulsed/CW Frequency Counter, 10 Watt protection	\$6,750.00
SYSTRON-DONNER 6054B 24 GHz Frequency Counter	\$1,875.00
SYSTRON-DONNER 6054B-opt.05,26 26.5 GHz Frequency Counter, GPIB	\$2,400.00
TEK 7D14 525 MHz Frequency Counter, 7000 series	\$175.00
TEK DC502 550 MHz Frequency Counter, TM500 series	\$400.00
TEK DC504 80 MHz Frequency Counter	\$125.00
TEK DP501 1.3 GHz Digital Prescaler, for DC503A, DC509, DC5010, etc.	\$500.00

### STANDARDS

AUSTRON 1250A Crystal Frequency Standard, 0.1 / 1.0 / 5.0 MHz, AC/batt.	\$900.00
HP5087A-031 Distribution Amp., 0.1/1.0/5.0 MHz & 4 channels each	\$1,800.00





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## AUDIO & BASEBAND

### SPECTRUM ANALYZERS

HP3580A-002 Spectrum Analyzer, 5 Hz-50 kHz, 1 Hz res., bal. input	\$1,850.00
HP3581A Wave Analyzer, 15 Hz-50 kHz	\$900.00
HP3582A FFT Spectrum An., 25.6 kHz max., dual channels, HP1B	\$2,500.00
HP3585A Spectrum Analyzer, 20 Hz-40 MHz, 3 Hz res., HP1B	\$6,000.00
HP3586C Selective Level Meter, 50 Hz-32.5 MHz, 50 & 75 ohms	\$1,750.00
HP8556A LF Section, 20 Hz-300 kHz	\$500.00
TEK 7L5-opt. 257/603 Spectrum Analyzer, 20 Hz-5 MHz, w/tracking gen. display	\$2,250.00

### DISTORTION ANALYZERS

HP334A Distortion Analyzer, 5 Hz-600 kHz, -60 dB, auto nulling	\$550.00
HP339A Distortion Analyzer, built-in low distortion osc.	\$2,400.00
TEK DA4084 Programmable Distortion Analyzer, 0.0025% THD, w/frame	\$1,500.00

### RMS VOLTMETERS

FLUKE 8920A True RMS Voltmeter, 180 uV-700 V, 10 Hz-20 MHz	\$700.00
HP3400A RMS Voltmeter, 10 Hz-10 MHz	\$250.00
HP400FLAC Voltmeter, 100 uV-300 V f.s., 20 Hz-4 MHz	\$200.00

### OSCILLATORS

FLUKE 6011A Synthesized Signal Gen., 10 Hz-11 MHz, 10 Hz res.	\$1,200.00
HP204C Oscillator, 5 Hz-1.2 MHz, 5 VRMS	\$150.00
HP204D Oscillator, 5 Hz-1.2 MHz, 5 VRMS, 80 dB step attenuator	\$200.00
HP205A Sine/Square Wave Generator, 4 Hz-2 MHz, 5 VRMS max.	\$225.00
HP4204A Synthesizer, 10 Hz-1 MHz, 1 mV-30 V / 600 Ohms	\$350.00
HP652A Test Oscillator, 10 Hz-10 MHz	\$300.00
ROCKLAND 5100 Synthesizer, 1 mHz-1.999999999 MHz	\$400.00

### FILTERS, MISCELLANEOUS

KROHN-HITE 3202 Dual High-Pass/Low-Pass Filter, 20 Hz-2 MHz, 24 dB/oct	\$600.00
KROHN-HITE 3342 Dual HP/LP Filter, 0.001 Hz-99.9 kHz, 48 dB/octave	\$1,100.00
KROHN-HITE 3343 Dual HP/LP Filter, 0.01 Hz-99.9 kHz, 48 dB/octave	\$950.00
P.A.R. 189 Filter/Amplifier, 0.1 Hz-110 kHz, variable Q & gain	\$400.00
TEK AM502 Differential Amplifier, 0.1 Hz-1 MHz, TM500 series	\$575.00

## RF & MICROWAVE

### SPECTRUM ANALYZERS

HP11970A WR28 Harmonic Mixer, 26.5-40 GHz	\$1,100.00
HP11970U WR19 Harmonic Mixer, 40-60 GHz	\$1,400.00
HP5371A Modulation Domain Analyzer, 125 mHz-500 MHz	\$5,900.00
HP8406A Comb Generator, 1/10/100 MHz increments, to 5 GHz	\$450.00
HP8443A Tracking Generator, 0.1-110 MHz, LED display	\$700.00
HP8444A Tracking Generator, 0.1-1300 MHz, for 8554B	\$800.00
HP8444A-059 Tracking Generator, 0.5-1500 MHz, for 8554, 8568, etc.	\$1,500.00
HP8445B Preselector, 1.8-18.0 GHz, for HP 8555A	\$800.00
HP8552B IF Section	\$750.00
HP8553B RF Section, 1 kHz-110 MHz	\$500.00
HP8554B RF Section, 0.1-1250 MHz	\$800.00
HP8554B/8552B/141T Spectrum Analyzer, 100 kHz-1250 MHz, 100 Hz resolution	\$2,000.00
HP8555A RF Section, 0.01-18 GHz	\$950.00
HP8555A/8552B/141T Spectrum Analyzer System, 10 MHz-18 GHz, 100 Hz res.	\$2,250.00
HP8558B/181TR Spectrum Analyzer, 0.1-1500 MHz, 1 kHz res., w/display	\$2,250.00
HP8559A/181TR Spectrum Analyzer, 0.01-21 GHz, 1 kHz res., w/display	\$4,500.00
TEK 494P Spectrum Analyzer, 1 kHz res., w/display	\$13,000.00
TEK 496P Spectrum Analyzer, 1 kHz-1.8 GHz, 30 Hz res., GPIB	\$5,500.00
TEK 7L14/7603 Spectrum Analyzer, 10 kHz-1.8 GHz, 30 Hz res., w/display	\$3,200.00
TEK 7L18/7603 Spectrum Analyzer, 1.5-18.0 GHz, 30 Hz res., w/display	\$3,400.00
TEK TR503 Tracking Generator, 0.1-1800 MHz, for 492/4/5/6	\$1,750.00

### NETWORK ANALYZERS

HP11665B Modulator, 0.15-18.0 GHz, for use with 8755/6/7	\$375.00
HP8405A Vector Voltmeter, 1-1000 MHz	\$700.00
HP8407A/8412A/8601A Network Analyzer, 100 kHz-110 MHz, with sweep generator	\$1,250.00
HP85020A Directional Bridge, 0.01-4.3 GHz, N(f), for 8755/6/7	\$750.00
HP85021A Directional Bridge, 0.01-18.0 GHz, APC7, for 8755/6/7	\$1,200.00
HP85050D APC7 Calibration Kit, for 8510 series	\$1,100.00
HP8755C/11666A-02/181T Scalar Network An. w/dir. bridge, 10 MHz-18 GHz & frame	\$1,750.00
HP8756A Scalar Network Analyzer	\$3,000.00
NARDA 7000A/7202/7206 Microwave Multimeter System, scalar analysis 0.1-18 GHz	\$1,950.00
WILTRON 560 3x-7550 Scalar Network Analyzer, w/3 detectors, 0.01-18.5 GHz	\$2,000.00
WILTRON 560 560-98K50 Scalar Network Analyzer, w/VSWR Autotester 0.01-40 GHz	\$2,950.00
WILTRON 640/G50/E(2)/7B50(2) Network An., w/1-1500 MHz source, (2) log amp, (2) det.	\$1,675.00

### SIGNAL GENERATORS

BOONTON 1020 Synthesized Signal Gen., 0.15-540 MHz, GPIB	\$1,850.00
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BOONTON 102C Signal Generator, 0.45-520 MHz, AM, FM	\$850.00
COMSTRON FS-2000-4 Synthesizer, 10 MHz-4 GHz, 1 uS speed, -140 dBc noise	\$15,000.00
FLUKE 6050A-488 Synth. Signal Gen., 100 kHz-1040 MHz, 100 Hz res., GPIB	\$3,500.00
FLUKE 6050A/AN Synthesized Signal Gen., 10 kHz-520 MHz, 10 Hz res, GPIB	\$2,000.00
GIGATRONICS 875/86 Levelled Multiplier, 26.5-40.0 & 50.0-75.0 GHz outputs	\$8,000.00
HP85100V Frequency Mult., 10-15 GHz in / 50-75 GHz out >0 dBm	\$4,250.00
HP8656A Synthesized Signal Gen., 0.1-990 MHz, 100 Hz res., HP1B	\$3,250.00
HP86601A RF Plug-in, 10 kHz-110 MHz, for 8660 series	\$650.00
HP8660C/86602B/86633B Synthesized Signal Generator, 1-1300 MHz, AM, FM, HP1B	\$2,750.00
HP8660C/86603A-002/34A Synthesized Sig. Gen., 1-2600 MHz, phase mod. to 10 MHz	\$4,500.00
HP8683B Signal Generator, 2.3-6.5 GHz, AM, WBFM, Pulse	\$5,000.00
HP8684B Signal Generator, 5.4-12.5 GHz, AM, WBFM, Pulse	\$5,000.00
ROHDE & SCHWARTZ SMK Signal Gen., 10 Hz-140 MHz, -130 dBc/20 kHz phase noise	\$1,750.00
WILTRON 6742A Synthesizer/Sweep Generator, 18.0-26.5 & 26.5-40.0 GHz	\$9,000.00

### SWEEP GENERATORS

EIP 928-opt. 9201 Sweep Gen., 0.1-18.6 GHz, step atten., power sweep, GPIB	\$4,000.00
HP8350A/86290B-H08 Programmable Sweep System, 2.0-22.0 GHz, +4 dBm I/d	\$5,500.00
HP8601A Generator/Sweeper, 0.1-110 MHz, +20 dBm levelled	\$500.00
HP8620C Sweep Oscillator Frame	\$550.00
HP8620C-011 Sweep Oscillator Frame, HP1B programmable	\$675.00
HP86210A RF Plug-In, 3-350 MHz, +13 dBm levelled	\$450.00
HP86222A-002 RF Plug-in, 10-2400 MHz, 70 dB step attenuator	\$1,750.00
HP8622B-002 RF Plug-In, 10-2400 MHz, crystal markers, 0-70 dB atten	\$1,950.00
HP86240B RF Plug-in, 2.0-8.4 GHz, +13 dBm levelled	\$1,000.00
HP86240C RF Plug-in, 3.6-8.6 GHz, +16 dBm levelled	\$1,200.00
HP86241A-001 RF Plug-in, 3.2-6.5 GHz, +8 dBm levelled	\$500.00
HP86242D-004, 008 RF Plug-In, 5.9-9.0 GHz, +10 dBm levelled	\$500.00
HP86260A RF Plug-in, 12.0-18.0 GHz, +10 dBm unlevelled	\$1,000.00
HP86290A RF Plug-in, 2.0-18.0 GHz, +7 dBm levelled	\$1,750.00
HP86290B RF Plug-In, 2.0-18.6 GHz, +10 dBm levelled	\$2,000.00
WAVETEK 1067 Sweep Generator, 1-400 MHz, +10 dBm, 75 ohms	\$500.00
WAVETEK 2001 Sweep Gen., 1-1400 MHz in 3 bands, +10 dBm levelled	\$850.00
WAVETEK 2002 Sweep Gen., 1-2500 MHz in 4 bands, +10 dBm levelled	\$1,500.00
WAVETEK 954 Signal/Sweep Generator, 3.7-7.6 GHz, +7 dBm unlevelled	\$2,000.00
WAVETEK 962 Sweep Generator, 1.0-4.0 GHz, markers, +12 dBm unlvld	\$2,500.00
WAVETEK/MARCONI 8910 Programmable Sweep Generator, 2-20 GHz, +10 dBm, GPIB	\$5,500.00

### POWER METERS

BOONTON 42B/41-4E Analog Power Meter, with 1 MHz-18 GHz sensor	\$650.00
BOONTON 42B/42A-S3 Analog Power Meter, with 1 MHz-8.4 GHz N(f) sensor	\$375.00
GENERAL MICROWAVE 476/4240A Power Meter & Sensor, 0.01-18 GHz, -35 to +10 dBm	\$375.00
HP11683A Range Calibrator, for HP 435/6/7/8	\$750.00
HP432A/478A Power Meter, 0.01-10 GHz, -20 dBm to +10 dBm f.s.	\$375.00
HP432A/478B Power Meter, 0.01-18 GHz, -20 to +10 dBm f.s.	\$500.00
HP432C Autorangeing Digital Power Meter, 10 uW-10 mW f.s.	\$425.00
HP435A/4841A Power Meter, 10 MHz-18 GHz, -30 to +20 dBm	\$1,000.00
HP435A/482A Power Meter, 0.1-4200 MHz, -30 to +20 dBm	\$1,000.00
HP435A/482B Power Meter, 0.1-4200 MHz, -15 to +34 dBm	\$1,150.00
HP435A/484A Power Meter, 10 MHz-18 GHz, -70 to -20 dBm	\$1,000.00
HPK486A WR42 Thermistor Mount, 18.0-26.5 GHz, for 432 series	\$400.00
HPQ486A Power Sensor, 33.0-50.0 GHz, WR22 waveguide, for 432 series	\$1,500.00
HPR486A WR28 Thermistor Mount, 26.5-40.0 GHz, for 432 series	\$400.00
WAVETEK 1034A Portable Analog Power Meter, 1 MHz-18 GHz	\$375.00

### RF MILLIVOLTMETERS

MILLIVAC MV-723BBS RF Millivoltmeter, 10 kHz-1.2 GHz, 1 mV-30 V	\$375.00
RACAL 9303 TRMS Level Meter, 10 kHz-2 GHz, -77 to +23 dBm, GPIB	\$875.00

### AMPLIFIERS, MISCELLANEOUS

ALITECH 7616 Noise Source, 1.0-12.4 GHz, N(m), 15 dB ENR	\$375.00
ALITECH 7618E Noise Source, 10 MHz-18 GHz, SMA(m), 15 dB ENR	\$675.00
BOONTON 82AD FM/AM Modulation Meter, 10-1300 MHz	\$1,000.00
ENI 240L Amplifier, 50 dB, 20 kHz-10 MHz, 40 Watts	\$1,250.00
ENI 600L Amplifier, 24 dB, 0.8-1020 MHz, 150 mW	\$450.00
ENI A150 Amplifier, 55 dB, 0.3-35.0 MHz, 150 Watts	\$2,000.00
ENI A300 Amplifier, 55 dB, 0.3-35.0 MHz, 300 Watts	\$3,500.00
HP346B Noise Source, 0.01-18.0 GHz, 15 dB ENR, APC3 5(m)	\$950.00
HP8447F-H64 Dual Amp, 9 kHz-50 MHz/ 28 dBG & 0.1-1300 MHz/ 25 dBG	\$1,100.00
LOGMETRICS A300L TWT Amplifier, 20 Watts, 1.0-2.0 GHz, gain >30 dB	\$2,200.00
M.P.D. LAB2-1020-2A Amplifier, 34 dB, 1.0-2.0 GHz, 2 Watts	\$1,000.00
M.P.D. LAB2-110-1E Amplifier, 30 dB, 100-1000 MHz, 1 Watt	\$700.00
M.P.D. LAB2-714-3A Amplifier, 34 dB, 0.7-1.4 GHz, 3 Watts	\$1,000.00
MICROWAVE SEMI. CORP. MC5112 Noise Source, 25.5 dB ENR, 1.0-12.4 GHz, N(m), +28 VDC	\$325.00

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ANZAC MDC-171 Mixer, RF/LO=4-18 GHz, LO +7 dBm, IF=DC-4 GHz, SMA	\$135.00
GR 874-LTL Constant Impedance Trombone Line, 0-44 cm, DC-2 GHz	\$450.00
GR 900-LB Precision Slotted Line, 0.3-8.5 GHz, 50 Ohms 0.1% tol.	\$450.00
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HP 11590A-001 Bias Network, 1-18 GHz, APC7	\$400.00
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HP33300 Detector, 0.01-33.0 GHz, APC3.5(m)/SMC(f)	\$275.00
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HP767D Dual Directional Coupler, 20 dB, 1.9-4.1 GHz	\$150.00
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HP8495B-001 Step Attenuator, 0-70 dB, DC-18.0 GHz, N(f/f)	\$400.00
HP8497K-004 Programmable Attenuator, 0-90 dB, DC-26.5 GHz, APC3.5	\$600.00
HP911C Coaxial Sliding Load, 2.0-26.5 GHz, APC3.5	\$450.00
HPK532A WR42 Frequency Meter, 18.0-26.5 GHz	\$500.00
HPK752A WR42 Directional Coupler, 3 dB, 18.0-26.5 GHz	\$425.00
HPK752C WR42 Directional Coupler, 10 dB, 18.0-26.5 GHz	\$425.00
HPK752D WR42 Directional Coupler, 20 dB, 18.0-26.5 GHz	\$425.00
HPQ532A WR22 Frequency Meter, 33.0-50.0 GHz	\$1,500.00
HPR532A WR28 Frequency Meter, 26.5-40.0 GHz	\$500.00
KRYTAR 202020016 Directional Det., 2-20 GHz, SMA(f/m)/SMC(f), 10 uW/uW	\$200.00
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NARDA 3090-SERIES Precision High Directivity Couplers	\$225.00
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PASSIVE MW. RHG-1003 WR28 Isolator, 20 dB, 26.5-40.0 GHz, loss <1 dB	\$250.00
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TRGB551 WR22 Precision Meter, 33.0-50.0 GHz	\$550.00
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WEINSCHIEL 1579 Power Divider, DC-26.5 GHz, APC3.5(f/f/f) "NEW"	\$275.00
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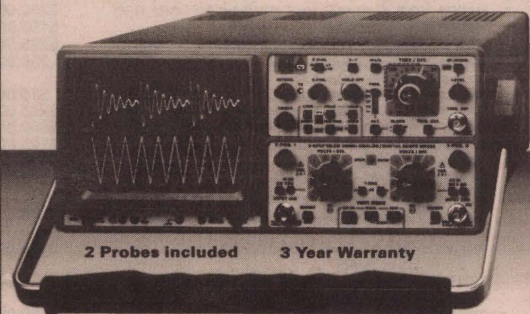
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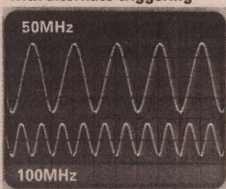


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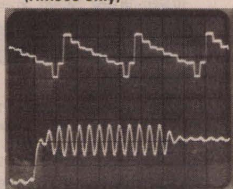
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#### #80 TEST EQUIPMENT cont.

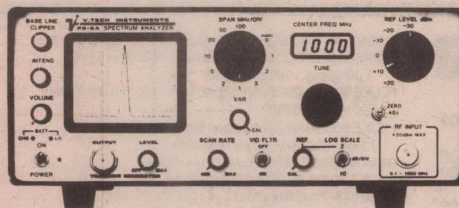
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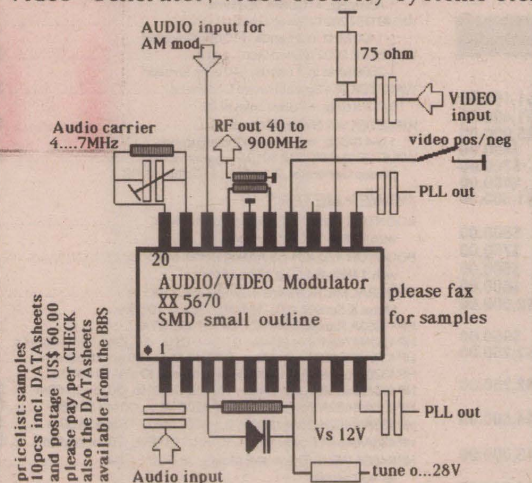
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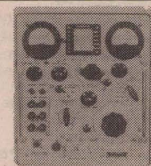
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11507A, 11521A. Hadron 108. Narda Mi-  
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da, PO Box 390613, San Diego, CA 92149.  
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milton Instruments: 619-439-1345.

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# AMATEUR ROBOTICS

**A.** K. Peters, Ltd., publishers of *Mobile Robots*, by Joe Jones and Anita Flynn, are scheduled to release another new robotics book at the end of June 1995. If the pre-publication review copy I looked at recently is any indication, I think Klaus and his staff have another winner on their hands.

The book, entitled *Sensors for Mobile Robots*, was written by H.R. (Bart) Everett, a retired Commander in the United States Navy and a former director of the Office of Robotics and Autonomous Systems at the Naval Sea Systems Command in Washington, DC.

*Sensors* deals almost exclusively with the theory and application of sensor systems. It covers a bewildering variety of sensors, describing the effect sensed, how to install and effectively use the sensor, weaknesses and strengths of the sensor and the returned data, and how to factor the returned data into developing a more accurate picture of the robot's world.

Often, the sensor discussed is available in one or more commercial configurations. In these cases, Bart usually includes a discussion of the more popular units, and sometimes provides pictures or graph-

ics of existing robot systems built with the commercial sensor units. This helps you gauge how easily such a system might fit into your plans.

I knew I was going to like this book before I even finished the forward, written by Dr. Rodney A. Brooks of the MIT AI Lab. Rod Brooks makes a strong case for non-visual robotics sensors, arguing that some robot builders tend to focus on those sensors most like the system we find the most vivid: our eyesight.

Nature, however, has devoted millennia to developing non-visual sensors that are remarkably effective. Rod mentions the cockroach, specifically.

Any of you who have lived in the Arizona desert and tried to demonstrate your evolutionary superiority over a cockroach probably found it a maddening experience. Simply trying to stomp a cockroach usually makes you look like a fool.

You can try the quick stomp, but the roach usu-

ally skitters away long before your foot gets there. You can try the sneaky method, where you slowly lower your foot until it's so close to the bug you couldn't miss if you tried, but you usually miss.

And I won't even try to describe trying to hit a moving cockroach with anything slower than a 9 mm slug. (No, don't ask!)

According to Rod, it isn't the bug's eyes that make it so hard to hit; it's the 30,000 wind-sensitive hairs attached to the roach's legs. These hairs detect minute changes in wind currents, and the bug can respond in only 10 milliseconds. The roach can detect your approaching foot, then change speed and direction far faster than you can react.

And we think our vision sensors make us such hot stuff!

## Back to the book

Chapter 1 consists of an introduction describing some of Bart's earliest robots. WALTER, a science fair project from the mid-1960s, stood five feet tall and used an AC power cord for its current source. Bart scrounged actuators for sewing machines, a movie projector, a kitchen mixer, and bicycles.

WALTER used vacuum tubes for its electronics, had two microphones for ears, and a capacitive sensor on one of the two grippers. Bart writes that this sensor was specifically added to discourage pulling and prodding from curious onlookers.

"... any stray finger that poked its way into the open claw would be met by a startling and decidedly effective warning snip. The resounding thump of the actuating solenoid only served to accentuate the message."

I'll leave the story of WALTER's demise undiscussed, other than to say it contains warnings all of us would do well to heed.

Bart went on to create CRAWLER I in the late 1960s, this time for a junior-year science fair. CRAWLER I was battery operated, fully autonomous, with tank-like treads for locomotion, a rotating photocell scanner for tracking a homing beacon, and tactile sensors made of guitar strings.

Lacking BOT-Boards in those days, Bart "programmed" his robot using an ingenious system built on a circular punched-paper disc. This program disc measured about 12 inches in diameter, and con-

```
*
* SBasic compiler (Beta 0.3) for the 68HC11
*
varbeg      equ      $00c0
codebeg     equ      $b600
stkbeg      equ      $00ff
```

```
org varbeg      start of variables
rmb 52          room for 26 16-bit vars
```

```
org codebeg     start of code
start lds #stkbeg top of stack
```

```
* foo.bas(1): '
* foo.bas(2): ' prog3.bas      test program to
* foo.bas(3): '                68hc11 SBasic
* foo.bas(4): '
* foo.bas(5): '
* foo.bas(6): '
* foo.bas(7): ' Declare some constants
* foo.bas(8): '
* foo.bas(9): '
* foo.bas(10): const portb = $1004
* foo.bas(11): const baud = $102b
* foo.bas(12): const sccr2 = $102d
* foo.bas(13): const scsr = $102e
* foo.bas(14): const scdr = $102f
* foo.bas(15): '
* foo.bas(16): const MAXN = 10000
* foo.bas(17): const MINN = 1000
* foo.bas(18): '
* foo.bas(19): '
* foo.bas(20): '
* foo.bas(21): '
* foo.bas(22): ' Initialize the target
* foo.bas(23): ' default maximum. Initialize
* foo.bas(24): '
* foo.bas(25): '
* foo.bas(26): x = MAXN
ldd #10000
std varbeg+46
```

```
* foo.bas(27): pokeb baud, $30
ldd #48
stab 4139

* foo.bas(28): pokeb sccr2, $0c
* foo.bas(29): '
ldd #12
stab 4141

* foo.bas(30): '
* foo.bas(31): ' Do forever...
* foo.bas(32): '
* foo.bas(33): '
* foo.bas(34): while 1 = 1
* foo.bas(35): '
whl000
ldd #1
cpd #1
beq *+5
jmp whl001
```

```
* foo.bas(36): '
* foo.bas(37): ' Initialize a counter, turn
* foo.bas(38): ' count up until the counter
* foo.bas(39): '
* foo.bas(40): '
* foo.bas(41): pokeb portb, $ff
ldd #255
stab 4100

* foo.bas(42): for n=0 to x
ldd #0
std varbeg+26
for000
ldd varbeg+26
cpd varbeg+46
ble *+5
jmp for001

* foo.bas(43): next
ldd #1
addd varbeg+26
std varbeg+26
jmp for000

for001
* foo.bas(44): '
* foo.bas(45): '
* foo.bas(46): ' Initialize a counter, turn
* foo.bas(47): ' count up until the counter
* foo.bas(48): '
* foo.bas(49): '
* foo.bas(50): pokeb portb, 0
ldd #0
stab 4100

* foo.bas(51): for n=0 to x
ldd #0
std varbeg+26
for002
ldd varbeg+26
cpd varbeg+46
ble *+5
jmp for003

* foo.bas(52): next
ldd #1
addd varbeg+26
std varbeg+26
jmp for002

for003
* foo.bas(53): '
* foo.bas(54): '
* foo.bas(55): ' Test for a character from the
* foo.bas(56): ' and echo anything received.
* foo.bas(57): '
* foo.bas(58): '
* foo.bas(59): if $20 and peekb(scsr) = $20
clra
ldab 4142
anda #0
andb #32
cpd #32
beq *+5
jmp if000

* foo.bas(60): c = peekb(scdr)
clra
ldab 4143
```

```
* foo.bas(27): pokeb baud, $30
ldd #48
stab 4139
```

```
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* foo.bas(29): '
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std varbeg+26
for000
ldd varbeg+26
cpd varbeg+46
ble *+5
jmp for001

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ldd #1
addd varbeg+26
std varbeg+26
jmp for000

for001
* foo.bas(44): '
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* foo.bas(48): '
* foo.bas(49): '
* foo.bas(50): pokeb portb, 0
ldd #0
stab 4100

* foo.bas(51): for n=0 to x
ldd #0
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for002
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cpd varbeg+46
ble *+5
jmp for003

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ldd #1
addd varbeg+26
std varbeg+26
jmp for002

for003
* foo.bas(53): '
* foo.bas(54): '
* foo.bas(55): ' Test for a character from the
* foo.bas(56): ' and echo anything received.
* foo.bas(57): '
* foo.bas(58): '
* foo.bas(59): if $20 and peekb(scsr) = $20
clra
ldab 4142
anda #0
andb #32
cpd #32
beq *+5
jmp if000

* foo.bas(60): c = peekb(scdr)
clra
ldab 4143
```

```
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jmp for003

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ldd #1
addd varbeg+26
std varbeg+26
jmp for002

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stab 4100

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for002
ldd varbeg+26
cpd varbeg+46
ble *+5
jmp for003

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ldd #1
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jmp for002

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ldab 4142
anda #0
andb #32
cpd #32
beq *+5
jmp if000

* foo.bas(60): c = peekb(scdr)
clra
ldab 4143
```

```
* foo.bas(60): c = peekb(scdr)
clra
ldab 4143
```

```
std varbeg+4

* foo.bas(61): pokeb scdr, c
ldd varbeg+4
stab 4143

* foo.bas(62): endif
if000

* foo.bas(63): wend
jmp whl000
whl001

* foo.bas(64): '
* foo.bas(65): end
bra *

* foo.bas(66): '
* foo.bas(67): reset vector
org $ffe
fdb start

end
```

Output from the SBasic compiler



tained groups of punched holes. The hole patterns encoded each of the 16 possible input sensor arrangements, and each of the corresponding actuator responses.

By altering the holes controlling the actuator patterns, Bart could precode his machine's responses to each possible input combination.

CRAWLER I simply spun the disc until its scanning photocells saw a group of sensor holes matching the current configuration. It then stopped the disc and read the actuator response for this pattern from the output section of the disc, and changed its actuators as needed.

This technique, updated to today's technology, could serve as a good stepping stone toward fully microcontroller-driven robots.

Start by replacing the paper disc with a 27c64 or other cheap EPROM. Tie all of the robot's sensor signals to selected address lines on the EPROM. Wire some or all of the EPROM's data lines to your actuators. Then burn the proper responses to each possible input combination into the EPROM.

Viola! A one-chip robot controller, suitable for science fair projects and class demonstrations. And, incidentally, capable of quite sophisticated behaviors, given proper programming. For example, you could hook one of the EPROM's data lines back to an address line, creating a feedback loop. Or, you could add a slow 555 timer as an input sensor, which would give your robot a "heartbeat" or a timing reference.

(Actually, I like this idea a lot. You might see more on this concept in a later column.)

Bart followed CRAWLER I with CRAWLER II, a tethered, 117 VAC robot that was apparently built in his early years at Georgia Tech.

ROBART I was built during Bart's thesis work at the Naval Postgraduate School, in 1982. ROBART I contained a huge assortment of sensors, as well as a SYM-1 6502-based microcontroller board. Designed as a security and patrol machine, ROBART I could detect and respond to fire, smoke, flooding, earthquake, and toxic gas. It could detect intruders using optical or ultrasonic motion detection.

Bart's robots became increasingly sophisticated, with larger numbers of sensors and actuators over the years. No doubt it helped that he didn't have to pick up the tab for all of his machines' additions; he was able to evaluate sensor systems beyond the budget of many robot hobbyists.

You have to see the pictures of ROBART III, a security robot that sports a six-barreled Gatling-style tranquilizer dart gun. The text contains quite a bit of detail on the gun's construction and operation. Very scary!

Chapter 1 concludes, as do all of the other chapters, with a multi-page list of references for relevant papers and publications. For all the information contained in this book — and it contains a lot — the extensive and up-to-date citation list may be the book's greatest asset.

Bart has compiled over 500 references for this book, many of them as recent as 1995. Since the references are broken down on a per-chapter basis, you can skip to a desired chapter, read Bart's information, then find additional information by skimming the chapter's reference list.

The power of this technique becomes immediately apparent when you start on Chapter 2, dealing with dead-reckoning navigation. Bart describes several types of odometry sensors, such as potentiometers, synchros and resolvers, various kinds of optical encoders, and Doppler and inertial navigation systems.

He then writes about mobility configurations. This refers to the arrangement of steering and driving wheels; assuming, of course, that your 'bot has

wheels or treads. Different configurations accumulate dead-reckoning errors differently, and you can improve your robot's ability to correct for these errors if you understand the weaknesses of your chosen system.

The chapter concludes with over 40 references on steering mechanisms and dead-reckoning navigation. If you want to know a LOT more about, say, Ackerman steering, read Bart's write-up, then head for the library or Internet and check out his references.

By the way, many of these citations actually refer to parts of a larger, more diverse reference. For example, Bart cites papers in Chapter 2 that describe robotic wheelchairs, autonomous robotic cars, mining robots, and tele-operation of off-road vehicles.

Following chapters go into similar detail on various sensor systems, and on using data collected from those systems. Chapter 3 discusses tactile and proximity sensors, Chapter 4 goes into triangulation ranging, Chapter 5 covers time-of-flight (TOF) ranging, Chapter 6 deals with various ranging systems built on phase-shift measurement and frequency modulation, and Chapter 7 covers several other ranging techniques.

Each of these chapters covers a variety of methods for acquiring data. This usually includes both active and passive systems. It also includes, where appropriate, sensors that respond to a wide range of energies, such as infrared (IR), acoustic (sonar), radio-frequency (RF), laser, and microwave.

Chapter 8 goes into great detail on sonar systems, while Chapter 9 handles electromagnetic energy systems, including optical and radar systems.

Starting with Chapter 10, on collision avoidance, Bart begins looking at sensor systems designed to fulfill specific tasks. For example, he discusses navigation control strategies, or general techniques your robot can use to avoid collisions with local obstacles. Each discussion is accompanied by suitable equations and charts to simplify and explain the concepts. Where necessary, Bart recommends sensor systems that fit well with each strategy.

Chapter 11 covers guide path following, where the robot senses and tracks some type of course-defining agent or material. Here, the sensors must accurately locate the agent, then maintain "lock" as the robot performs its tasks.

Chapter 12 deals with magnetic compasses. This type of sensor has a large number of commercial designs available, and his comments on the different systems make interesting reading. This chapter covers a lot of ground, and I strongly recommend you check Bart's material on compasses before trying to add one to your own machine.

Chapter 13 discusses issues related to gyroscopes. While this is not usually a sensor one associates with a hobby machine, there has been considerable traffic in comp.robotics lately on using gyros, and this material could answer a lot of questions.

Chapter 14 handles position locating systems built around RF components. Such systems could be as simple as a couple of home-built RF beacons, or as technologically advanced as the global positioning system (GPS) satellites. Bart discusses the workings of several commercial systems, including Loran and Navstar.

Chapter 15 provides similar treatment of various optical and sonar position locating systems. In some cases, these designs are commercially available, either as components or as total robotic systems. For example, IS Robotics' Genghis walking robots use a pair of sonar pingers, located at two points on the floor or wall, to locate themselves within their world.

```

' prog3.bas      test program to demonstrate
'               68hc11 SBasic
'
' Declare some constants
'
const portb = $1004
const baud = $102b
const sccr2 = $102d
const scsr = $102e
const scdr = $102f

const MAXN = 10000
const MINN = 1000

'
' Initialize the target variable (x) to the
' default maximum. Initialize the serial port.
'
x = MAXN
pokeb baud, $30
pokeb sccr2, $0c

' Do forever...
while 1 = 1

' Initialize a counter, turn the LED on, then
' count up until the counter hits the target.

    pokeb portb, $ff
    for n=0 to x
    next

' Initialize a counter, turn the LED off, then
' count up until the counter hits the target.

    pokeb portb, 0
    for n=0 to x
    next

' Test for a character from the serial port,
' and echo anything received.

    if $20 and peekb(scsr) = $20
        c = peekb(scdr)
        pokeb scdr, c
    endif
wend
end
    
```

Sample SBasic source file

Chapter 16 covers world referencing using fixed landmarks, such as walls, doorways, and ceilings. This type of referencing is usually used to cancel out any accumulated dead-reckoning errors, since the robot has reached a known landmark. Bart describes how ROBART II used elements of this system to locate and confirm its recharging station, and also zero out its navigation errors.

The final chapter deals with a variety of application-specific sensors.

This covers the strange sensors that you might have to add to, say, a security robot that would not be needed in your general-purpose mobile robot.

Here Bart limits his discussion to two applications with which he is most familiar: physical security and automated inventory assessment. Some of the more colorful applications, such as hazardous material handling, are not explored. Still, he provides good coverage of a variety of passive IR (PIR), acoustical, vibration, pyroelectric, and other sensors.

The book concludes with a listing of cited sources, so you know who to call to order copies of any of the cited literature.

I didn't see much missing from this book, certainly not in the area of sensor coverage. Anything you would normally need in a robot confined to a human-benign environment is discussed.

I did notice that the book lacks an index. This could have been simply because my copy is not a publication draft; I certainly hope that is the reason. Failing to provide an index to a book like this would



be a serious, though certainly not fatal, omission.

Another item curiously missing was any means of checking on-board power levels. Given the wide variety of batteries available, and the number of different power-control and charging systems in use, I would have liked some discussion on how a robot can determine that it is hungry. Perhaps the large number of possibilities to cover precluded any such discussion.

You might have noticed that I did not mention vision systems. *Sensors* focuses (interesting . . .) on non-vision sensors, leaving discussion of vision-based systems to other writers. Bart does, from time to time, make minor references to aspects of robot vision, but it is cursory only; certainly not in the depth he devotes to, for example, sonar.

And you will be disappointed if you go into *Sensors for Mobile Robots* expecting to find implementation-specific software. This book covers sensors only (well, and some actuators); you get to supply the software for your system.

But this book more than makes amends for these minor faults. This is, simply, an astounding work, in both the range and depth of its coverage.

From the most mundane to some fairly bizarre sensors, Bart Everett provides both immediately useful information on theory and application, and (perhaps more valuable) citations to definitive references. These references are often papers developed by the sensor's designer, or in-depth reports of real-world robots that used the sensor in part of its suite.

Get a copy of this book, and keep it on the shelf next to your copy of *Mobile Robots*. I guarantee you'll go back to both works often.

## 68hc11 SBasic

For years, I waited for someone to develop a Basic compiler for the 68hc11, but no one ever did. At least, I haven't run across it yet in all my years of scrounging.

There's something about Basic that is, well, basic. As in simple, easy-to-write software. Face it, almost anyone with a PC has access to some form of Basic, and most such robotic experimenters have tried their hand at writing Basic programs.

Now, you can find a 68hc11 Basic interpreter on the Motorola FREEMWARE BBS. In fact, those of you interested in staging the Basic language on your 68hc11 robot should take the time to download this program and play with it.

But I wanted a compiler, not an interpreter. I'm perfectly willing to trade a little extra code size for a lot more speed.

Well, no one ever got around to writing the compiler I wanted, so I am writing my own.

I call it SBasic, for Simple Basic. I started with the source code for a simple Basic interpreter that I copied from an excellent book by Herbert Schildt, entitled *The Art of C*.

Anyone interested in the nuts and bolts of simple, functional C programs should pick up a copy of *The Art of C* and spend some time looking through it. Herbert provides full source listings and files (on supplied disc) for fairly hefty PC projects. You get a very simple serial-based LAN, some simple video and graphics programs, a mouse program, and a simple Basic interpreter.

Starting with Herbert's SBasic interpreter, I started adding and changing, redesigning the code as I needed it. The program, vastly changed, no longer executes a Basic source file, but instead turns the file into 68hc11 assembly language source.

Note that this is a modest start at a compiler, hardly a commercial-grade product. Think of it more as tiny4th for the Basic language.

In its current form, SBasic supports the following operators:

```
+ - * / Math functions
mod Modulus
and Boolean AND
or Boolean OR
xor Boolean XOR
= Assignment, test equals
<> >< Test not equals
< Test less than
> Test greater than
<* Unsigned test less than
>* Unsigned test greater than
peek() Fetch 16-bit value
peekb() Fetch 8-bit value
poke Store 16-bit value
pokeb Store 8-bit value
if-else-endif Structured if
while-wend Structured while
interrupt Interrupt service routine (ISR)
return Return from ISR or subroutine
const Declare a 16-bit constant
```

This list is very preliminary, and only describes SBasic as of this writing (end of March, 1995). The features will grow and mutate as time permits.

SBasic currently supports only 26 variables, each 16 bits wide. This will change in the future; I intend to support named variables and arrays, but this small, fixed variable set is a good starting point.

I also have the first cut at for-step-next loops installed. As of now, SBasic doesn't handle down-counting (negative step values), but that should change before long.

I also intend to add do-loop structures, along with while-and-until-modifiers.

And I want to add a whole slew of goodies to make SBasic more suitable for embedded control and robotics. Some of these features already exist in the list above, and deserve a little discussion.

I have added the <\* and >\* test operators, to allow unsigned comparisons of 16-bit numbers. Without them, \$8000 is less than \$7fff; with them, the comparison works the way you expect for a 65K number range.

I also added the interrupt command, used to mark the beginning of a 68hc11 interrupt service routine (ISR) written in SBasic. Since SBasic compiles down to fairly tight assembly language, it is perfectly reasonable to write your ISRs in SBasic.

I will, however, add the ability to include segments of 68hc11 assembly source, for those instances when you absolutely have to write in assembly language.

So how good is the compiler's output? I have included a very simple test case to show what kind of output you can expect. Note that the compiler does no optimization. It rearranges SBasic operands, where possible, to take advantage of register usage, but it does not optimize from one SBasic source line to the next.

The sample SBasic source file contains a small program that alternates the output lines of port B between 0 and \$ff. After each change, the code sits in a tight for-next loop, running a counter from 0 to 10,000.

My test system is a BOT-Board with an LED hooked to one of the port B lines. This gives me a visual indication of the port's state.

After writing a 0 to port B, the code also glances at the SCI status register, in case the host computer sent a character. If so, this code echoes the character back to the host. Note that two lines of code at the top of the source file initialize the SCI for 9600 baud, assuming a crystal of 8 MHz.

The SBasic compiler translates this file, prog3.bas, into a corresponding assembler source

file named prog3.asc. The prog3.asc file is properly formatted to assemble with the Motorola FREEMWARE asmhc11 assembler.

Take a few minutes to examine the accompanying listing of the output from the SBasic compiler.

All lines that do not begin with an asterisk in column one will be treated by the assembler as either source code or assembler directives.

Most of the comment lines (those with an asterisk in column one) are the original SBasic source lines, copied into the output file by the SBasic compiler. This helps you follow the transformation between SBasic source and 68hc11 assembler source.

SBasic automatically reserves 52 bytes of RAM space for its 26 variables, each of which gets 2 bytes. Any reference to a variable, such as X in source line 26, is converted into an offset added to the address VARBEG.

VARBEG is assigned at the top of the output file, and is currently hard-coded to \$00c0. Later versions of SBasic will allow full control over the placement of VARBEG, CODEBEG, and STKBEG. The latter two values set the start of the code and stack, respectively.

Check the code generated by source lines 42 and 43, an empty for-next loop. This represents the minimum amount of code that a for-next loop will create, and indicates the top speed you can reach in a simple counting loop.

This empty loop consumes 28 cycles for each iteration, or 14 usecs using an 8 MHz crystal. Since the example loops count to 10,000 on each pass, the LED will stay on (or off) for 10,000 times 14 usecs, or .14 seconds.

Looking at this from another angle, your software could count through this empty for-next loop more than 71,000 times per second. Obviously you will have to replace a large portion of those empty loops with meaningful code. Still, the code generated by the SBasic compiler is far faster than tiny4th's interpreted code, and plenty fast enough to do useful robot tasks.

SBasic is one of those evolving software projects; they always seem to take longer than I expected when I started them. But I will continue to refine SBasic, and hope to have a strong version, ready for release, by the time you read this.

I want to make SBasic so simple to use that even total 68hc11 novices can sit down at a PC, write a few lines in a language they already understand, and watch their robots move. Initial feedback from those SRS members who have been kind enough to beta-test my early SBasic executables is encouraging.

Incidentally, I have designed SBasic so that all code generation is confined to a single, well-defined module. I already have plans to make a second code generator, to create SBasic output for the 68302.

This will give me the tools I need to develop serious robot code for my hacked Practical Peripheral's ProClass external modem; see the previous two columns for details. NV

As always, you can reach me at:

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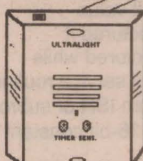
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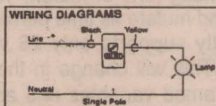
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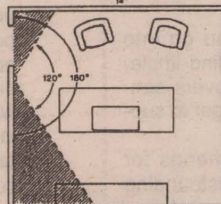
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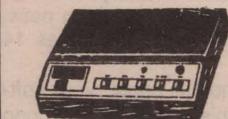
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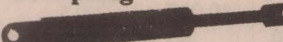
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RISE AND FALL TIME: LESS THAN 2 MICROSECONDS

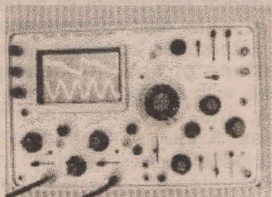


**RF EQUIPMENT:** HP 5342A/1 18GHz microwave counter (oven time base) \$2,220. Tek 4921,2,3 spectrum analyzer, 50KHz through 21GHz, 100Hz resolution bandwidth, digital storage, internal preselector, CRT readout, calibrated \$8,000. Tek TR 503.1 to 1800MHz tracking generator, calibrated \$1,400. HP 3403C/3,6 true RMS digital voltmeter (DC-100MHz, autoranging, remote control, dB display) \$375. HP 8660C/005, 100 synthesized signal generator mainframe \$1,700. HP 86222B .01 to 2.4GHz sweep oscillator plug-in \$1,600. HP 8505A RF network analyzer .5 to 1300MHz, 100dB dynamic range, with phase-lock option 005 and HP 8501A storage normalizer. Bright CRT. \$3,700. Tek P6201 900MHz active probe \$350. Excellent condition, with warranty. Pepper System, 214-353-0257.

**TEKTRONIX 7L12** spectrum analyzer for 7613/23 oscilloscope, 0.1-1800MHz, 300Hz RBW. Service manual, application notes. \$1,400. John, PO Box 95, Los Alamos, NM 87544. 505-455-2565.

**TEKTRONIX TEST EQUIPMENT FOR AUDIO, BROADCAST, VIDEO:** AM 503 & A6302 current probe & amplifier (to 5 A/div; DC to 50MHz) \$890. AM 503 & A6303 (to 50 A/div; DC to 15MHz) \$1,440. FG 501A audio to 1MHz function generator or \$265. FG 502 audio to 11MHz function generator \$275. FG 504 audio to 40MHz function generator, lin/log sweep \$750. PG 508 50MHz pulse generator (variable rise, fall times) \$325. DM 502A auto-ranging multimeter \$215. AA 501 distortion analyzer \$1,250. DA 4084 distortion analyzer (like AA 5001) \$1,250. 466 100MHz portable storage oscilloscope \$845. 485 350MHz portable oscilloscope \$795. 7633 100MHz storage mainframe \$475. 7A22 high-sensitivity differential vertical amplifier \$375. AM 502 high-sensitivity differential amplifier \$375. 7854 400MHz oscilloscope mainframe: digital storage, waveform processing, GPIB \$975. 7D20 digital storage plug-in: cursor measurements, min/max enveloping, signal averaging \$825. 149A NTSC generator \$775. Excellent condition, with warranty. Pepper Systems, 214-353-0257.

**TEST EQUIPMENT surplus for sale,** MA4001, G1412R satellite receiver, HP 8020B sweep mainframe and HP 8621A RF section, Oak Mark II and III scrambler. Best offer. Call 619-569-8089.



**TEK 453, \$185!** Tested and repaired \$245. Very good condition \$295. Calibrated, manual, accessories, 1 year warranty \$395. Gary, N6ZD. 408-385-0301; FAX 408-385-0261.

**HP SWEEP generator 86290C** \$1,500; 86342C, 86350C, \$750; Wavetek 1001 \$150; ETN System noise monitor \$250; Electro Metrics interference analyzer EMC-50 \$1,500; Polarad test receiver \$2,500 (ESH-2). Tel 714-441-1002, FAX 714-441-1214.

**LOGIC ANALYZERS:** HP1630D logic analyzer (100MHz timing, 25MHz state) \$995. Pods for HP 1600A \$39 each. Tek 7D01/DF1 logic analyzer plug-in (to 100MHz) \$225. Tek DAS 9129 color systems, up to 660MHz - low prices. Analyzers sold with pods, warranty. Pepper Systems, 214-353-0257.

**HP 7351A** DC transfer standard \$500; HP 3400A RMS voltmeter \$150; Tek 7CT1N curve tracer \$300; AO microscopes, model 40 stereo 20X & 40X with light \$300, model 60 biological 40X, 100X, 430X with substage light \$200. Call 412-833-0874.

**WANTED: LATE MODEL TEST EQUIPMENT** (Tektronix, HP, Fluke). Especially: Tek SG 505/2, Tek S-6, Tek 2465A/B. Also, we buy test equipment **service manuals and catalogs**. Pepper Systems: 214-353-0257; 214-902-9511 FAX.

**WANTED DOLCH** model ALP44 active logic probes (and possibly other 4850A compatible accessories) 708-358-3275.

**GENRAD 2220** Bug Hound \$265. Dexis, 612-944-7670.

**UNITEK WELDERS** wanted for cash. Parallel heads and power supplies. Call 608-643-5434, FAX: 608-643-4439.

**WANTED: TWT Amps** bad/good, new/used, and TWT tubes. We buy all types of test equipment. Call/Fax Richard at: MHz Electronics, 602-265-0731. FAX: 602-285-9066.

**WANTED: TEST** equipment in working condition. TEK, HP, FLUKE and others! DEXIS. Fax list to 612-942-9712 or voice at 612-944-7670.

**WANTED! TEST** equipment. We pay top dollar for used, scopes, generators, analyzers from HP, Tektronix and others. Call Charles at **Metric** for immediate quotation. 1-800-432-3424.

**TEK 78440** oscilloscope dual beam 400MHz \$700. Dexis, 612-944-7670.

**FLUKE 2240C** Data logger \$1,200. Dexis, 612-944-7670.

**WANTED: SERVICE** monitors dead or alive. Motorola, IFR, Cushman, Wavetek. Fax your list. Call me last for best cash price. 408-929-2244 page 510-498-6875.

**TEST EQUIPMENT** sale: GR916AL, RF bridge \$350; Environmental Instruments RDM101 Respirable Dust Monitor, \$300; Druck DP1600 Dig pressure indicator \$200, GR 874-D50 50cm adjustable stub, \$50, GR1650A RCL Bridge, \$250, GR1568A Wave ana, \$200; GR1521B Graphic level Recorder \$300, GR1432J, \$100. A-Comm Electronics 303-290-8012.

## ALFA ELECTRONICS

HIGH QUALITY TEST EQUIPMENT  
BEST PRICE



### DMM 89 \$199.95

#### Most Advanced DMM

All Purpose & Communication  
-80.7 to 81.4 dBm with 4Q-1200Ω  
20 reference impedances  
True RMS  
Frequency counter: 0.01Hz-10MHz  
Capacitance: 1pF-50,000pF  
Measure AC volt to 20kHz  
5000 counts, 0.1% accuracy  
Auto/manual range, fast bar graph  
Min/Max/Ave/DH/Relative/Zoom  
Auto power off  
Input warning  
Splash proof  
Volt, amp, ohm, logic, diode, continuity  
Ruggedized case  
Rubber holster included



### DMM 2360 \$119.95

#### DMM+LCR Meter

#### Very Versatile DMM

Inductance: 1μH-40H  
Capacitance: 1pF-40μF  
Frequency: 1Hz-4MHz  
Temperature: -40-302°F  
TTL Logic Test: 20MHz  
Diode, Continuity  
Volt, Amp, Ohm  
3999 count display  
Peak Hold  
Auto power off  
Ruggedized case  
Rubber Holster \$8.00  
Temperature probe \$7.00



### DMM 21 \$74.95

#### Inductance: 1μH-40H

#### Capacitance: 1pF-200μF

#### Frequency: 1Hz-1MHz

#### Volt, amp, ohm, diode,

#### continuity

#### 3999 count display

#### TTL logic, HFE

#### Peak hold

#### Ruggedized case

#### Rubber holster \$8.00

#### Full line of DMMs,

#### economy, compact,

#### ruggedized, solar cell,

#### automotive, heavy

#### duty, industrial

#### starts from \$15.95

### Fluke Multimeter

#### Fluke 12 \$84.95

#### Holster C-10 \$10

#### Fluke 70 II \$67.5

#### Fluke 73 II \$94

#### Fluke 75 II \$129

#### Holster C-70 \$16

#### Fluke 77 II \$149

#### Fluke 79 II \$169

#### Fluke 29 II \$169

#### Fluke 83 \$225

#### Fluke 85 \$259

#### Fluke 87 \$287

#### Fluke 97

#### Scope Meter \$1785



### LCR Meter 131D \$229.95

#### Most Advanced LCR

#### Dual display: L/C or C/D

#### Inductance: 0.1μH-1000H

#### Capacitance: 0.1pF-10,000pF

#### Impedance: 1mΩ-10MΩ

#### 0.7% basic accuracy

#### Dissipation factor & Q factor

#### Serial & parallel mode

#### Relative mode for comparison

#### and to remove parasitics

#### Statistics, tolerance,

#### Best for design, incoming

#### testing & production

#### SMD and chip component

#### test probe \$25.00



### LCR Meter 814 \$189.95

#### Best Resolution LCR

#### Inductance: 0.1μH-200H

#### Capacitance: 0.1pF-20,000pF

#### Resistance: 1mΩ-20MΩ

#### 1% basic accuracy

#### Dissipation factor indicates leakage

#### in capacitor and Q factor in inductor

#### Zero adjustment to reduce parasitics

#### from test fixture

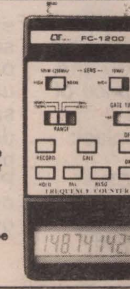
#### Best for high frequency RF

#### and surface mount components.

#### SMD and chip component test probe

#### \$25.00, Deluxe carrying

#### case \$5.00



### Frequency Counter

#### FC-1200 \$129.95

#### Frequency: 0.1Hz-1.25GHz

#### Display: 8 digit LCD

#### Period: 0.1μs-0.1s

#### Records: Max/Min/Average

#### Data hold, relative mode

#### Telescoping antenna \$8.00

#### Deluxe case \$5.00

#### Also Available:

#### AC/DC clamp meter, Light meter,

#### Thermometer, pH meter, High

#### voltage probe, Digital caliper

#### Anemometer, Electronic scale,

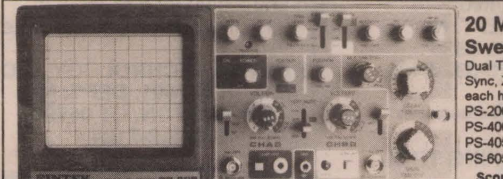
#### Force gauge, Tachometer,

#### Stroboscope, Humidity & EMF

#### adapter, Sound level meter,

#### Frequency counter, SWR/field

#### strength/power meter, Dip meter



### 20 MHz Oscilloscope with Delay

#### Sweep PS-205 \$429.95

#### Dual Trace, Component test, 6" CRT, X-Y Operation, TV

#### Sync, Z-Modulation, CH2 Output, Graticule illum, 2 probes

#### each has x1, x10 switch. Best price with delay sweep.

#### PS-200 20 MHz DUAL TRACE \$339.95

#### PS-400 40 MHz DUAL TRACE \$494.95

#### PS-405 40 MHz DELAY SWEEP \$589.95

#### PS-605 60 MHz DELAY SWEEP \$789.95

#### Scope Probe: 60MHz x1, x10 \$13, 100MHz x1, x10 \$22

### 20 MHz Digital Storage

#### Oscilloscope DS-203 \$729.95

#### Switchable between digital and analog modes

#### 2 K word per channel storage

#### Sampling rate: 10 M sample/sec

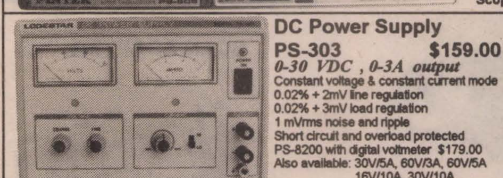
#### 8 bit vertical resolution (25 Level/div)

#### Expanded Timebase 10ms/div - 0.5 s/div

#### Refresh, Roll, Save all, Save CH2, Pre-Trig

#### Plotter Control

#### 250MHz x1, x10 \$29, 250MHz x100 \$39



### DC Power Supply

#### PS-303 \$159.00

#### 0-30 VDC, 0-3A output

#### Constant voltage & constant current mode

#### 0.02% + 2mV line regulation

#### 0.02% + 3mV load regulation

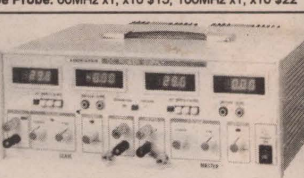
#### 1 mVrms noise and ripple

#### Short circuit and overload protected

#### PS-8200 with digital voltmeter \$179.00

#### Also available: 30V/5A, 60V/3A, 60V/5A

#### 16V/10A, 30V/10A



### DC Power Supply Triple Output

#### PS-8202 \$499.95

#### Two 0-30 VDC, 0-3A outputs

#### One fixed 5VDC, 3A output

#### Capable of independent or tracking operation

#### Constant voltage and constant current mode

#### Four digital meters for volt and current display

#### Excellent regulation and low ripple

#### Short circuit and overload protected

#### Also available: 30V/5A, triple output

#### Dual tracking 30V/3A, 30V/5A, 60V/3A, 60V/5A



### RF SIGNAL

#### GENERATOR

#### SG-4160B

#### \$119.00

#### 100 kHz-150MHz sine wave in 6

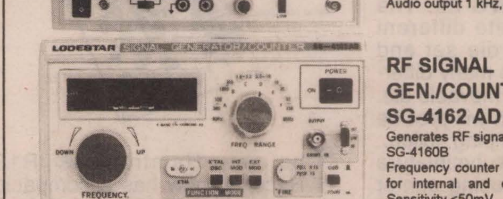
#### ranges

#### RF Output 100mVrms to 35 MHz

#### Internal 1kHz, External 50Hz-20kHz

#### AM modulation

#### Audio output 1 kHz, 1 Vrms



### RF SIGNAL

#### GEN./COUNTER

#### SG-4162 AD

#### \$229.95

#### Generates RF signal same as

#### SG-4160B

#### Frequency counter 1Hz - 150 MHz

#### for internal and external source

#### Sensitivity <50mV

### AUDIO GENERATOR

#### AG-2601A \$119.00

#### 10Hz - 1MHz in 5 ranges

#### Output: 0-8Vrms sine wave

#### 0-10Vp-p square wave

#### Synchronization: ±3% of oscillation

#### frequency per Vrms

#### Output distortion:

#### 0.05% 500Hz - 50kHz

#### 0.5% 50Hz - 500kHz

#### Output impedance: 600 ohm

### FUNCTION GENERATOR

#### FG-2100A \$169.95

#### 0.2 Hz - 2 MHz in 7 ranges

#### Sine, square, triangle, pulse and ramp

#### Output: 5mV-20Vp-p

#### 1% distortion, DC offset ± 10V

#### VCF: 0-10V control frequency to 1000:1

#### FUNCTION GEN/COUNTER

#### FG-2102AD \$229.95

#### Generates signal same as FG-2100A



# New Product

Our readers are always looking for new and interesting electronic items. Showcase your NEW PRODUCTS here to help stimulate your product's success. Submit all news releases, product information, and/or photos to:

**NUTS & VOLTS MAGAZINE**  
NEW PRODUCT EDITOR,  
430 PRINCELAND CT., CORONA, CA 91719

# News

## TF-144 2M INTERMODULATION FILTER

**T**ucker Electronics and Computers announces the Tucker TF-144 2M intermodulation filter.

The TF-144 utilizes a three-pole filter that provides 40 dB or more of attenuation to frequencies outside of the two-meter amateur band.

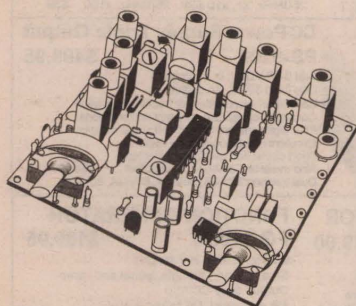
The TF-144 installs between the antenna and the transceiver with two female SO-239 connectors. The filter automatically switches on during receive and off during transmit. It can also be manually switched in and out of the circuit. It can be used on both handheld and mobile transceivers.

The TF-144 measures only 2.5" x 1.75" x 1.75" and is powered by 12 VDC at less than 100 mA (power cord included). List price of the Tucker TF-144 is \$79.95.

For more information, contact:

**TUCKER ELECTRONICS  
& COMPUTERS**  
1717 RESERVE ST., DEPT. NV  
GARLAND, TX 75042-7621  
1-800-527-4642  
214-348-8800  
FAX: 214-348-0367

## HAMTRONICS® VHF FM RECEIVERS



**H**amtronics®, Inc. announces a new low-cost monitor receiver kits for the 28, 50, 73, 144, 152, and 220 MHz bands. The R100 Receiver was designed to replace both the R144/R220 and R76 series receivers which have long been popular for demanding applications, such as repeaters, audio and data links, packet radio, and remote control. The R100 not only provides a replacement for the older R76 series used for the lower VHF bands, but it also allows easier coverage of the various segments of the 150-175

MHz high band and 200-240 MHz ranges which are popular with commercial customers. In addition, the R100 was designed to have a new positive-acting, wide-range squelch circuit, and additional output terminals for repeater audio and discriminator audio. And it is now easier to assemble and align.

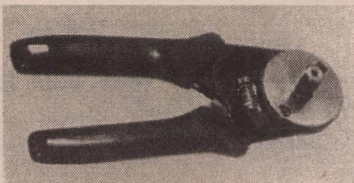
It uses triple-tuned circuits in the front end and excellent crystal and ceramic filters in the IF with steep skirts for close channel spacing or repeater operation. The IF selectivity, for instance, is over 100dB at  $\pm 12$  KHz away from the carrier. Low noise FETs in the front end provide good overload resistance and 0.15//V sensitivity.

The price of the R100 is considerably less than the R144/R220 series. Kits for any of the bands are only \$129.00. Wired and tested units are only \$189.00, a \$30.00 savings. Channel crystals for any desired frequency within these bands are only \$12.00. Proportionally-controlled crystal ovens are available for operation over wide temperature ranges.

For more details, contact:

**HAMTRONICS, INC.**  
65-F MOUL RD., DEPT. NV  
HILTON, NY 14468-9535  
716-392-9430 FAX: 716-392-9420

## MINIATURE PIN CRIMPING TOOL



**R**F Industries introduces a new miniature pin crimping tool for coax and D-subminiature crimp pins.

This new tool will crimp pins with an OD from as large as AWG 20 to as small as AWG 26. The crimping action is quite different from the normal hex die set and allows one tool to crimp many different sized pins with one movable die. This four-way die action will provide unique and positive crimping action.

Many of the new subminiature cable connectors are using center conductor pins smaller than .052" and, therefore, outside the range of most crimping die sets. The RFA-4089 miniature pin crimping tool will crimp such pins.

For additional information, contact:

**RF INDUSTRIES, LTD.**  
7620 MIRAMAR RD., DEPT. NV  
SAN DIEGO, CA 92126  
619-549-6340 FAX: 619-549-6345  
1-800-233-1728

## DUAL COLOR BARGRAPH

**T**he new D101 from Creative Technology, Inc. is usable in low light or total darkness. Full scale is always lit green, signal voltage is red, enabling you to see the signal and full scale together. The unit can be used in either dot or bar mode, any combination of dual color LEDs may be used.

Over range causes display to flash red/green, over range flash can be set to any of the 10 LEDs.

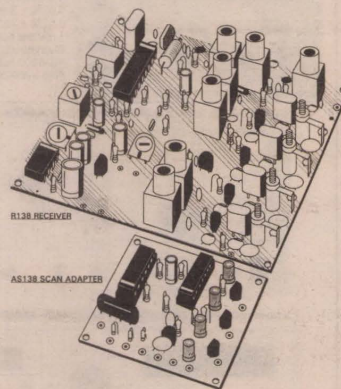
Kit includes built-in audio beep for over range. Device can be used as a voltmeter in your home, or automotive applications, or use two for the stereo.

The unit has a kit price of \$26.00 and is also available assembled and tested for \$34.95.

For further details, call or write:

**CREATIVE TECHNOLOGY, INC.**  
P.O. BOX 1401, DEPT. NV  
TORRINGTON, CT 06790  
203-482-7124

## SCAN ADAPTER



**T**he new Hamtronics® R138 Receiver now has a companion accessory, the AS138 Scan Adapter Module.

The R138 Receiver is crystal controlled; and it has four-channel oscillators, which allows you to

select a particular satellite simply by grounding the desired control line with an external switch. Crystals are available for all the common satellites, and they install simply by plugging into sockets on the board. This scheme is very practical and saves about 50% of the cost of having a synthesized receiver, even more if you built it as a kit.

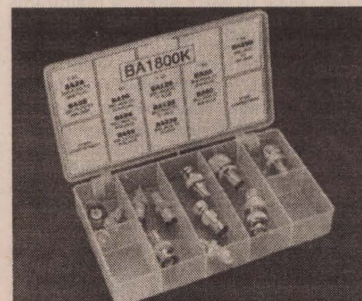
The new AS138 Scan Adapter allows you to be away from the shack and still monitor the various weather satellites. It consists of a small PC board which continually monitors the receiver, scanning the four channels, looking for an active satellite overhead. If it hears one, the scanner stops on that channel and turns on a relay. The relay can be used to activate a tape recorder, allowing you to play back the tape into your demodulator unit whenever you have time to reproduce the satellite images on your computer.

The R138 Receiver's kit price is \$129.00. It is also available wired & tested for \$189.00. The AS138 Scan Adapter Module is \$39.00 in kit form, or \$69.00 wired & tested. Channel crystals are only \$12.00 each.

For more details, write to:

**HAMTRONICS, INC.**  
65-F MOUL RD., DEPT. NV  
HILTON, NY 14468-9535  
716-392-9430 FAX: 716-392-9420

## INTERSERIES ADAPTORS



**L**-com has announced a handy RF adaptor assortment kit to have in the lab or for field maintenance people. Interseries adaptors allow the interface of any BNC equipped cables with any popular SMA, UHF, RCA, and "F" Series Terminated cables. A total of 11 adaptors are included all housed in a high impact compartmental case. All adaptors are quality machined to close tolerances. The adaptors have nickel plated housings and gold plated contacts.

The Model BA1800K Interseries assortment is moderately priced at only \$39.95.

For more information, contact:

**L-COM, INC.**  
1755 OSGOOD ST., DEPT. NV  
NORTH ANDOVER, MA 01845  
800-343-1455, 508-682-6936  
FAX: 508-689-9484

## THREE CHANNEL 5 AMP SUPPLY

**D**iamond Mountain Engineering announces the release of a new



# New Product News

three channel programmable power supply designed for four-corner product testing. The Model 553 has a fixed 5 volt, a programmable 5 volt, and a programmable 12-volt channel. Voltage range is  $\pm 750\text{mV}$  in 1.5mV steps (5 volt) and  $\pm 2$  volts in 4mV increments on the 12-volt output. Accuracy of both programmable channels is 0.1%. The 5-volt channel is also configurable to 3 volts. The unit is easily programmed with high or low level software through the PC parallel port. Sample software written in QuickBasic is included.

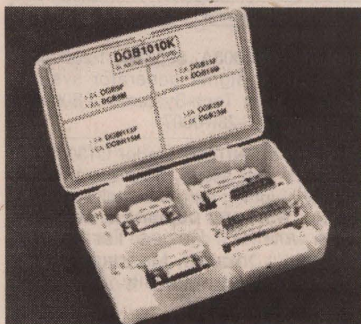
Other features include a manual or automatic programming switch, remote sensing capabilities, output sequencing, and two 10-turn potentiometers for voltage adjustment in the manual mode.

Applications include testing of electro-mechanical devices such as hard disk drives, floppies and tape units, integrated circuit parametric testing, motherboard burn-in, and any other application where stable and accurate voltages at currents up to 5 amps are required. Unit is available as a board level product, with a bulk power supply, or as an enclosed stand-alone bench top unit with two 3-1/2 digit voltmeters.

For more information, contact:

**DIAMOND MOUNTAIN  
ENGINEERING, INC.**  
3213 WHIPPLE RD., DEPT. NV  
UNION CITY, CA 94587  
510-487-9530 FAX: 510-487-9531

## GENDER CHANGER ASSORTMENT



The slimline gender changer assortment kit contains a total of eight adaptors usable on just about every D-Sub equipped cable. Includes DB9, DB15, DB25, and DB37 types, each in male-male or female-female versions.

Slimline gender changers are manufactured to tight tolerances and with high quality materials. Extremely low profile of only 3/16" between connectors contributes to less strain for overstressed interface ports. Fully shielded, gold plated contacts, and UL Listed. Provided with applicable fastening hardware which may be removed if not needed.

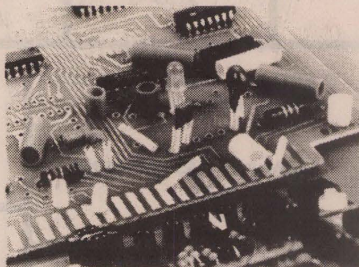
The Model DGB1010 kit is packaged in a high-impact carry contain-

er. Single lot price is only \$49.95, priced much lower than when the eight gender changers are purchased separately.

For detailed information, contact:

**L-COM, INC.**  
1755 OSGOOD ST., DEPT. NV  
NORTH ANDOVER, MA 01845  
800-343-1455, 508-682-6936  
FAX: 508-689-9484

## TEFLON® STANDOFFS



Standard and thin wall Teflon® tubing that can be cut to length in precise sizes for raising components on PC boards to improve solder flow and prevent electrical discontinuities is available from M.M. Newman Corporation.

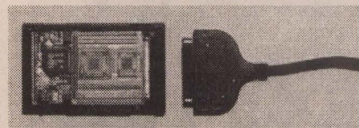
M.M. Newman Teflon Standoffs can be fabricated from 56 standard sizes of tubing ranging from AWG 30 to AWG 0 in standard and thin wall types. Used to raise capacitors and other components on plated thru hole PC boards, they draw solder into the holes by capillary action and help to prevent electrical discontinuities.

Cut to length from 1/16" with  $\pm .032$ " accuracy, M.M. Newman Teflon Standoffs are available clear or in colors for coding by length. Featuring a 2.1 1400 v/mil dielectric strength, the tubing is chemically inert, nonflammable, operates from -450°F to +500°F, conforms to MIL-I-22129, ASTM-D-3295, AMS-3653/3655, and is UL listed.

For more information, contact:

**M.M. NEWMAN CORPORATION**  
24 TIOGA WAY  
P.O. BOX 615, DEPT. NV  
MARBLEHEAD, MA 01945  
617-631-7100 FAX: 617-631-8887

## HEADSTARTCARD™ PCMCIA PROTOTYPING KIT



Accurite Technologies, Inc. announces the latest addition to its family of PCMCIA products with its HeadstartCard™ PCMCIA prototyping kit.

Release 2.10 compatible, the HeadstartCard kit streamlines the design cycle for PCMCIA products

providing a completed PCMCIA interface design ready for tailoring to a custom application and already packaged in a type II form factor.

The HeadstartCard development and prototyping kit includes a type II physical format PCB with PCMCIA interface logic based on the Zilog Z86M17ASC adapter chip. The custom application area of the PCB supports surface mount ICs including 32 or 64 pin QFPs, 44 or 100 pin QFPs, and 150 and 300 mil SOICs.

The ample documentation supplied includes schematics for the prototype board together with data books and specifications for key chips included on the board, as well as for popular controller chips being used in PCMCIA card readers.

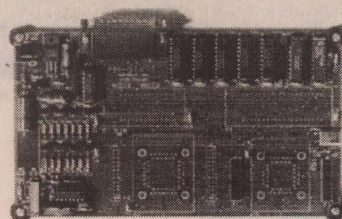
PCMCIA general design reference material is also provided together with assorted utility software useful in debugging and completing the design.

The HeadstartCard prototyping kit is economically priced at \$399.00.

For more information, contact:

**ACCURITE TECHNOLOGIES, INC.**  
231 CHARCOT AVE., DEPT. NV  
SAN JOSE, CA 95131-1107  
408-433-1980 FAX: 408-433-1716

## PB-51/11 PROGRAMMING BOARD



Allen Systems announces the PB-51/11 programming board. The PB-51/11 is a cost-effective EPROM and EEPROM programmer for the popular 8051 and 68HC11 microcontroller families. It connects to a PC parallel printer port (either LPT1 or LPT2) and includes the necessary cable and driver software (MS-DOS, 5-1/4 inch disk). Also included is an AC adapter which supplies the 9 VDC power to the board.

The programming board accommodates a number of zero insertion force (ZIF) socket types: a 28 pin DIP ZIF for programming the 27C256 (32K EPROM); both a 40 pin DIP ZIF and 44 pin PLCC ZIF for programming the 89C51 (4K EEPROM), and 87C51 family devices (4K, 8K, 16K, 32K EPROM); and a 52 pin PLCC ZIF for 68HC711E9 devices (12K EPROM).

To minimize cost, the board is offered in a number of configurations. ZIF sockets can be very expensive, especially for 44 and 52 pin PLCC types. Hence, the board can be purchased with only the required ZIF socket(s) installed. It

can even be purchased without any ZIF sockets.

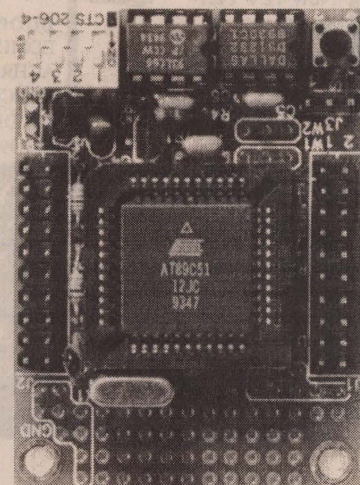
Each PB-51/11 configuration supports a single target device type and package style. If desired, the user can reconfigure the PB-51/11 for other devices and/or packages.

An assortment of software drivers for the host PC is supplied with the PB-51/11. Currently, four drivers are included: 89C51 Driver, 87C51 Family Driver, 68HC711E9 Driver, and 27C256 Driver.

For more information, contact:

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The LITTLE BYTE-51 is a miniature single board computer based upon the popular 8051 family of microcontrollers. The family device installed on the board is the 89C51. It is a fully static CPU with clock speeds of up to 20MHz.

A major advantage of the 89C51 is its 4K byte EEPROM for program storage. Because the EEPROM is electrically erasable, application software can be installed or updated while the 89C51 remains on the board. This "in-system programming" is performed using Allen Systems' PB-51/11 programming board.

A major design feature of the LITTLE BYTE-51 is its small footprint. The board measures only 1.625 by 2.25 inches. Other board features include the DS1232 MicroMonitor chip, the 93LC66 serial EEPROM, and a prototyping area. The DS1232 generates the reset signal on power-up, and provides an optional watchdog timer. The 93LC66 is a serial EEPROM with 512 bytes of storage.

Designing with the LITTLE BYTE-51 is relatively straightforward because of the connectors on the board. Two 20 pin headers provide access to all CPU lines. These can

Continued on page 133





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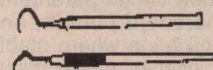
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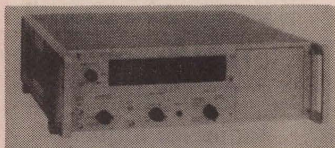
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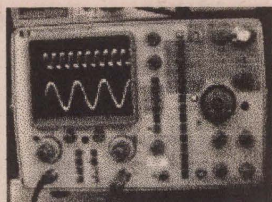
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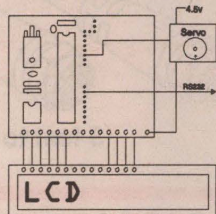
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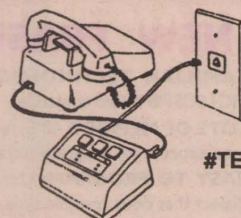
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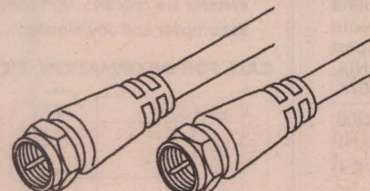
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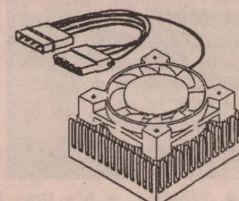


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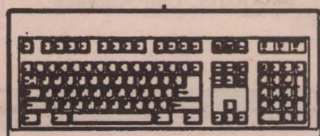


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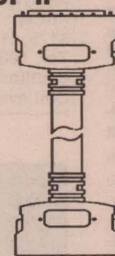
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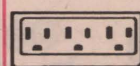
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# THE COMMERCIAL RADIO LICENSE —

## DO IT BEFORE JULY!

***If you have been planning to study for the commercial radio operator licenses, better hit the books before this coming July. Major changes in the commercial radio test question pool will turn a relatively easy test into a major brain-thumper. Worse yet, there won't be any study materials for the new test until the end of the year.***

The commercial general radio operator's license is the FCC ticket necessary for performing maintenance on marine and aviation two-way radios, as well as the radar endorsement exam necessary for maintaining land and marine radar systems, plus the rules exam for talking over certain ship and aircraft radio systems where passengers are carried for hire.

The commercial radio operator license was originally called radiotelephone-first class license, radiotelephone-second class license, and radiotelephone-third class permit. Back in the old days, the third class ticket allowed you to speak over certain broadcast stations and aboard boat stations. The second class license was necessary to work on boat radios and aircraft equipment, and in the old days the first class ticket was necessary for the adjustment of AM and FM/TV broadcast stations.

In 1984, that all changed — the FCC dropped the requirements for any commercial license to work on land mobile radio equipment, like business band radio, police radio, CB radio, and radio control. They also rolled up the first and second class radiotelephone licenses into a new lifetime general radiotelephone operator license. The third class radiotelephone permit, along with the broadcast station endorsement, was also canned. However, the commercial general radiotelephone operator license (old first or second class ticket) was still required to work on aircraft radios, marine radios, and powerful shortwave broadcast radios. Also, the marine radio operator permit (old third class) was still required by operators aboard boats carrying passengers for hire, and certain aviation and marine shore-side radio stations.

Even though the FCC "delisted" the need for the commercial

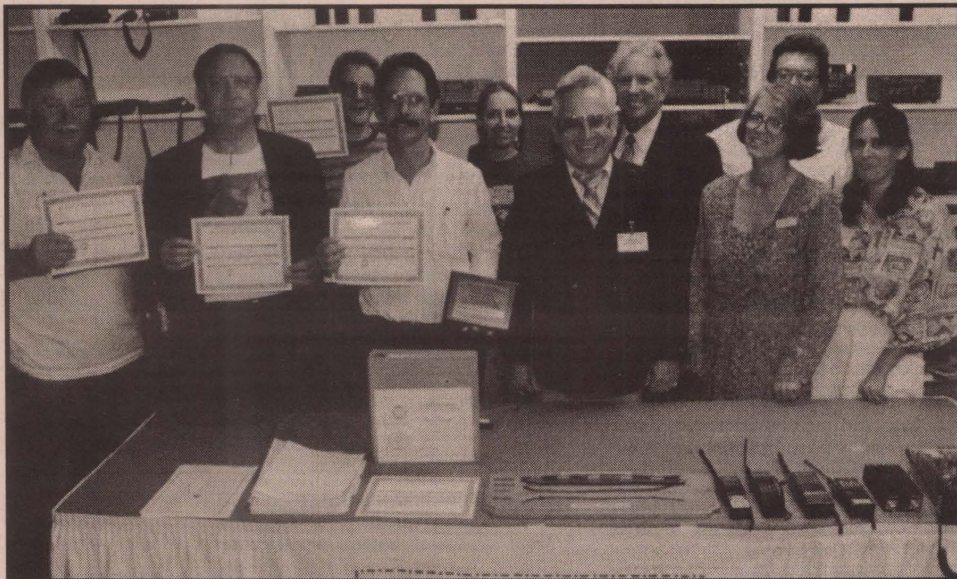
radio operator's permit for domestic radios, they were still overwhelmed by the number of applicants wanting to take the exams, plus the fact that the exams were terribly out of date, and major cut-backs in their budget loomed ahead. The FCC needed out, and looked at how well the amateur radio volunteer examination system was handling the requirement for obtaining the amateur radio ticket.

Just one year ago, the FCC turned over the general radiotelephone and radiotelegraph testing business over to "colems" — commercial operator license examination manager organizations. Nine colems (see list) would manage the test question pools and begin giving the commercial FCC tests for the following FCC commercial licenses:

- Marine radio operator permit, written Element 1
- General radiotelephone operator license, Element 1 and 3
- First class telegraph license, CW Elements 3 and 4, written Elements 1, 5, and 6
- Second class radiotelegraph license, CW Elements 1 and 2, written Elements 1, 5, and 6
- Third class radiotelegraph license, CW Elements 1 and 2, written Elements 1 and 5

- Global marine distress safety system operator, written Element 1 and 7
- Global marine distress safety system radio maintainer, written Element 1, 3, and 9
- Ship radar endorsement, written Element 8

It's been over a year since the colems have assisted with coming up with the original test questions for each of these license grades, and a year since the colems have been actively administering the exams.



***These happy GROL test passing applicants and examiners were the first in the country under the new rules in 1993 to offer exams outside of an FCC office.***

The program has worked SUPERBLY with volunteer examiners giving the commercial exams almost everywhere in the country on an almost every-week basis.

The most popular examinations were the general radio operator license with ship radar endorsement. Only one test preparation book was available for the first year that covered every question, every answer, and a description of how the correct answer was arrived at — and I am happy to say that I am the author of that book available through all Radio Shack stores. The book is now in its second printing and still continues to be the

ONLY source of all of the questions, answers, AND a description of how the right answer is calculated.

The radiotelegraph questions were not a big hit because most U.S. ships have dropped radiotelegraph equipment in favor of the new global marine distress safety system satellite gear. So radiotelegraph didn't get much play last year, even though a six-tape code course specifically for radiotelegraph Elements 1-4 is available from this author (Gordon West,

714-549-5000).

The global marine distress safety system exams were few and far between because there was absolutely no study material available for the tests, and only a few ships in the United States were looking for GMDSS accredited radio operators.

Without question, the most exams given were for the general radio operator license Elements 1 and 3 along with Element 8 for ship radar endorsement.

The technical question pool for GROL was hastily pulled together due to an extremely short period for colems to develop the initial question

by Gordon West



## DO IT BEFORE JULY!

pool. The big contributor was W5YI VEC, one of the country's biggest amateur radio test-givers who is also accredited as a commercial COLEM. Over 80 percent of the Element 3 test questions came out of the amateur radio Advanced and Extra class question pools. This gave hams who were Advanced and Extra class operators an easy go at re-studying those ham questions, and passing rules and regs Element 1 and the technical Element 3. Almost all used the Gordon West Radio Shack book.

The radar Element 8 was another matter — the test questions came from all over the place, and some of the test questions were as old as the operator submitting them dealing with ancient radar where images were seen as a horizontal line on an old phosphorous oscilloscope. There were copious mentions of Loran A, and the

Loran A navigation system that has little to do with radar was turned off over 20 years ago! And some of the other radar questions were so complex that even your scientific calculator would at times hiccup. Nonetheless, the Gordon West explanations on the radar question pool were developed and are now available from the author (714-549-5000) as the only explanations out there specifically addressed to the present Element 8 radar question pool.

### BIG CHANGE THIS JULY

Despite the FCC getting out of the commercial licensing business, they were still responsible for seeing that the question pools were indeed valid and best reflect the subject material, and the FCC was also the only agency issuing the actual license

once the test results were turned into them in Gettysburg, PA. They received so many comments from marine radio and aviation radio technical experts that the Element 3 was nothing more than a re-warmed ham test, they decided to let colems and all interested parties review ALL of the test question pools; send in their comments, complaints, and suggestions for better questions; and CHANGE all of the question pools this coming July, 1995.

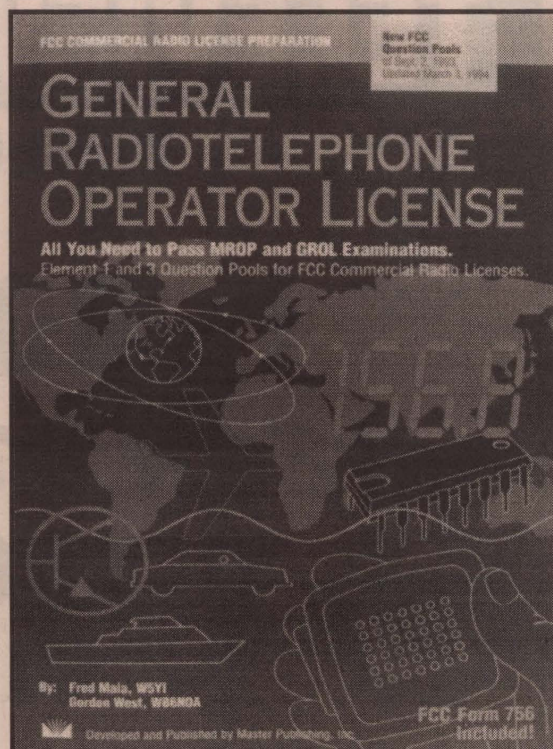
This July, all of the written commercial question pools will reflect new updated questions. Most of the Element 3 amateur radio questions will be thrown out, and new brain-busters introduced. Element 1 rules won't change much because rules are rules. The Element 8 radar questions will be completely revised, and their complexity will probably remain the same if not slightly reduced in necessary calculations.

Radiotelegraph written exams and GMDSS written examinations will change slightly, but nothing will change as much as Element 3. And Element 3 is the big one that is required for most of the other licenses, and Element 3 is the main question pool for the general radio operator's license.

The new question pool won't be released to the public until a few weeks before the new questions go into effect. When the new pool is released, it will take book publishers, including yours truly as an author, time to review the questions, come up with an explanation of the correct answer, and publish the book by December of this year. There won't be many folks passing the GROL from July to December without proper study materials, and it takes at least six months for study materials to get into stores throughout the country.

### BEST ADVICE — TEST NOW

The question pools won't rotate until July of this year. If ever you want-



**Commercial GROL books will only be valid until July! Pass the tests now (while the test questions are easy)!**

ed to test for the written based on amateur radio-type questions, now's the time to do it. In one month, a licensed ham could get up to speed on passing the test. In about 60 days, the radio enthusiast could get through the books and prepare for the test without much problem.

Radio Shack anticipates a sell-out of their remaining stock of current GROL test preparation books written by yours truly, along with Fred Maia W5YI.

They believe, as Fred and I do, that there will be a literal run for the books as being the only ones in the country that reflect the present test question pool, and folks throughout the country will want to take the test before the exam gets infinitely more complex.

So if ever you wanted the commercial general radio operator's license, Elements 1, 3, and 8 should be taken before July with the study materials along with a description of how the correct answers were arrived at in a Q & A and description format.

If you can't locate the study materials near you, contact Gordon West Radio School, (714) 549-5000, Monday through Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Speak directly with me so we can get you up to speed and through the tests before the major summertime change. **NV**

### Commercial Radio Licenses — Examination Requirements

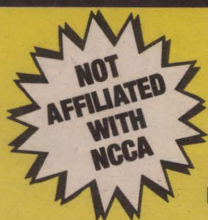
License Class	Test Element	Type of Examination	Pass <sup>3</sup>
Marine Radio Operator Permit (MROP)	Written Element 1	24-question written examination	18
General Radiotelephone Operator License (GROL)	Written Element 1	24-question written examination	18
	Written Element 3	76-question written examination	57
T-1 — First Class Radiotelegraph Operator Certificate - 1st R/T (Must be 21 years old and have 1 year of experience)	Telegraphy Element 3 <sup>2</sup>	20 code groups (CG) per minute	
	Telegraphy Element 4 <sup>2</sup>	25 plain language (PL) words per minute	
	Written Element 1	24-question written examination	18
	Written Element 5	50-question written examination	38
	Written Element 6	100-question written examination	75
T-2 — Second Class Radiotelegraph Operator Certificate - 2nd R/T	Telegraphy Element 1 <sup>2</sup>	16 code groups (CG) per minute <sup>4</sup>	
	Telegraphy Element 2 <sup>2</sup>	20 plain language (PL) words per minute <sup>4</sup>	
	Written Element 1	24-question written examination	18
	Written Element 5	50-question written examination	38
	Written Element 6	100-question written examination	75
T-3 — Third Class Radiotelegraph Operator Certificate - 3rd R/T	Telegraphy Element 1 <sup>2</sup>	16 code groups (CG) per minute <sup>4</sup>	
	Telegraphy Element 2 <sup>2</sup>	20 plain language (PL) words per minute <sup>4</sup>	
	Written Element 1	24-question written examination	18
	Written Element 5	50-question written examination	38
	Written Element 7	76-question written examination	57
GMDSS Radio Operator <sup>1</sup> (GMDSS/O)	Written Element 1	24-question written examination	18
	Written Element 7	76-question written examination	57
GMDSS Radio Maintainer <sup>1</sup> (GMDSS/M)	Written Element 1	24-question written examination	18
	Written Element 3	76-question written examination	57
	Written Element 9	50-question written examination	38
Ship Radar Endorsement (RADAR)	Written Element 8	50-question written examination	38
Six Months Endorsement (Must hold First or Second Class Radiotelegraph Operator's Certificate)	No examination requirement, but requires a minimum of six months service as a radio operator aboard a U.S. ship.		
Restricted Radiotelephone Operator Permit	No examination requirement, but holder must be eligible for employment in the U.S., be familiar with radio law, be able to keep a log and be able to speak and understand English.		

#### Notes:

- The Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) is an automated ship-to-shore distress alerting system using satellite and advanced terrestrial communications systems. GMDSS basically replaces Morse code communications which is being phased out as a maritime distress communications medium.
- Passing telegraphy examination requires copying CW (Morse code) for one minute without error.
- Number of correct answers to pass examination.
- Amateur Extra Class operators automatically receive credit for this element examination without testing.



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☐ Yes, I am paying for full service, this unit is only to be used as an extra unit.

**1. WARNING:** The ownership of a cable decoder DOES NOT give the owners of the decoder the right to decode or view premium cable channels without AUTHORIZATION from their cable company.

**2. AUTHORIZATION:** In general terms, proof of payment to a cable company for viewing their premium channels is AUTHORIZATION.

I, the undersigned, understand paragraphs 1 and 2 above and agree that:

**AS A USER:** I will not use any cable products purchased from Greenleaf by myself or my company, for the purpose of decoding or viewing unauthorized premium cable channels or avoiding rightful payment to any cable company.

**AS A SELLER:** I will not sell, trade, give or dispose of any goods I have purchased from Greenleaf to any third party or customer to whom I know, believe or suspect of using said goods for the purpose of decoding unauthorized premium cable channels or avoiding rightful payment to any cable company.

**AS AN ADVERTISER:** I agree I will not advertise, tell or communicate to anyone in any manner, that products I have purchased from Greenleaf can be, should be or are intended to be used for the purpose of decoding unauthorized premium cable channels or avoiding rightful payment to any cable company.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# Events

# CALENDAR

**CA - SANTA BARBARA** — Computer Marketplace.  
**SPONSOR:** National Productions. **LOCATION:** Earl  
Warren Showgrounds. **ADMISSION:** \$5. **CONTACT:**  
National Productions, 408-778-5200.

**CA - SANTEE** — Ham Radio, Computer & Electronics Swap Meet. **SPONSOR:** ARC of El Cajon.  
**LOCATION:** Santee Drive-In, 10990 N. Woodside.  
**HOURS:** 6:30am-? **ADMISSION:** 50¢. **TALK-IN:** 146.520. **FEATURES:** C - E - F - F/R - H. **DEALER INFO:** \$6/vehicle. **CONTACT:** Pat, WA6GMZ, ARCEC, Box 50, El Cajon CA 92020. 619-561-0052.

**CA - LIVERMORE** — East Bay Area Amateur Radio/ Electronics/Computer Swap Meet **SPONSOR:** Livermore Amateur Radio Klub (LARK). **LOCATION:** Las Positas College, N of I-580 at Airway Blvd. exit. **HOURS:** 7am-12noon, rain or shine. **ADMISSION:** Free. **TALK-IN:** 147.045 + (PL 94.8) from 145.350- (PL 100) from east. **FEATURES:** E-H- FP-F/R. **DEALER INFO:** Setup after 7am only. \$10 space fee. Covered spaces avail. if rain. **CONTACT:** Noel Anklam KC6QZK, 510-447-3857 eves or 510-783-2803 message days.

**CA - SANTA ROSA** — MarketPro Computer Show & Sale. **LOCATION:** Sonoma Co. Fairgrounds. **HOURS:** 10am-5pm. **ADMISSION:** \$6, free w/membership. **FEATURES:** C. **CONTACT:** MarketPro Computer Shows.\*

**CA - FONTANA** — Amateur Radio & Electronic Equipment Swap Meet. **SPONSOR:** Inland Empire ARC & A.B. Miller High School ARC. **LOCATION:** A.B. Miller High School, 6821 Oleander Ave. **HOURS:** 7am-7. **ADMISSION:** Free. **FEATURES:** E - EX - F - FR - H. **DEALER INFO:** Set-up 6am. **CONTACT:** Bill Gruber 909-822-4138 evs.

**CA - POMONA** — Computer Marketplace. **SPONSOR:** National Productions. **LOCATION:** Fairplex Expo Center. **ADMISSION:** \$7. **CONTACT:** National Productions. 408-778-5200.

**CA - SACRAMENTO** — MarketPro Computer Show & Sale. **LOCATION:** Cal Expo. **HOURS:** 10am-5pm. **ADMISSION:** \$6, free w/membership. **FEATURES:** C. **CONTACT:** MarketPro Computer Shows. \*

**CA - SAN DIEGO** — MarketPro Computer Show & Sale. **LOCATION:** Scottish Rite Center. **HOURS:** 10am-5pm. **ADMISSION:** \$6, free w/membership. **FEATURES:** C. **CONTACT:** MarketPro Computer Shows.\*

**CA - FRESNO** — MarketPro Computer Show & Sale. **LOCATION:** Fresno Fairgrounds. **HOURS:** 10am-5pm. **ADMISSION:** \$6, free w/membership. **FEATURES:** C. **CONTACT:** MarketPro Computer Shows. \*

**CA - POMONA** — Radio & Electronics Swap Meet. **SPONSOR:** Calif. Microwave Relay Assn. **LOCATION:** DeVry Institute of Technology Parking Lot. **HOURS:** 7am-11 am. **ADMISSION:** Free for buyers. **TALK-IN:** 146.175 +, 445.925- PL100. **DEALER INFO:** Tailgate space, \$5. **CONTACT:** Mike Wulfstetig, N6RHZ, 714-537-4230.

**CA - SANTEE** — Ham Radio, Computer & Electronics Swap Meet. **SPONSOR:** ARC of El Cajon. **LOCATION:** Santee Drive-In, 10990 N. Woodside. **HOURS:** 6:30am-? **ADMISSION:** 50¢. **TALK-IN:** 146.520. **FEATURES:** C - E - F - F/R - H. **DEALER INFO:** \$6/vehicle. **CONTACT:** Pat, WA6MHZ, ARCEC, Box 50, El Cajon CA 92020. 619-561-0052.

**WA - YAKIMA** — ARRL Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Yakima ARC. **CONTACT:** Mark Tharp, KB7HDX, POB 2222, Yakima WA 98907. 509-965-3379.

**AZ - PHOENIX** — Computer & Electronic Swap Meet. **SPONSOR:** Electronic Materials & Computers. **HOURS:** 8am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** Free. **FEATURES:** FP. **DEALER INFO:** Vendor spaces \$15. **CONTACT:** 3102 W. Thomas Rd. #902, Phoenix AZ 85017. 602-272-3200.

**CA - SAN RAFAEL** — MarketPro Computer Show & Sale. **LOCATION:** Embassy Suites. **HOURS:** 10am-5pm. **ADMISSION:** \$6, free w/membership. **FEA-**

The Events Calendar is a free service limited to electronic events such as computer shows, hamfests, flea markets, etc. If your organization is sponsoring an event and would like a free listing, contact us at least 60 days prior to the event. Include your flyer, estimated attendance, name of person to contact and phone number.

Complimentary issues are available upon request for distribution to your attendees.  
A street address for UPS shipment is required.

While we strive for accuracy in our calendar, we cannot be responsible for errors or cancellations. The information contained in this column is for the use of the readers of Nuts & Volts and may not be republished in any form without the written permission of T & L Publications, Inc.

**TURÉS:** C. **CONTACT:** MarketPro Computer Shows \*

**CA - STOCKTON** — MarketPro Computer Show & Sale. **LOCATION:** Civic Auditorium. **HOURS:** 10am-5pm. **ADMISSION:** \$6, free w/membership. **FEATURES:** C. **CONTACT:** MarketPro Computer Shows. \*

**OR - SEASIDE** — SEAPAC Ham Convention. **SPONSOR:** Oregon Tualatin Valley ARC. **LOCATION:** Seaside Convention Center. **HOURS:** Fri. 12pm-6pm; Sat. 8am-5pm; Sun. 8:30am-2pm. **ADMISSION:** \$6 adv., \$8 door. **TALK-IN:** 146.660. **FEATURES:** AC - B - CB - DP - E - EX - F - FM - FP - R - H - RV - S - S. **DEALER INFO:** Al Berg, 503-640-5456. **CONTACT:** Randy Stimson, 503-297-1175. \* VE Testing - Registration Deadline May 1, 1995.

**CA - SANTEE** — Ham Radio, Computer & Electronics Swap Meet. **SPONSOR:** ARC of El Cajon. **LOCATION:** Santee Drive-In, 10990 N. Woodside. **HOURS:** 6:30am-7. **ADMISSION:** 50¢. **TALK-IN:** 146.520. **FEATURES:** C - E - F - F/R - H. **DEALER INFO:** 56 vehicle. **CONTACT:** Pat, WA6MHZ, ARCEC, Box 50, El Cajon CA 92020. 619-561-0052.

**CA - Pomona** — Computer Marketplace. **SPONSOR:** National Productions. **LOCATION:** Fairplex Expo Center. **ADMISSION:** \$7. **CONTACT:** National Productions. 408-778-5200.

**CA - LIVERMORE** — East Bay Area Amateur Radio/ Electronics/Computer Swap Meet **SPONSOR:** Livermore Amateur Radio Klub (LARK). **LOCATION:** Los Positas College, N of I-580 at Alway Blvd. exit. **HOURS:** 7am-12noon, rain or shine. **ADMISSION:** Free. **TALK-IN:** 147.045 + (PL 94.8) from West, 145.350 (PL 100) from east. **FEATURES:** E-H - F/P-F/R. **DEALER INFO:** Setup after 7am only 150 space fee. Covered spaces avail. if rain. **CONTACT:** Noel Anklam, CKGQZK, 510-447-3857 or 510-783-2803 message days.

**CA - FONTANA** — Amateur Radio & Electronic Equipment Swap Meet. **SPONSOR:** Inland Empire ARC & A.B. Miller High School. **LOCATION:** A.B. Miller High School, 6821 Oleander Ave. **HOURS:** 7am-2. **ADMISSION:** Free. **FEATURES:** E - EX - F - FR - H. **DEALER INFO:** Set-up 6am. **CONTACT:** Bill Gruber 909-822-4138 evs.

**CA - SANTEE** — Ham Radio, Computer & Electronics Swap Meet. **SPONSOR:** ARC of El Cajon. **LOCATION:** Santee Drive-In, 10990 N. Woodside. **HOURS:** 6:30am-7. **ADMISSION:** 50¢. **TALK-IN:** 146.520. **FEATURES:** C - E - F - F/R - H. **DEALER INFO:** 56 vehicle. **CONTACT:** Pat, WA6MZH, ARCEC, Box 50, El Cajon CA 92020. 619-561-0052.

**CA - SANTEE** — Ham Radio, Computer & Electronics Swap Meet. **SPONSOR:** ARC of El Cajon. **LOCATION:** Santee Drive-In, 10990 N. Woodside. **HOURS:** 6:30am-7. **ADMISSION:** 50¢. **TALK-IN:** 146.520. **FEATURES:** C - E - F - F/R - H. **DEALER INFO:** \$6 vehicle. **CONTACT:** Pat, WA6MHZ, ARCEC, Box 50, El Cajon CA 92020. 619-561-0052.

**CA - LIVERMORE** — East Bay Area Amateur Radio/ Electronics/Computer Swap Meet **SPONSOR:** Livermore Amateur Radio Klub (LARK). **LOCATION:** Los Positas College, N of I-580 at Airway Blvd. exit. **HOURS:** 7am-12noon, rain or shine. **ADMISSION:** Free. **TALK-IN:** 147.045 + (PL 94.8) fr west, 145.350 - (PL 100) fr east. **FEATURES:** E - H - FP -

F/R. **DEALER INFO:** Setup after 7am only. \$10 space fee. Covered spaces avail. if rain. **CONTACT:** Noel Ankiam KC6QZK, 510-447-3857 eves or 510-783-2803 message days.

**CA - FONTANA** — Amateur Radio & Electronic Equipment Swap Meet. **SPONSOR:** Inland Empire ARC & A.B. Miller High School ARC. **LOCATION:** A.B. Miller High School, 6821 Oleander Ave. **HOURS:** 7am-7. **ADMISSION:** Free. **FEATURES:** E - EX - FP - F/R - H. **DEALER INFO:** Set-up 6am. **CONTACT:** Bill Gruber 909-822-4138 eves.

**ID - BOISE** — Convention 1995. **SPONSOR:** International Radio Club of America. **LOCATION:** Owyhee Plaza Hotel. **FEATURES:** DP - F. **CONTACT:** 208-377-5346.

**CA - SANTEE** — Ham Radio, Computer & Electronics Swap Meet. **SPONSOR:** ARC of El Cajon. **LOCATION:** Santee Drive-In, 10990 N. Woodside. **HOURS:** 6:30am-7. **ADMISSION:** 50¢. **TALK-IN:** 146.520. **FEATURES:** C - E - F - F/R - H. **DEALER INFO:** \$6 vehicle. **CONTACT:** Pat, WA6MZH, ARCEC, Box 50, El Cajon CA 92020. 619-561-0052.

**AZ - PHOENIX** — Computer & Electronic Swap Meet. **SPONSOR:** Electronic Materials & Computers. **LOCATION:** Electronic Materials & Computers

- AC — Air-conditioned
- B — Banquet
- C — Computers
- CB — Commercial Booths
- DP — Door Prizes
- E — Electronics
- EX — FCC exams
- F — Forums
- FM — Flea Market
- FP — Free Parking
- F/R — Food & Refreshments
- H — Amateur Radio
- RV-H — RV Parking w/hookups
- RV-S — RV Parking Self-contained
- S — Seminars
- T — Tailgating

AGI Computer Fair - 317-299-8827  
CMA Computer Shows - 804-272-1570  
KGP Computer Shows - 908-297-2526

MarketPro Computer Shows:  
West (CA) - 415-388-8893  
East (MD, OH, PA, VA) - 301-365-9696  
N.E. (CT, MA, NJ, NY, RI) - 201-265-1075  
NARISAAM Computer Shows - 800-436-6707  
Northern Computer Shows - 508-744-8440



# Events CALENDAR

**ADMISSION:** \$5. **FEATURES:** C - DP - E - FM - F/R - H. **DEALER INFO:** 6' indoor table \$10, 8' premium location tables \$25. After 4/25/95 add \$5. **CONTACT:** Joe Bowen Pres., Voice or FAX 216-442-1776. Ron Nelson Voice President, Voice 216-292-7744 or fax 216-292-7746, and mail to: National Exps, Inc., 30799 Pinetree Rd., #230, Cleveland OH 44124.

**TX - AMARILLO** — ARRL Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Panhandle ARC. **CONTACT:** Guy Pigg, WZ5C, POB 3842, Amarillo TX 79116-3842, 806-372-8462.

## MAY 6-7

**TX - ABILENE** — ARRL West Texas Section Convention & Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Key City ARC. **LOCATION:** Abilene Civic Center. **HOURS:** Sat: 8am-5pm; Sun: 9am-2pm. **ADMISSION:** \$7 adv., \$8 door. **TALK-IN:** 146.160/760. **FEATURES:** EX - FP. **DEALER INFO:** Tables \$5; set-up, Fri. 4pm-9pm, Sat. 6am. **CONTACT:** Peg Richard, KA4UPA, 1442 Lakeside Dr., Abilene TX 79602, 915-672-8889.

## MAY 7

**IN - SOUTH BEND** — Camera/Computer Swap Meet. **LOCATION:** Century Center, Downtown South Bend. **HOURS:** 10am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** \$5, under 12 free. **DEALER INFO:** 8' tables \$50. **CONTACT:** Roger L. Smith, 8863 E. Black Point Rd., Syracuse IN 46567. 219-856-3863, voice/FAX.

**MI - LANSING** — Computer Trade Show. **LOCATION:** Holiday Inn South Convention Center, 6820 South Cedar St., Exit #104 off of I-96. **HOURS:** 10am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** Adults \$4, seniors & students w/ID \$3, under 12 free w/adult. **FEATURES:** C - DP. **CONTACT:** Computers & You, 313-283-1754.

**MN - BEMIDJI** — Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Paul Bunyon ARC. **LOCATION:** Bemidji Eagles Club. **HOURS:** 8:00am-3:30pm. **TALK-IN:** 146.13/73. **FEATURES:** CB - DP - EX - FM. **CONTACT:** Dave Peterson NOQH, 218-751-2314. George Welte, NOWBU, 218-751-2931. To register for testing, Gurnee Bridgeman W9NT.

**OH - CLEVELAND** — Computer Mania! **SPONSOR:** National Computer Exposition. **LOCATION:** Brennan's Party Center, 13000 Trisket Rd. at I-90 Exit 166, 1/4 mile S to Trisket, 1/2 mile W on Trisket. **HOURS:** 10am-3:30pm. **ADMISSION:** \$1 off w/ad, under 12 free. **FEATURES:** FP. **DEALER INFO:** Setup 8am-9:30am. Sellouts are common, early booking advised. **CONTACT:** Joe Bowen, 216-442-1776 or Ronald Nelson, FAX: 216-292-7746. National Expo's, Inc., 30799 Pinetree Rd. #230, Cleveland OH 44124.

**OH - LISBON** — 1995 Columbiana County Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Triangle ARC. **LOCATION:** Columbiana County Fairgrounds. **HOURS:** 8am-7pm. **ADMISSION:** \$4, under 12 free. **TALK-IN:** 146.70 - 224.66 - 146.805. **FEATURES:** DP - RV-S. **DEALER INFO:** Indoor Tables \$6 each, Flea Market Space \$1 each. Set-up 6:30. **CONTACT:** KB8JB, Dick 216-385-1245.

## MAY 12-13

**IN - KOKOMO** — 24th Regional Radio Festival. **SPONSOR:** Indiana Historical Radio Society. **LOCATION:** Ramada Inn. **HOURS:** Fri: 8am-5pm; Sat: 8am-6pm. **ADMISSION:** \$8 adv., \$8/family (same address); \$10 door/family (same address). **FEATURES:** B - FM - F/R - H. **DEALER INFO:** Outside flea market space; \$5/1 space, \$15/2 spaces, \$35/3 spaces. Indoor flea market, Friday only, limit 1 \$5/5' table. **CONTACT:** Herman Gross, 317-459-8308. Dr. Michael Clark IHRS Treasurer, RR 2, Box 90, Franklin IN 46131.

**NE - SOUTH SIOUX CITY** — Hamboree & Iowa State Convention. **SPONSOR:** 3900 & Sooland ARA. **LOCATION:** Marina Inn. **ADMISSION:** \$6 both days. **FEATURES:** B - DP - EX - F - F/R - H. **DEALER INFO:** Flea Market tables \$5, AI Smith, 3529 Douglas St., Sioux City, IA 51104, 712-259-7475. **CONTACT:** Dick Pitner, 2931 Pierce St., Sioux City IA 51104, 712-258-1520.

## MAY 13

**LA - SPRINGHILL** — North LA/South AR Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Springhill ARC, Inc. & Arkia ARC, Inc. **LOCATION:** Civic Center, North Main Street. **HOURS:** 8am-2pm. **ADMISSION:** \$3. **TALK-IN:** 147.165 & 146.730. **FEATURES:** CB - DP - EX - FP. **DEALER INFO:** Tables, \$10. Set-up 7:00am. **CONTACT:** NSNSX, 605 5th NE, Springhill LA 71075, 318-539-4167.

**OH - TOLEDO** — Computer Mania! **SPONSOR:** National Computer Exposition. **LOCATION:** Ramada Inn/Southwyck, 2340 S. Reynolds Rd., Ohio Tpk. 80/90 Exit 4, 1/4 Mile North on Rt. 20. **HOURS:** 10am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** \$1 off w/ad, under 12 free. **FEATURES:** AC - C - DP - FP - F/R. **DEALER INFO:** Setup 8am-9:30am. Sellouts are common, early booking advised. **CONTACT:** Joe Bowen, 216-442-1776 or Ronald Nelson, FAX: 216-292-7746. National Expo's, Inc., 30799 Pinetree Rd. #230, Cleveland OH 44124.

**WI - MANITOWOC** — Lakeshore Hamfest, Electronics & Computer Swapfest. **SPONSOR:** Mancord Radio Club. **LOCATION:** Manitowoc County Expo. **HOURS:** 8am-7pm. **ADMISSION:** \$2 adv., \$3 door. **TALK-IN:** 146.61 or 147.03 +. **FEATURES:** DP - EX - F/R. **DEALER INFO:** Tables, \$4 ea., electric outlets, \$5 ea., set up Fri. night until 10pm or early Sat. morning. **CONTACT:** Glen 414-684-7096 or Red 414-684-9097.

## MAY 14

**IA - MARSHALLTOWN** — Hamfest '95. **SPONSOR:** CIRAS. **LOCATION:** Marshalltown Community College. **HOURS:** 8am-4pm. **ADMISSION:** \$4 adv., \$5 door. **FEATURES:** DP - EX - H - T. **DEALER INFO:** 8' tables, \$8 pre-paid. **CONTACT:** CIRAS, POB 184, Laurel IA 50141.

**MI - DEARBORN** — 3rd Annual Mothers Day Computer Trade Show. **LOCATION:** Dearborn Civic Center, 15801 Michigan Ave., corner of Greenfield. **HOURS:** 10am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** Adults \$4, seniors & students w/ID \$3, under 12 free w/adult, all females free. **FEATURES:** C - DP. **CONTACT:** Computers & You, 313-283-1754.

**OH - ATHENS** — 16th Annual Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Athens County ARA. **LOCATION:** City Recreation Center. Take the E Street exit on either US Rt. 33 or US Rt. 50 and look for signs to the hamfest. **ADMISSION:** \$4, YLs and female spouses of hams are free. **TALK-IN:** 145.15MHz (-600 offset). **FEATURES:** DP - FM - F/R - H - T. **DEALER INFO:** Indoor space is only available by advanced registration. If interested contact John Biddle, WD8JLM, 80 Wonder Hills Dr., Athens OH 45701. Phone 614-594-8901, after 6:00pm. **CONTACT:** Carl J. Denbow, KA8JXG, 63 Morris Ave., Athens OH 45701-1939. Internet: denbow@mail.oucom.ohio.edu. or packet: KA8JXG@KA8DRR.OH.US.NA.

**OH - MEDINA** — Medina County Hamfest '95. **SPONSOR:** Medina 2 Meter Group, Inc. **LOCATION:** Medina County Community Center, 735 Lafayette Rd. **HOURS:** 8am-1pm. **ADMISSION:** \$3 adv., \$4 door. **TALK-IN:** 147.63/03. **FEATURES:** C - DP - E - FM - FP - F/R - H. **DEALER INFO:** Tables \$6, flea market, 10', space \$4, set-up 6:00am. **CONTACT:** Medina Hamfest Committee, POB 452, Medina OH 44258, 216-725-4492, 10am-5pm.

## MAY 19-20-21

**SD - HOT SPRINGS** — 1995 Dakota Division Ham Radio Convention. **SPONSOR:** Hot Springs ARC. **LOCATION:** Mueller Civic Center. **HOURS:** 8am-7pm. **ADMISSION:** \$8 adv., \$10 door. **TALK-IN:** 146.850(-). **FEATURES:** B - C - CB - DP - F - FM - F/R - H. **DEALER INFO:** Flea Market tables \$10. **CONTACT:** Tim Anderson, KOOR, 440 N 20th, Hot Springs SD 57747, 605-745-6323.

## MAY 20

**CO - COLORADO SPRINGS** — Swapfest. **SPONSOR:** Pikes Peak ARA. **LOCATION:** Liberty High School, 8720 Scarborough Dr. **HOURS:** 8am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** \$3. **TALK-IN:** 146.97, 146.52. **FEATURES:** C - DP - E - EX - F/R - H. **DEALER INFO:** Tables \$10, 2 or more \$8. Set-up 6am. **CONTACT:** Harv Hunter, WA3EIB, 1437 Chelton Rd., Colorado Springs CO 80909. 719-597-8964.

**IN - INDIANAPOLIS** — Indianapolis Computer Fair. **LOCATION:** Quality Inn East, 35th & Shadeland Ave. **CONTACT:** Ben Yanto, AGI Computer Fairs.\*

**MI - WESTLAND** — Great Lakes Computer Expo & Sale. **SPONSOR:** Progressive Computer Productions. **LOCATION:** Wayne-Ford Civic League, 1645 Wayne Rd., 1 blk. S of Ford Rd. **HOURS:** 10am-4pm. **ADMISSION:** Adults \$4, Seniors/Students \$3, under 12 free w/adult. **FEATURES:** C - DP - FP - F/R - S. **DEALER INFO:** 8' \$35 ea. 12' \$40 ea. **CONTACT:** Progressive Computer Productions, 23814 Michigan Ave., Ste. 237, Dearborn MI 48124. 313-425-9276.

**MO - FESTUS** — Cave Fest '95. **SPONSOR:** Jefferson County ARC. **LOCATION:** 20 miles south of St. Louis, I-55 South to exit 178, Herculanum, East to HWY 61/67. South on HWY 61/67 2 miles to CAVE entrance. **HOURS:** 7am-7pm. **ADMISSION:** \$3, under 12 free. **TALK-IN:** 147.075/224.04/442.500. **FEATURES:** C - CB - DP - E - EX - F - FP - F/R - H - S - T. **DEALER INFO:** Tables \$15/commercial, \$10/ amateur, \$7/electric hookups, \$10/tailgaters. Set-up Fri. noon-1pm, Sat. 4am-7am. **CONTACT:** Herb Metts, POB 232, House Springs MO 63051, 314-671-0667.

**MO - KANSAS CITY** — Missouri State Convention. **SPONSOR:** Missouri State Convention. **CONTACT:** Chuck Miller, WA0KU, 7000 NE 120th St., Kansas City MO 64166. 816-781-7313.

**TX - ARLINGTON** — Calculator & Antique Instrument Collector Convention. **SPONSOR:** International Assoc. of Calculator Collectors. **LOCATION:** Arlington Convention Center, 10 minutes from Dallas/Ft. Worth Airport. **HOURS:** 10am-4pm. **ADMISSION:** Free. **DEALER INFO:** 8' tables \$20. **CONTACT:** Skip Solberg, 817-467-0368, 717 Salisbury, Arlington TX 76014.

## MAY 20-21

**NM - RUIDOSO** — ARRL Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Sierra Blanca ARC. **CONTACT:** Gunnar Carlson, AE4W, POB 4067, Ruidoso NM 88345. 505-525-2159.

**OH - CINCINNATI** — Cincinnati Computer Fair. **LOCATION:** Cincinnati Gardens. **HOURS:** Sat. 10am-5pm, Sun. 10am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** \$5. Good both days. **DEALER INFO:** 10 x 10 professional space w/backdrop & electricity 2' draped tables w/chair \$200. 8 x 6 Flea market space w/8' table \$30. Elec. \$5. **CONTACT:** 513-263-3378

## MAY 21

**IA - BURLINGTON** — Valley Emergency Communications Assn. **CONTACT:** Chuck Gysl, N2DUP, POB 911, Burlington IA 52601-0911. 319-752-3000.

**IL - GLEN ELLYN** — Computer Central. **LOCATION:** College of DuPage, Park Blvd. & College Rd. **HOURS:** 9:30am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** Adults \$6, 8-12 \$2, under 8 free. \$1 off reg. adult admission w/this ad. **FEATURES:** AC - C - FP. **CONTACT:** Computer Central, Jay B. Robinson, 708-940-7547.

**IL - PEOTONE** — ARRL Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Kankakee Area Radio Society. **CONTACT:** Willis Bowser, K9IFO, 1210 N. Riverside Dr., Mokena IL 60454-3452. 815-472-2079.

**IN - WABASH** — 27th Annual WCARC Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Wabash County ARC. **LOCATION:** Wabash County 4-H Fairgrounds. **HOURS:** 7am-5pm. **ADMISSION:** \$6 adv., \$5 door. **TALK-IN:** 147.63/03 442.325/447.325. **FEATURES:** C - CB - DP - E - FM - FP - F/R - H - RV-S - T. **DEALER INFO:** Indoor tables, \$10. Set-up: Sat. 1pm-9pm, Sun. 6am-7am. **CONTACT:** Don Spangler, 235 Southwood Dr., Wabash IN 46992, 219-563-5564.

**MI - MADISON HEIGHTS** — Computer Trade Show. **LOCATION:** UF & CW Hall, 876 Horace Brown Dr., 1 block East of I-75, 3 blocks S of 13 Mile Road. **HOURS:** 10am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** Adults \$4; Seniors & students w/ID \$3; under 12 free w/adult. **FEATURES:** C - DP. **CONTACT:** Computers & You, 313-283-1754.

## MAY 26-27-28

**OK - TULSA** — Green Country Hamfest & Oklahoma State Convention. **LOCATION:** Maxwell Convention Center, Exhibit Hall A, W 7th St. between Denver Ave. & Houston Ave. **HOURS:** Sat, 8am-5pm, Sun, 9am-12 noon. (Hamfest Hours Only.) **ADMISSION:** \$8 adv., \$10 door. **TALK-IN:** 146.88, 145.27. **TALK-IN:** B - CB - DP - EX - F - FM - RV-H. **DEALER INFO:** Flea market tables, \$6 adv., \$8 door. Dealer booths start @ \$45. Set-up Fri. afternoon. Charlie 918-241-4214. **CONTACT:** Call 918-272-3081, leave message.

## MAY 27

**MI - TROY** — Computer Trade Show. **LOCATION:** American Polish Cultural Center, 2975 E. Maple Road (15 Mile), corner of Dequindre. **HOURS:** 10am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** Adults \$4, seniors & students w/ID \$3, under 12 free w/adult. **FEATURES:** C - DP. **CONTACT:** Computers & You, 313-283-1754.

## MAY 27-28

**WY - CASPER** — ARRL Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Casper ARC. **CONTACT:** Steve Speir, N7JUO, 3511 Swanton Ave., Casper WY 82609. 307-265-5675.

## MAY 28

**IL - CHICAGO** — Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Chicago ARC. **LOCATION:** DeVry Institute of Tech, 3300 N. Campbell. **HOURS:** 8am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** \$4 adv., \$5 door. **TALK-IN:** 147.255 +, 444.825 +. **FEATURES:** FP. **DEALER INFO:** Indoor tables \$1 a foot. Outdoor Swapfest free. Set-up 6am. **CONTACT:** CARC, 5631 W. Irving Pk. Rd., Chicago IL 60634. 312-545-4740.

**IL - ORLAND PARK** — The Orland Park Computer Show. **LOCATION:** Orland Park Civic Center, 147th St & LaGrange Rd. (Rt. 45). **HOURS:** 9:30am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** Adults \$5 - \$1 off with copy of this ad, 8-12 yrs \$2, under 8 free. **FEATURES:** A - C - CB - DP - FP - F/R - All indoors. **CONTACT:** 24-hour Hotline 708-974-3123.

**OH - YOUNGSTOWN** — 10th Annual Hamfest & Computer Show. **SPONSOR:** Twenty Over Nine Radio Club. **LOCATION:** Canfield Fairgrounds, Rt. 46. **HOURS:** 8am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** \$3 adv., \$4 door. Under 12 free w/paid admission. **TALK-IN:** 147.315 +, 443.225 +. **FEATURES:** C - FM - FP - F/R - H. **DEALER INFO:** Inside tables. Outdoor flea market free with admission. Set-up 6:30am. **CONTACT:** Don Stoddard, N8LNE, 42 S. Whitney Ave., Youngstown OH 44509, 216-793-7072. Or Dave Mellott, K8BKT, 2895 Penny Ln., Austintown OH 44515, 216-793-0816.

## JUNE 3

**CO - LOVELAND** — Superfest Swapmeet. **SPON-**

**SOR:** Northern Colorado ARC. **LOCATION:** Larimer County Fairgrounds, 700 S. Railroad. **HOURS:** 8am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** \$3. **FEATURES:** C - CB - DP - E - EX - FP - F/R - H. **DEALER INFO:** Tables \$8, Jeanene Gage, NOYHY @ 303-351-7327. **CONTACT:** Gen. info. Randy Long, WB6AVV, 303-226-1529, Granddaddy Moore, AA0PB, 303-221-3698.

**MI - MUSSER RAPIDS** — 15th Annual Hamfestival. **SPONSOR:** Independent Repeater Assn. **LOCATION:** Hudsonville Fairgrounds, 5 miles W of Grand Rapids, off I-196, X-way. **HOURS:** 8am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** \$4 adv., \$5 door, under 12 free. **TALK-IN:** 147.160 Link Repeater System. **FEATURES:** C - CB - DP - EX - F/R - H. **DEALER INFO:** Tables \$8, 10' trunk spaces \$5. Set-up 6am. **CONTACT:** Tom or Kathy Werkema, KABYSM/KB8KZH, 562 92nd St. SE, Byron Center MI 49315. 616-698-6627.

## JUNE 4

**IL - PRINCETON** — Princeton Hamfest & Computer Show. **SPONSOR:** The Starved Rock Radio Club. **LOCATION:** Bureau County Fairgrounds. **HOURS:** 8am-7pm. **ADMISSION:** Flea Market: Free. Show: \$5 adv. double stub, \$5 door single stub. **TALK-IN:** 146.355/955. **FEATURES:** C - CB - DP - FM - FP - F/R - H - RV-S. **DEALER INFO:** Tables \$10, bring your own dropcards. Set-up: Sat. 12pm-6pm, Sun. 6am. **CONTACT:** Bruce Burton, KU9A/Debbie Burton, N9DRV, 1153 Union St., Marseilles IL 61341-1710. 815-795-2201.

**IN - EVANSVILLE** — Hamfest, Computers & Electronics Show. **SPONSOR:** Tri-State ARS. **LOCATION:** Vanderburgh County 4-H Fairgrounds, Hwy 41 & Boonville - New Harmony Rd. **HOURS:** 8am-7pm. **ADMISSION:** \$4. **TALK-IN:** 147.15MHz (transmit + 600KHz). **FEATURES:** C - CB - DP - E - EX - F/R. **DEALER INFO:** Indoor tables free, commercial vendor set-up 6am, Flea market set-up 7am. **CONTACT:** TARS, PO Box 4521, Evansville IN 47724.

**KS - SALINA** — Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Central Kansas ARC. **LOCATION:** Bicentennial Center Heritage Hall. **HOURS:** 9am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** \$6. **TALK-IN:** 147.03 (+). **FEATURES:** AC - C - CB - DP - E - FM - F/R - H. **DEALER INFO:** Commercial tables \$10. Flea market tables \$5. **CONTACT:** Dan Cook, AAOOT, % KCARC, POB 2493, Salina KS 67401-2493. 913-263-8540.

**MI - CHELSEA** — 18TH Annual Chelsea Swap "N" Shop. **SPONSOR:** Chelsea ARC. **LOCATION:** Chelsea Fairgrounds. **HOURS:** 8am. **ADMISSION:** \$3, YLs, XYLs, under 12 all free. **TALK-IN:** 146.980. **FEATURES:** FM - F/R. **DEALER INFO:** 8' tables \$10, Trunk space \$3. Set-up 6am. **CONTACT:** PO Box 325, Manchester MI 48158, or Gary R. Widmayer, 313-428-9398.

**OH - DAYTON** — PC Buyers Mart. **SPONSOR:** 5 O'Clock Computers. **LOCATION:** Nutter Center. **HOURS:** 10am-4pm. **ADMISSION:** \$4 Seniors, \$2 students. **FEATURES:** C. **DEALER INFO:** 6' tables \$30, \$5 electric hook-ups. **CONTACT:** 5 O'Clock Computers, 513-426-0350 or 1-800-363-5200.

## JUNE 10

**IN - INDIANAPOLIS** — Indianapolis Computer Fair. **LOCATION:** Knights of Columbus auditorium, 2100 E. 71st St., W. of Keystone Ave. **HOURS:** 10am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** \$4, under 12 free. **FEATURES:** C - DP. **CONTACT:** Ben Yanto, AGI Computer Fairs.\*

## JUNE 11

**IL - ORLAND PARK** — The Orland Park Computer Show. **LOCATION:** Orland Park Civic Center, 147th St. & LaGrange Rd. (Rt. 45). **HOURS:** 9:30am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** Adults \$5 - \$1 off with copy of this ad, 8-12 yrs \$2, under 8 free. **FEATURES:** A - C - CB - DP - FP - F/R - All indoors. **CONTACT:** 24-hour Hotline 708-974-3123.

**IL - WILLOW SPRINGS** — 18th Annual Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Six Meter Club of Chicago. **LOCATION:** Santa Fe Park, 91st & Wolf Rd. **ADMISSION:** \$4 adv., \$5 gate. **TALK-IN:** 146.52, 146.37/97 (107.2Hz). **FEATURES:** C - CB - E - FM - FP - F/R. **DEALER INFO:** Joseph Gutwein, WA9RIJ, 7109 Blackburn Ave., Downers Grove IL 60516. 708-963-4922. **CONTACT:** Adv. tickets: Mike Corbett, K9ENZ, 606 S. Fenton Ave., Romeoville IL 60441.

**MI - DEARBORN** — Computer Trade Show. **LOCATION:** Adray Sports Arena, 14900 Ford Road (M-153), 1 block E of Greenfield. **HOURS:** 10am-4pm. **ADMISSION:** Adults \$4, seniors & students w/ID \$3, under 12 free w/adult. **FEATURES:** C - DP. **CONTACT:** Computers & You, 313-283-1754.

## JUNE 16-17

**MN - MAPLEWOOD** — Electronics Fair '95. **SPONSOR:** North Area Repeater Assn. **LOCATION:** Aldrich Arena, 1850 White Bear Ave. **HOURS:** Fri.: Outside flea market 6pm-9:30pm, Commercial Exhibits 6pm-10pm. Sat.: Outside flea market 6am to 3:30pm, Commercial Exhibits 8am-3:30pm.

Continued on page 136



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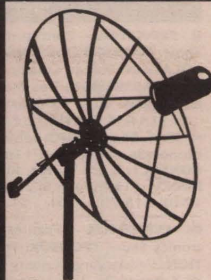
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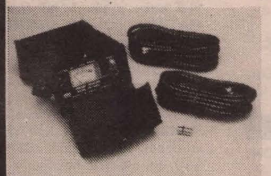
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1514004 10.0 SX-10 PolarSpin 83 (S&H) 449  
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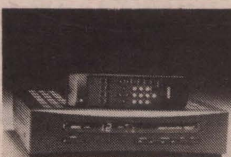
900038 Pico Peaker S&H \$5 \$89.95

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Is your actuator no longer doing its job because of wear and tear? As the hardest working part of your satellite system, the actuator must move your dish from east to west across the entire satellite belt. Each time you change satellites, your actuator sends pulses to the receiver telling the receiver when to stop moving the dish. Most older actuators sent only 10-16 pulses for each inch of travel, which may not be enough to stop the dish at the maximum signal strength.

Today's new heavy duty actuators with high resolution reed sensors send 48 pulses per inch of arm travel. So if your old actuator is getting tired, let a new SuperJack insure the finest picture possible.

18" arm 1019018 S&H \$15 \$89  
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Ultra

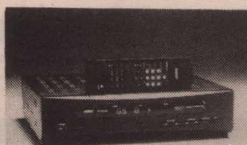
The Ultra is Uniden's newest, smallest fully-integrated C/KU receiver ever. This unit includes the ability to control dish movement and is ready for an optional internal program decoder. The Ultra comes preprogrammed for 49 satellite positions and allows you to add satellites as they are launched. Move directly to the satellite by entering the abbreviation from the included infrared remote control. Forty programmable favorite channels can be accessed immediately from your easy chair. Run across something you don't want your kids to see? Just touch a button and eliminate that channel from their access. A complete variety of color menus allow you to control everything from your remote control. The Uniden Ultra is an ideal receiver to get you started in Direct-To-Home Satellite TV.

4527008 Ultra S&H \$22 \$379.00

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4527009 UST4600 S&H \$22 \$499.00



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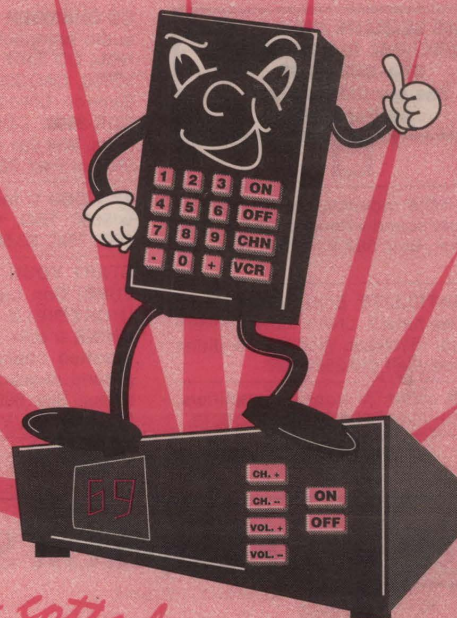
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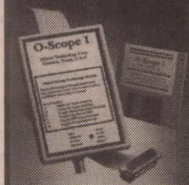
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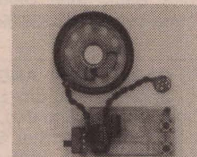
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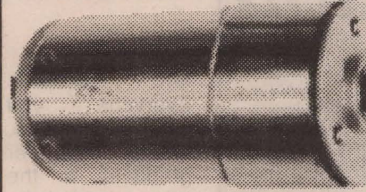
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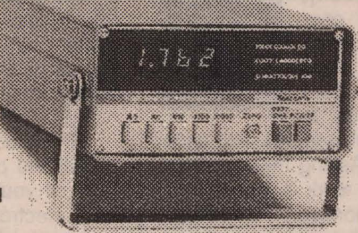
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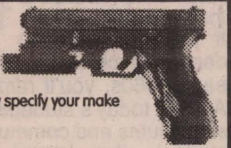
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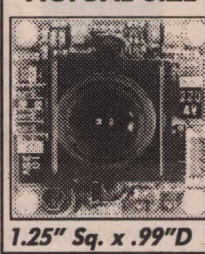
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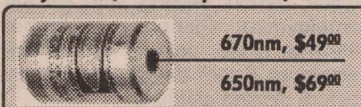
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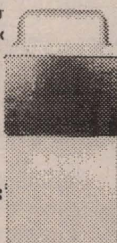
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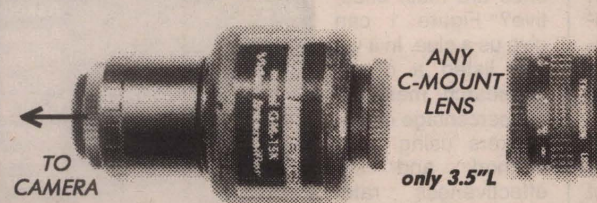


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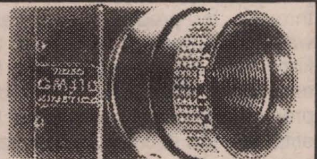
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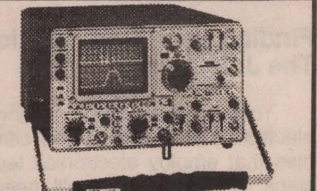
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# Launching Your High-Tech Career:

## Finding, Getting, and Keeping Your First Position as an Electronics Technician

**Ah, the good old days.**

And they weren't that long ago, either. If you were a student at a technical school back in the early 1980s, you'll remember them. As with today's students at vocational institutes and community colleges, students of a decade or more ago often had trouble finishing their certificate or degree programs in electronics technology. But it wasn't so much because, as with today's students, they were burdened with family obligations, dead-end work responsibilities, or difficult academic challenges, though they faced all of those obstacles, too.

No, many of yesterday's electronics students failed to complete their course of study because, believe it or not, they were often yanked out of a program, midway through, by predatory, application-waving corporate recruiters from firms such as Hughes Aircraft, IBM, and Litton Industries, enticed by promises of high salaries, good benefits, and job security. Unfortunately, with today's corporate downsizing, world-wide competition, an automation onslaught, and changing job descriptions, those good old days are gone for good.

Be that as it may, there are still electronics technician jobs to be had, good ones. But to find, get, and keep one, you better not be waiting for a recruiter to jerk you out of class. To be successful now, you're going to have to go out and make it happen yourself. In this article, we'll show you how.

### Finding Your First Position: The Job Search

Your first step in launching an electronics career is to find companies that employ electronics technicians. In doing so, you'll need to know what kind of companies hire technicians and what job-search methods are most effective.

What type of companies use electronics technicians? First, of course, there are the electronics companies that produce or repair the products and services of the electronics age. Trimble Navigation, of Sunnyvale, CA is typical. They sell, install, and repair portable Global Positioning Systems (GPSs). They obviously need electronics techni-



everything from washing machines to VCRs.

There are, in addition, many non-electronics companies that demand electronics technicians of all types. Hospitals are a good example. Most hospitals of any size have medical electronics technicians on duty to deal with emergency equipment failure and routine preventive maintenance. If more extensive work is required, a distributor or vendor is called in. It is important to keep these non-electronics companies in mind while engaging in your job search. Electronics is so pervasive, it's hard to find any enterprise that is immune to it. As an electronics technician, you're going to wind up where electronics are — and that's everywhere.

Let's turn now to specific job-search procedures. Just what are the methods used to find technician positions and which ones are most effective? Figure 1 can give us a clue. In it we see listed a dozen job-search methods, the percentage of job-seekers using each method, and the effectiveness rate. Keep in mind that the information covers all job categories, not just that of electronics technicians.

According to the data, 66.0 percent of all job-seekers apply

cians. Also in this category are the giant service (or repair) centers. For example, Circuit City Stores, Inc., operates a huge service center in Walnut, CA where over 30 electronics technicians repair

directly to an employer, and when they do, nearly half — 47.7 percent — find employment. Clearly, direct employer contact is effective. So too is answering local newspaper ads: 23.9 percent, or close to one out of four job seekers, find a job in this manner. Asking friends about jobs where they work is also a successful, time-honored approach, 22.1 percent finding that this method hits the mark. At the other extreme, asking a teacher or professor, or taking a civil service test are, in general, rather ineffective.

Though helpful, the list in Figure 1 is not complete. A number of job-search approaches for the would-be electronics technician are not mentioned. Here, then, are an additional half-dozen key job-search methods you will want to seriously consider:

#### 1. Networking with friends

electronics store, needs to know that you are looking for a position as an electronics technician.

2. *Networking on the Net.* While parents and friends will remain the main networking tool for a long time to come, many job searchers are now "surfing the nets" for job information. Check with the *National Business Employment Weekly* for more information.

3. *School placement offices and public and private employment services.* If you're still in school, check your electronics department's files and those of the general placement office. When dealing with private employment agencies, remember there is a fee, paid by you or the employer. Check things out carefully before signing anything.

4. *Job fairs.* Wherever you find job fairs, be they at schools, conventions, or large companies, approach individuals with an "I know what I am looking for" attitude. Follow up any good lead with a phone call or letter of inquiry.

FIGURE 1

### Commonly Used Job Search Methods

Percent of Total Job Seekers Using the Method	Method	Effectiveness Rate*
66.0%	Applied directly to employer.	47.7%
50.8%	Asked friends about jobs where they work.	22.1%
41.8%	Asked friends about jobs elsewhere.	11.9%
28.4%	Asked relatives about jobs where they work.	19.3%
27.3%	Asked relatives about jobs elsewhere.	7.4%
45.9%	Answered local newspaper ads.	23.9%
21.0%	Private employment agency.	24.2%
12.5%	School placement office.	21.4%
15.3%	Civil Service test.	12.5%
10.4%	Asked teacher or professor.	12.1%
1.6%	Placed ad in local newspaper.	12.9%
6.0%	Union hiring hall.	22.2%

\*A percentage obtained by dividing the number of job-seekers who actually found work using the method, by the total number of job-seekers who tried to use that method, whether successfully or not.

Source: *Tips for Finding the Right Job.* U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, 1991.

and relatives. Everyone you meet, be it relative, friend, former graduate, or the person behind the counter at the local



## Five Critical Interview Tips

## FIGURE 2

1. Show interest and enthusiasm. Try to relate your interests to the organization's.
2. Make points politely. Stress your best qualities and experience; note what you could bring to the position. Focus on the employer's needs, not your own.
3. Be honest. Admit when you don't know something. Remember, you're not expected to be an expert on the company's products and services, just a quick learner.
4. Be positive about former employers. Never complain about previous employers or their practices.
5. Ask for the job at the close of the interview. Of course, don't expect an affirmative response on the spot. Ask when you can expect to hear from the company.

5. *Professional clubs or organizations.* To get a list of organizations, consult the *Encyclopedia of Associations* found in most libraries.

6. *Cold calls and walk-ins.* A cold call takes guts, but it can be extremely effective. Remember, your main objective is to get an application on file. Most companies will let you do at least that.

How many of these half-dozen job-search methods should you use? You may need all of them and then some. As has been said, finding a job is practically a full-time job in itself.

### Getting Your First Position: Being the Chosen One

Until now, we have dealt only with the first step toward full-time employment as an electronics technician — the job search. Once you have identified an attractive company that you hope is hiring, it is time to move onto the second, most critical step — that of actually getting, or securing the job. Here you must do everything possible to become the chosen one from what will surely be a deluge of candidates. To do so, you will have to (1) write a flawless resume and cover letter; (2) "ace" any employee test that is given; and (3) not only survive, but exploit, the job interview.

Dozens of books, and many more articles, have been written on how to write resumes and cover letters. We won't take up valuable space here restating what they cover quite adequately. Visit your local library or book store to get the guidance you need.

Nonetheless, with regard to resumes and cover letters, there is one important point that can't be overstated. Remember, your resume

reveals two things about you: (1) your qualifications for a position, and, (2) how well you express and present yourself. No matter how good you look on paper with regard to the former, if the resume (and cover letter) isn't perfect, meaning absent of all flaws, it doesn't matter. Type and retype a resume and cover letter until it is flawless.

Some employers will require you to take a company test. There are two types, formal and informal. If a test is given at all, you will certainly be given the former. You may not, however, even know you're getting the latter.

The written test, most likely multiple choice, tends to be heavy on basic electronics, contains some math, and requires a knowledge of Ohm's law, Kirchhoff's laws, etc. If you have been out of school for a while, secure a basic electronics text book and spend a few hours brushing up on the material. That should do it.

The informal test, when given, is often in the form of a tour of the facilities, with questions to follow. Do not make the mistake of thinking that such a tour is just a chance for the employer to show off the company. There is often more to it than that, with the tour guide later asking you questions on what you saw and what was said. It's a chance for the employer to see how fast you pick things up — how much of a "quick study" you are. As Keith Bilby of Anheuser-Busch Brewery in Van Nuys, CA said: "I take a prospective employee on a standard one-hour tour of the plant, the entire beer-brewing operation. Later on, during the interview, I refer back to the tour to see how much the applicant picked up and retained. It gives me another input on his or her capabilities."

Having a well-prepared resume is important and passing the company test, if given, is a must, but the job interview, especially today, is vital — it, more than anything else, gets you the job. Why is this so? It is

during the interview that the employer sizes you up, probes in questionable areas, and gets to see what you are really like. Resumes are often inflated, but the interview, as much as anything, tends to "tell it like it is." While the resume will get you in the door, it is the job interview that will determine whether or not you stay there.

There are a number of things that should be done before the interview takes place.

First, you should investigate the company and the industry in general. Find out all you can about the company's products and services. Talk with people who work there, if possible. Also, research the industry in a generic sense. If you have an interview at a brewery, for example, 15 to 30 minutes with an encyclopedia, pouring over the beer-brewing process, will be time well spent.

Second, gather up any pertinent materials you want to bring — extra copies of your resume, work samples, list of references, etc. Never walk into an interview empty-handed.

Third, organize your thoughts. Plan answers to possible questions. Find a good list of typical job — interview questions and go over it carefully.

Fourth, dress appropriately. The rule is simple, when choosing an outfit, dress to be included.

Fifth, be on time, although 10 to 15 minutes early is even better.

When you're ready for the actual interview, follow the five critical inter-

view tips shown in Figure 2.

### Keeping Your First Position: The Critical Early Weeks

You got the job, you're ready to start work. Congratulations — your "honeymoon period" is about to begin.

The honeymoon is a time, from a few weeks to a couple of months, when you can be a "freshman" again. It's a vague period in which "dumb questions" from you are not only tolerated, but expected. Take advantage of this opportunity to ask questions that you will be too embarrassed to put forth later on when you're expected to know the answers.

The first few weeks on the new job are also a time to develop a reputation, a period when your co-workers and supervisors find out who you are and what you're all about. It's a time to identify with the 20 percent of the work force that is doing 80 percent of the work. You will want to hang around with them, be seen with them, work with them, and become one of them. They are the winners — the group you want to be a part of.

Throughout this period, never lose sight of what you are there for — to earn a profit for the company. While at first your productivity will be low, eventually it must become high enough to justify your presence in the organization.

Keep in mind the "no-no's," the things most likely to upset an employer. In Figure 3, we list the top 10, according to a national survey.

On the positive side, be realistic, be patient, be alert, show initiative, be cooperative, be conscientious, be mature, and be inquisitive. (Sounds like the Boy Scout Oath, doesn't it?) And above all, keep on learning — on the job, in school, or on your own.

You are entering a field that is changing so drastically that what you know today will be obsolete tomorrow. Yet, electronics is filled with so much excitement, wonder, and promise that a long and rewarding career is ahead for you.

Make the most of it. NV

## FIGURE 3

### Ten "No-No's" to Avoid in the First Critical Weeks

1. Dishonesty and lying.
2. Irresponsibility, goofing off, and attending to personal business on company time.
3. Arrogance, egotism, and excessive aggressiveness.
4. Absenteeism and tardiness.
5. Not following instructions.
6. Ignoring company policies.
7. A whining or complaining attitude toward the company or job.
8. Absence of commitment, concern, or dedication.
9. Laziness and lack of motivation or enthusiasm.
10. Taking credit for work done by others.

#### Further Reading:

For a more in-depth discussion of what it means to be and what it takes to become an electronics technician, you might want to pick up a copy of the author's book *Becoming an Electronics Technician: Securing Your High-Tech Future* Prentice Hall Publishing, Inc. 445 Hutchinson Ave. Columbus, OH 43235.



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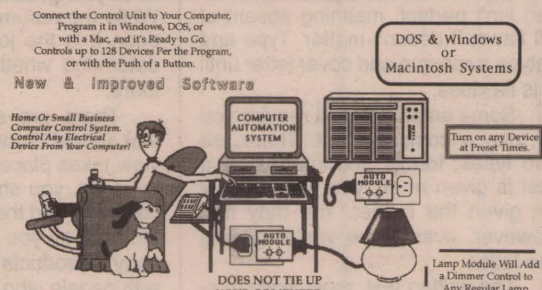
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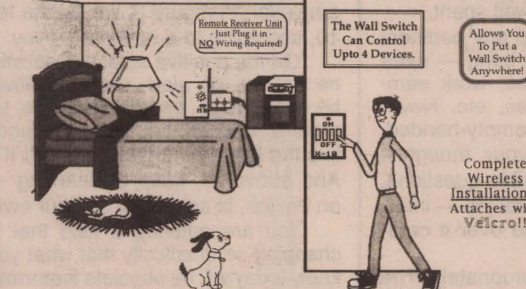
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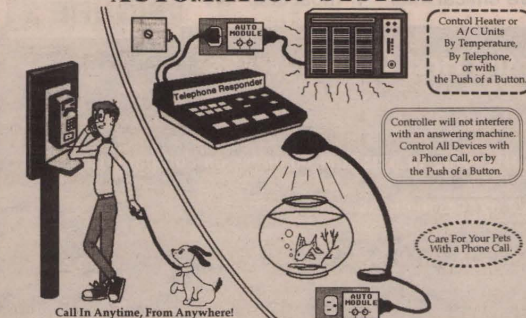
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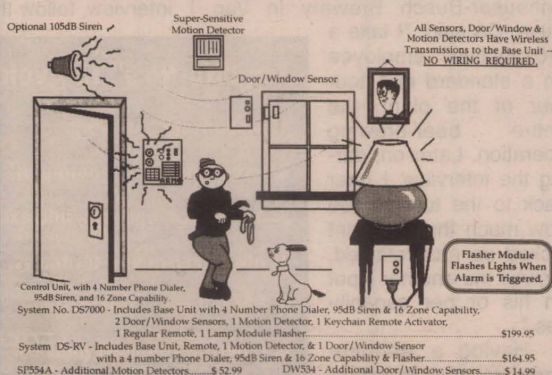
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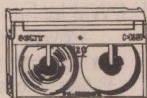
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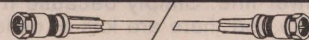
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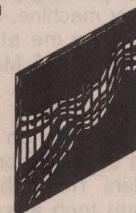
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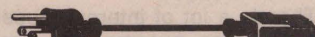


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Don Lancaster's

# RESOURCE BIN

number forty

## New opportunities in home automation

**O**ur usual reminder here that the *Resource Bin* is now a two-way column. You can get tech help, consultant referrals, and off-the-wall networking on nearly any electronic, *tinaja* questing personal publishing, money machine, or computer topic by calling me at (520) 428-4073 weekdays 8-5 Mountain Standard Time.

A portion of my PSRT RoundTable on *GENie* has also been set aside for you *Nuts & Volts* readers. This is the place you go for instant tech answers. Among the many files in our library, you will find complete reprints for all the *Resource Bin* columns.

I did manage to wrangle one super special sign-up deal for you *Resource Bin* readers. Ten free hours.

*GENie* now offers far lower day-time rates, a difect Internet access, and a Windows graphics interface, so it's an even better deal than ever.

See the trailer blurb for details.

### Home Automation

There's a lot of interest these days in home automation. For increased comfort, reduced power bills, lower environmental impact, and improved security. While home automation has been around for 20 years now, this field is about to explode. Thanks to some rather interesting and brand new developments.

I guess I'd define home automation as any set-up that lets computers and microcontrollers intelligently interact with a traditional home environment. In climate, cooking, lighting, security, and entertainment systems.

As I see it, there's three key issues today in home automation: (1) How is reliable and interference free two-way comm going to take place? (2) What standards (if any) should get used in the way of formats, protocols, and such? And (3) Where do we get a low-cost, legal, and electrician-free remote current transducer?

Let's look at these issues in more depth. We'll pick up a few of the key players as we go along...

### Power Line Comm

The "obvious" way to send control signals and status messages around a house is to use your AC power line. Simply because it is there and there are lots of outlets already present in every room. Most of what you need to control is already "on line."

The only problem is that power line comm does not work very well.

One of the first real jobs I ever had was designing carrier current comm devices for railroads and coal mines. In those days, you simply

### NEXT MONTH: Don looks at resources for security and alarm industry products.

shoved 30 watts or so of FM modulated voice or control signals on back into the tracks. Useful frequency channels went from 30 KHz to 200 KHz.

Receivers were remarkably similar to what we could call a TV sound chip today. A limiter, discriminator, and an audio amp. Sensitivity was in the two millivolt range.

Sadly, the power lines have gotten real ugly since then. More and more things that plug into the power line generate badly interfering harmonics. Two of the worst offenders are power supplies and dimmers.

Capacitor input DC power supplies often draw their current out as a short impulse current slug. Those dimmers have a sharp switching risetime in the middle of each AC half cycle. Both of these generate bad interference to any ultrasonic VLF carrier comm.

A second problem is that more and more things that plug into the power line now use superb noise filters.

A carrier system's information gets seen as noise by a filter. As an ancient example, that input filter on a *Diablo* 630 Daisywheel flat out blocks out *all* BSR control commands for a dozen or more feet in any direction. The typical computer

lashup now has at least six filters that are as bad or worse.

These days, your home power line looks more or less like a dead short at carrier comm frequencies.

A third problem is that the signals may travel too far. Or not far enough. Controlling your neighbor's hot tub is obviously a big no-no.

Especially for its *piranha* mode.

Most home power systems consist of one center-tapped single phase 220 volt system that delivers two separate 110 volt legs. It is very hard for carrier signals to hop between legs. A large coupling capacitor might sometimes help. At other times a special linking circuit could get used.

Yet other times, a reliable coupling flat out ain't gonna happen.

Finally, the regulators have newly fouled things up. There are new and horrible restrictions on how much AM radio interference gets allowed. These new restrictions can severely limit the amount of transmitted carrier power permitted. At the least, an expensive filter may be needed.

There is a brand new solution that's called *spread spectrum communications*. Using spread spectrum comm, pretty near the *entire* frequency range from 20 to 400 KHz is used by *every* channel. *Spreading codes* give outstanding noise immunity. And allows many sources to simultaneously communicate.

Interference free.

But spread spectrum carrier comm is so new that you have to work at the chip level or else go to costly systems. Two sources are *Signetics/Philips* and *SGS*. Another is the *Echelon* PLT-20.

One newsletter is Randy Robert's *Spread Spectrum Scene*.

The rule seems to be that anything less than full spread spectrum power line carrier comm appears doomed to failure. Thus, there is no point of even thinking about trying to do your own single channel FM or PWM lashup.

Power line carrier comm setups are routinely used by the electric utilities. More details on how the big boys do it by way of EPRI, that *Electric Power Research Institute*. They also publish a few home automation titles.

One chip source is *National*. They have teamed up with *Cyplex* and *Itron* to build new *IC/SS* products.

The most obvious source of power line comm products, of course, is...

### BSR and X-10

The ancient home controller system that everybody loves to hate is made by *BSR*. And is called the

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X-10 system. With off-the-shelf modules offered by *Radio Shack*, *Heath*, and others.

Transmitters, lamp and appliance modules, computer interfaces, and the handheld remotes are offered. At \$12.00 for a receiver module.

The appliance modules are for high-current on-off control only. But lamp modules can be remotely dimmed or brightened. You must *never* connect an induction motor or any fluorescent light to their lamp modules.

The BSR transmitter has 512 codes grouped into a *home code* and a *unit code*. A code gets sent, followed by its complement, giving a limited amount of noise immunity.

Comm is one-way only. There is no way to verify whether your command actually took place. Unless you see or hear the result yourself.

The modules are cheap and sort of work. Some of the time.

Their major faults include one-way comm, slow speeds, few commands, no collision detection, the ease with which signals can get stomped on by noise filters, and the major difficulty of hopping phase legs.

Insider technical details on the BSR system are in a Steve Ciarcia story in the Sept. 1980 *Radio Electronics*.

Individual chips are also available. The basic control chips from

BSR. And advanced computer interfacing chips from *MicroMint*.

Sources of BSR application products now include *Enerlogic*, *Jance Associates*, *Powerline Control*, *Creative Processing*, *Home Automation*, *JDS*, *Omnipotence*, *Remote Measurement*, and *Menage*.

*Leviton* is a second source for home controller modules. They also do get into occupancy detectors and similar stuff. *Leviton* has a *DEC Tech Manual*, the *DEC Troubleshooting Guide*, and a *Home Automation Network Guide*.

### Infrared Comm

At one time, most TV remotes used ultrasonics in the 40 KHz range. But it turns out that nearly anything you could do with ultrasonics, you can do with near infrared. And usually do so far cheaper using much less power in a smaller package.

Thus, ultrasonics are no more. A standard TV remote control uses a near IR light emitting diode to send out signals in much the same format as the ultrasonic originals.

Two good sources for details: the *Cable, TV, and Audio Handbook* from *Plessey*. Or the *IR Remote Control Data Pack* from *NEC*.

Two other sources for encoder and decoder chips are *Motorola* and

*Holtek*. *Holtek* is stocked by *Digi-Key*.

But there's a brand new game in town that gives you ultra high speed infrared comm. This one is the *IrDA* standard from a group that calls itself the *Infrared Data Association*. The baud rates go from 115 Kilobaud to several Megabaud and higher.

There's a good *IrDA* review in the March 30, 1995 issue of *EDN*. One leading proponent is *Hewlett Packard*. Who now does offer free two-way *IrDA Evaluation Modules*. Another source is *Linear Technology* with their LT1319 IR receiver integrated circuit.

Infrared and power line comm are likely to remain your two biggies for home automation. Other candidates now include twisted pair phone lines, optical fibers, or the elegantly simple micropower comm used by aerobic pulse monitors. See *HACK68.PDF* for the astounding secret insider details on the latter.

There's also UHF wireless comm. Try *Wireless Design & Development* and similar trade journals for your latest and best in this area. I've uploaded an extensive listing of wireless resources to *GENie\PSRT* as *NUTS38.PDF*.

### Which Standards?

Ideally, every home controller must be able to simultaneously talk

to each other on an interference free basis. By using some sort of a unified and *fully open* public standard.

At the least, such a standard *must* offer full duplex two-way, multi host comm having a full collision detection and excellent noise immunity. It must be medium independent, and perform equally well with powerline, infrared, wireless, or most "none of the above" signalling schemes.

And, of course, the standard *must not* be at all proprietary or favor any particular manufacturer in any way. The standard *must* be fully open with *all* documentation accessible.

Computer LAN networks certainly could be used for home control. Such as *AppleTalk* or *Ethernet*.

The only little problems have been their cost and complexity. Today, an *Ethernet* interface would double the price of, say, a bread machine. But prices are dropping rapidly. Time will tell whether these might eventually eliminate any need for any separate home automation bus standard.

Surely some musician somewhere is now running his kitchen toaster off *MIDI*. Giving a whole new meaning to having jam sessions.

The BSR code is a standard of sorts. This is well documented and more or less open. But, as we have seen, this code is pitifully slow, one-way only and has serious noise immunity and collision problems. I guess we could say this code is about the same as an 1890 aviation standard.

I know about three emerging home automation standards. One is the old *LonWorks* system from *Echelon*. To me, this is a grossly overblown example of megacorporations run amuck.

They started with the wrong micro family and applied it to proprietary bloated nonsolutions to non-problems.

Did they do this on purpose?

A maverick home standard from out in left field is being honchoed by *Lone Wolf Technologies*. This one is clean, lean, and mean. But it may lack enough momentum to ever make it into the mainstream. This one sure is cute, though.

But the home automation standard that looks like it is going to run away with all of the marbles is called the *CE Bus*, short for *Consumer Electronics*. It's now *Open Standard IS-60*. Copies of which are gotten from the *Electronics Industries Association*, the *Information Store*, or *Global Engineering Documents*.

This bus is called a packet oriented, peer-to-peer network. It now supports powerline comm, infrared, wireless, twisted pair, coax, and fiber optics. A good summary story is *CEBus for the Masses*, in the



# RESOURCE BIN

April 1995 *Circuit Cellar Ink* on pages 61-68.

Sources for CE Bus info, software, and end products now include *Intellon*, *Arcatron*, *Micromint*, *Command Control*, and *Cyberlynx*.

The CE bus is probably the one to bet on. At least for now.

## Current Sensing

I'm utterly amazed that nobody has yet picked up on the key part needed for home energy management. This is a low-cost remote current sensor that installs without using an electrician and without rewiring.

I first described these as an *Isopod* on back in HACK47.PDF. This was a tennis ball shaped device which you glomped onto your home power drop at the weather-head. When prompted, it sends a digital word proportional to present current use.

Similar modules could also plug-in at any outlet. The receiver would pick up a reference voltage. Extracting real and reactive power.

Obvious uses are to dramatically reduce your power bill by finding out where and when most of your usage takes place. Or doing load shedding for better utility rates. Or for such odd things as servicing air conditioning intermittent problems.

Current sensors, of course, must sense current. While those *Hall Effect* devices might work, an old fashioned *current transformer* is probably all you need to do the job. Done properly, the current transformer should also be able to pirate enough energy to run a transmitter as well.

*Amecon* is one mid-range source for snap-on current transformers. But I sure have been intrigued by the new #273-104 snap-on chokes from *Radio Shack*. Around \$3.50 each. With some care, you should be able to hack these into useful sensors.

Uh, I have not run those 60 Hertz permeability and saturation tests on their core material just yet. But, if it is manufactured from anything this side of ground up stove

parts, they should work out just fine.

When you experiment with these, remember that a current transformer has to accept *one*, but *not both* of the load wires. And you must *never* open circuit a current transformer.

This is an exciting new opportunity with a virtually unlimited market.

## Magazines and Such

So far, I've found three good mags on home automation. The one I like the best is *Circuit Cellar Ink*. Their April 1995 has lots of useful info in it. They tend to have special quarterly home automation supplements.

*Electronic House* is a bimonthly pub that has been publishing since 1986. Targeting on advanced housing and home automation topics.

There is also a new *Home Automator* labor-of-love newsletter.

If your primary focus is alternate off-grid energy, *Home Power Magazine* does a really great job here.

And, speaking of alternatives, one outstanding series of videos on straw bale home construction is offered by *Black Range Films*. They also host a superb wilderness bed and breakfast. And networking that you simply will not be able to believe.

From *Alpha Centari*, even.

Another useful video is *Living With an Intelligent Home*. It is produced by *Home Systems Network*.

## Which Microcontroller?

While a few older designers haven't gotten the message yet, there is one and *only* one chip to ever consider for home automation use. This, of course, is the PIC. Which completely, totally, and utterly blows the others away.

Start with the *Microcontroller Data Book* and *PIC Applications Manual* by *Microchip Technology*. Then go to the *BASIC Stamp* made by *Parallax*. And finally those superb *PIC Design Tools* from *Scott Edwards Electronics*.

By special arrangement with

Lance Wally of *Parallax*, I've just uploaded the entire *BASIC Stamp* manual to my *GENIE* PSRT. It is yours free for the downloading. See *BASTAMP1.PDF* as an intro, *BASTAMP2.PDF* for stamp commands, and *BASTAMP3.PDF* for detailed applications info.

Acrobat readers are also available free for the downloading if you do not already have one. In PSRT library #10. These let you view camera ready documents directly on your computer screen. Much more on Acrobat in my *MUSE89.PDF*.

A complete listing of PIC resources is in *HACK87.PDF*. The instruction set is in *MUSE88.PDF*. And, of course, all the previous Resource Bin columns are also in the library.

## Other Suppliers

*MicroMint* is one leading source of home automation electronics. Check out their *HCS II* and *SpectraSense 1000* product lines. They have got a brand new *Xpress Reference Manual*. Plus free BBS and catalogs.

Besides the previously mentioned books, *Home Automation Systems* also offers an *X-10 Applications Manual* and a unique *Building Interiors, Plants, and Automation* text for plant watering.

One useful source for the watering parts and systems is *RainDrip*.

Another automation distributor is *Home Control Concepts*. Who are also big on X-10 stuff, motion detectors, and intelligent remotes.

Other resources are *Home Systems*, *CompCo*, *Ademco*, and *Ja Mar*.

Drapery and window controls are offered by *Bautex*, *Cardiff*, *Solartronics*, *Makita*, *Marvin*, and *SM Automatic*.

Solar control products are available through *Zomeworks*.

High end consultants for architects and such include *Intellihome*, *Custom Command*, *Honeywell*, *Secant*, *Unity Systems*, *Home Automation Laboratories*, *Intelligent Systems*, *Mastervoice*, *Media Magic*, *Security*, or *Ken Wacks*.

A *Habitech95* home systems trade and training show is scheduled for May 17-20 in the Atlanta Apparel Mart and the Westin Peachtree Plaza.

There's also a new *Home Automation Association* trade group reachable at 75250.1274@COM-PUSERVE.COM or by way of (202) 223-9669 voice.

## This Month's Contest

I feel I might have missed a home automation supplier or two. For this month's contest, just tell me about any unmentioned resource.

Or, alternately, experiment with the #273-104 and show me what you can come up with in the way of a cheap, convenient, and electrician-free home automation current sensor.

There will be a largish pile of my new *Incredible Secret Money Machine II* books going to the dozen or so better entries, plus an all expense paid (FOB Thatcher, AZ) *tinaja quest* for two that will go to the very best of all.

Let's hear from you. **NV**

*Microcomputer pioneer and guru Don Lancaster is the author of 32 books and countless tech articles. Don maintains his no-charge tech helpline found at (520) 428-4073, besides offering all of his own books, reprints, and all of his consulting services. He also has a free catalog full of his resource secrets waiting for you. Your best calling times are 8-5 on weekdays, Mountain Standard Time.*

*Don is now the sysop of GENIE PSRT, where a special Resource Bin topic has been reserved for Nuts & Volts readers. For modem access: (800) 638-8369. When prompted, enter JOINGENIE. When asked for an offer code, enter DMD524.*

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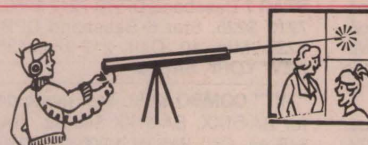
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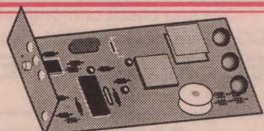
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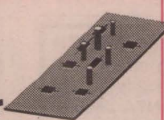
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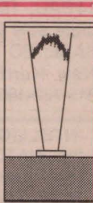
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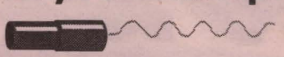


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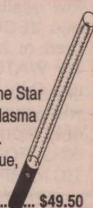
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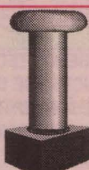


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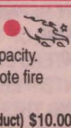


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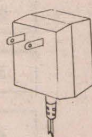
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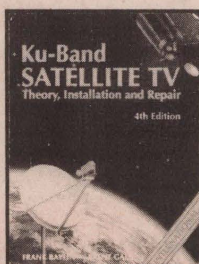
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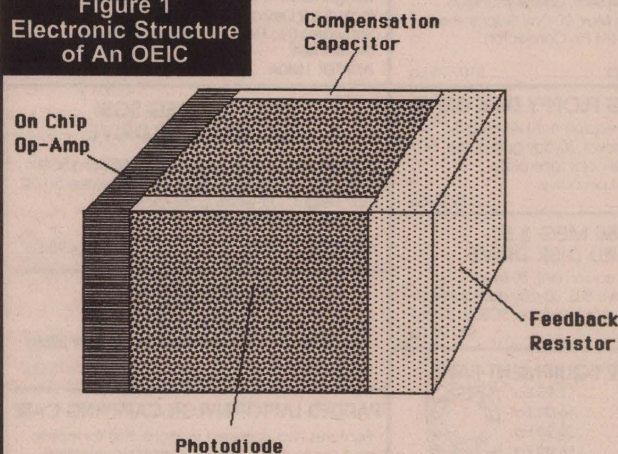




# THE SOLDERLESS BREADBOX

by Donald Wilcher

**Figure 1**  
Electronic Structure  
of An OEIC



tains, wireless burglar alarms, photometers, an optical counter, and an optoisolator. In the paragraphs to follow, we will explore the inner workings of OEICs in terms of its electronic structure and the physics behind its light sensing operation. And, as usual there will be plenty of hacker circuits to construct and experiment with. So, without further delay, let's take a look at an OEIC's electronic structure.

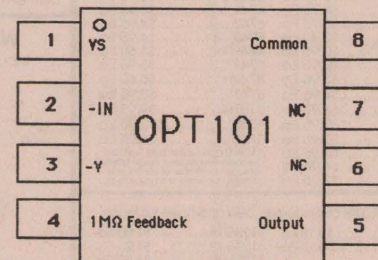
## An OEIC's Electronic Structure

An OEIC is made up of a photodiode and an op-amp sandwiched into one small package.

The fabrication of an ordinary photodiode is made by a bipolar semiconductor process. However, for an OEIC's photodiode, it is fabricated in a dielectric process in which all active circuit components are separated by a wall of silicon dioxide that is 1000  $\mu\text{m}$  (micrometers) thick. This fabrication process makes combining a PN photodiode and a FET op-amp on the same chip possible. Both the 1Meg feedback resistor and the quiescent current values are laser trimmed to maintain the IC's circuit accuracy. Figure 1 shows the structure for an OEIC. Another unique feature of this chip is the size of the photodiode, plus the speed of the op-amp determines the speed of the chip's optical system. The photodiode is large enough to just maximize the signal-to-noise ratio (SNR). If the OEIC is uniformly illuminated, the signal increases in proportion to the area of the photodiode's die. The addition of noise is caused by the

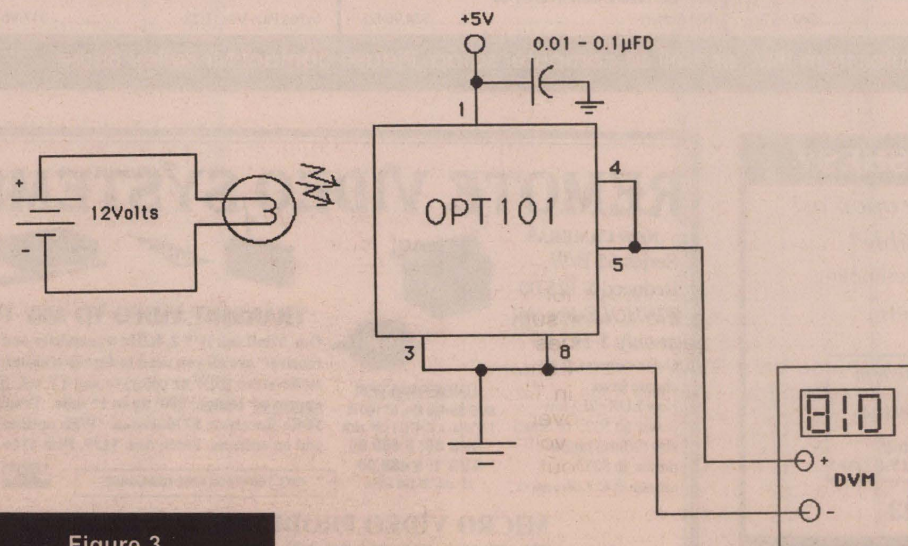
## Experimenting With Optical Electronic Integrated Circuits

This column is a continuation of last month's subject because of the topics of light, photodiodes, and how light measuring devices can be made using those two components. The discussion to follow will focus on how to combine a photodiode with an operational amplifier to create an optical electronic integrated circuit (OEIC). This integration of a light detector on an op-amp is quite unique because the only external part count required for the IC is a voltage bypass capacitor. With this feature, small light detecting devices and sensors can be created for all kinds of hacker inventions. Several applications that come to mind for this chip are proximity sensing, light cur-

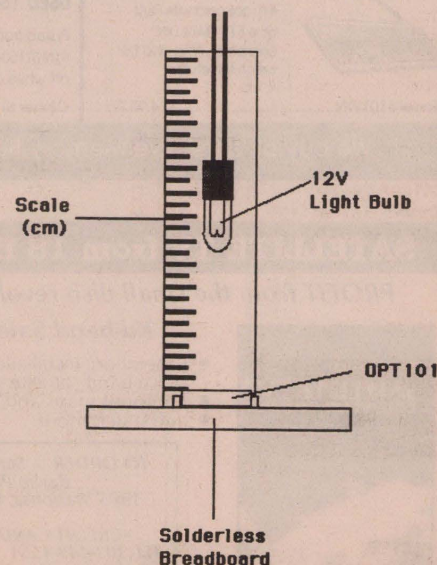


**Figure 2**  
Pinout For OPT101 IC

increase in the photodiode's size and is a direct relation to the function of the square root of its capacitance. However, the noise of the amplifier is independent of the photodiode's size. The noise contributed by the feedback resistor will decrease for lower gain, because it can decrease proportionately to the photodiode's size. Also, a large photodiode area makes it possible to keep the optical beam as wide as possible. The wide beam reduces the required accuracy of the optical system making the overall cost of the system less. The disadvantage of increasing the photodiode size is that its capacitance increases linearly with size, thereby reducing the speed of the system by the square root of the increase in photodiode size. A typical package size for an OEIC's photodiode is 2.29 mm by 2.29 mm, the largest that will fit with an op-amp and



**Figure 3**  
Test Circuit For OPT101

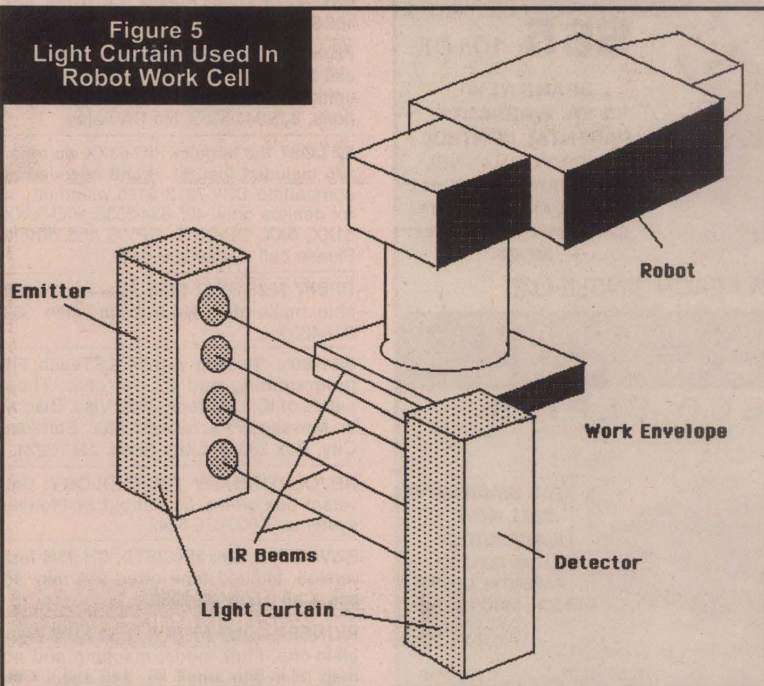


**Figure 4**  
Test Setup For Obtaining  
Data In Table 1



# THE SOLDERLESS BREADBOX

Figure 5  
Light Curtain Used In  
Robot Work Cell



cm	Vout (mv)
0	-297
2	-114
4	-64
6	-36
8	-23
10	-17
12	-13.5
14	-11.0
16	-9.3
18	-8.0
20	-7.0

Table 1  
Data Obtained From  
OPT101 Test Circuit In  
Figure 3

falling on the chip. I used a lens assembly made from the POLY-OPTICON kit instead of tubing, but the results should be the same.

## Experimenting with a Light Curtain

Using the OPT101 circuit already constructed, an experimental light curtain can be built. A light curtain is an optical switch used to provide safety for operators working around industrial machinery. If the invisible beam of light (Infrared) is broken, the machine stops dead in its tracks. The switching device consists of an emitter/detector pair arranged where the two components are mounted outside of the work envelope of the machine. The emitter transmits an IR beam to the detector, thereby allowing the machine to run continuously. The light curtain controls the machine's operation by use of a relay. Light curtains come in varying lengths and use several emitter/detector pairs which create a "curtain" of IR beams. Figure 5

resistor in a standard 8 pin DIP package. One thing to keep in mind when designing OEICs is noise equivalent power (NEP). NEP is the amount of light that must fall on the photodiode to generate equivalent electrical noise at the output. NEP is a combination of the dark current of the photodiode amplifier noise, resistor-generated noise, and input capacitor noise peaking. Now that OEIC's electronic structure has been explained, let's take a look at an actual device. We will begin the discussion by describing an OEIC that is manufactured by BURR-BROWN. This talk will then lead into some hacker experiments to perform.

## BURR-BROWN's OPT101 OEIC

BURR-BROWN's OPT101 OEIC is a photodiode and op-amp chipsandwich. The photodiode is monolithic and the op-amp is transimpedance. The amplifier is designed for single or dual power supply operation, making it ideal for battery operated equip-

ment. The combining of the photodiode and transimpedance amplifier on a single chip eliminates the problems commonly found with discrete designs such as leakage current errors, noise pick-up, and gain peaking due to stray capacitance. The 0.09 x 0.09" photodiode is operated in the photoconductive mode for excellent linearity and low dark current. The OPT101 operates over a wide supply range (+2.7V to +36V) and supply current is only 120uA (microamperes). It is packaged in a transparent plastic 8 pin DIP or 5 pin SIP (single in-line package). The temperature range for the IC is 0 degrees to 70 degrees Celsius. Figure 2 shows the pin out for the 8 pin package.

## OPT101 Experiments

We have now reached the point where to truly appreciate the OPT101's capability, some experiments must be tried. So, we will start off our investigation by measuring the output voltages relative to the amount of light shining on the IC. Figure 3 shows a test circuit for the OPT101. As mentioned in the introduction, the external capacitor is the only component that is wired to the IC. By tying pin 4 to 5, this connection establishes the gain/sensitivity to the circuit. Pins 8 and 3 are for the grounding circuit of the chip. Table 1 shows output voltages measured with varying light bulb distances. The interesting thing about this data is the negative values for voltage. By disconnecting the power supply from the chip, these negative values can be measured on a DVM. Figure 4 shows the test set-up for obtaining data in Table 1. If a cardboard tube is placed over the powered up OPT101, the output voltage measured on the DVM is about 0V. Without the tube, the chip registers a -2.7 mV value. This positive to negative voltage value demonstrates the NEP characteristic of the chip. The effect is minimized by reducing the amount of light

shows a typical light curtain device and how it is mounted in a machine's work envelope. The diagram in Figure 6 shows the set-up for an experimental light curtain. An optical bench is used to mount the light source (emitter), the lens, and the OPT101 IC (detector). With the light beam hitting the photodiode die of the OPT101, the measured output is approximately 4.3V. By placing a hand between the lens and the IC, the output signal drops to approximately 0.614V. This digital output signal can then be tied to a relay for controlling other electromechanical loads.

## Further Thoughts and Experimentation

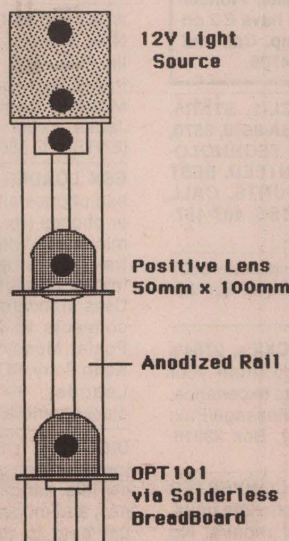
The light curtain project just discussed can be used as an electronic sensor for an optical counter. The digital output signal would be connected to a DCU (Digital Counting Unit) without the use of a signal conditioning circuit. Also, an optoisolator circuit can be constructed by using a switch tied into the light bulb circuit thereby separating or "isolating" 12V from 5V. Note: This arrangement is necessary where protection from high input voltage is not allowed when designing TTL circuits. Experiment with the circuits described and see if you can create other applications for this unique device. Enuf said, see ya next month in the breadbox !! NV

Optical Bench  
Edmund Scientific  
Cat# M39,510

Figure 6  
An Experimental  
Light Curtain

Light On  
Vout = 4.3V

Light Off  
Vout = 0.614V



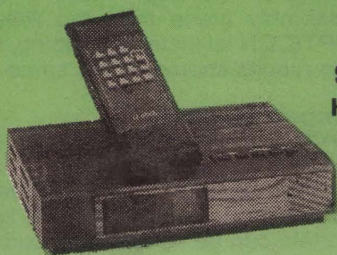
## Resources

To order the OPT101 from BURR-BROWN, call them at (602) 746-1111. The Optical Bench used in the light curtain project can be purchased from Edmund Scientific Company. They can be reached at (609) 573-6250.



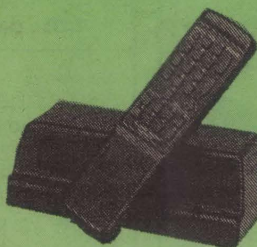
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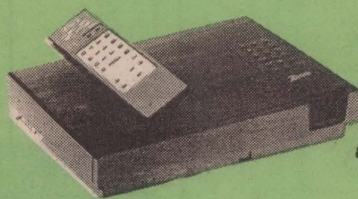
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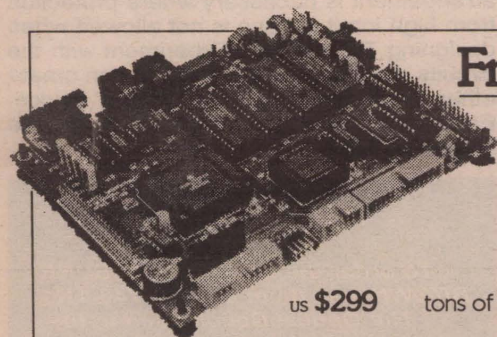
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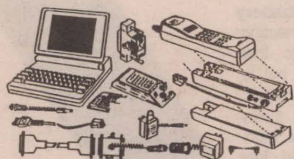
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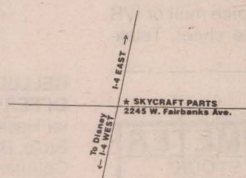
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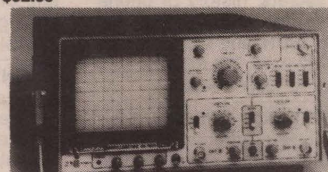
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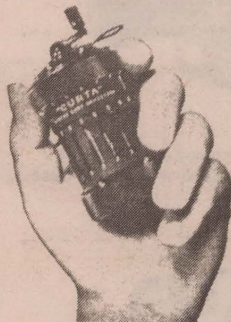
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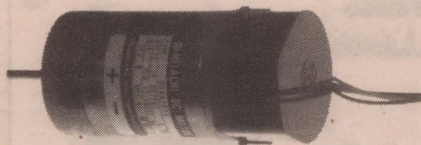


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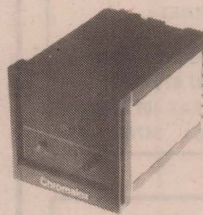
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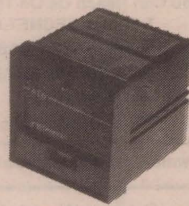
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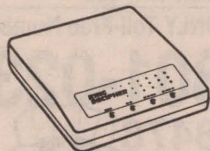
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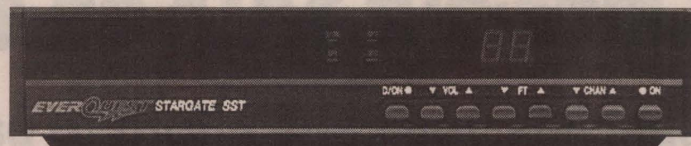
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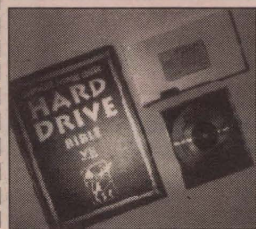


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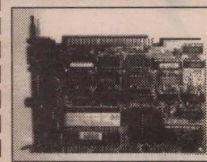
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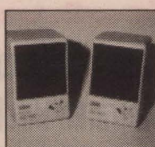
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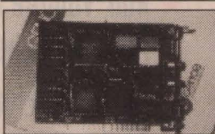
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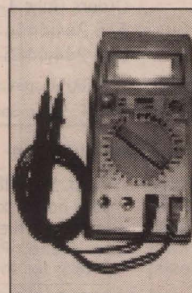
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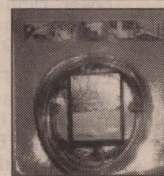
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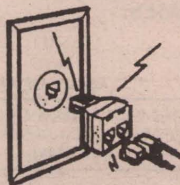
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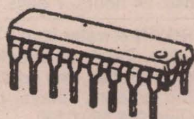


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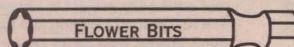
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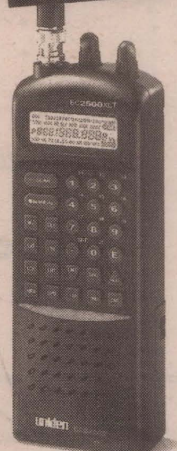
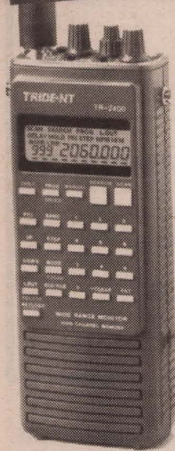
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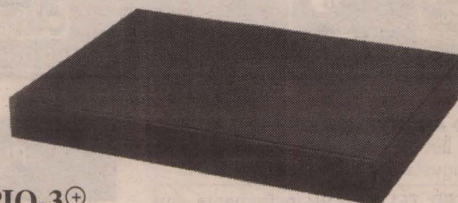
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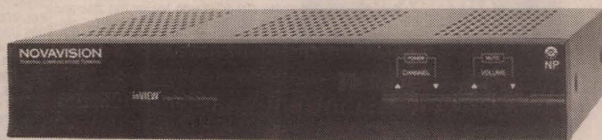
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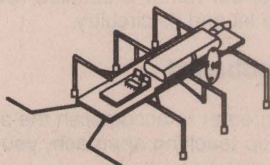
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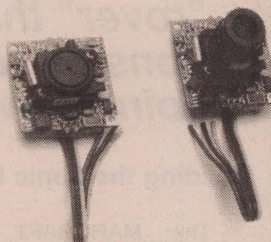
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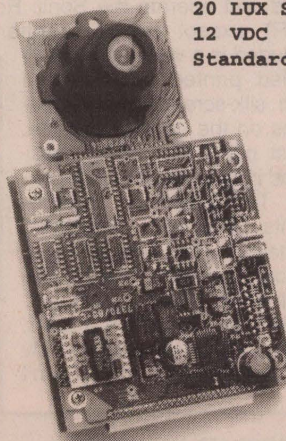
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Nuts & Volts Magazine/May 1995 101



by Fred Blechman



# Building the Sonic Rover Kit

*Advanced technology has provided us with an array of time-saving, entertaining, and useful products. These new products, however,*

*require more and more technical information and skills to design, manufacture, and service.*

*The purpose of building the MARCRAFT SE-1029 Sonic Rover is to expand an electronic student's understanding of audio amplifier, switching, and time-constant circuitry combined into a basic robotic device — and have fun with the results!*

*This article reviews the construction and circuit design of a nine-transistor, three-wheeled "rover" that responds to sound and obstructions by reversing direction, turning, and then going forward again.*

It's getting tougher and tougher to find electronic kits that still deal in basics and teach anything significant. Most kits these days consist of nothing more than a small printed circuit board with a few parts (usually integrated circuits), and without any sort of professional appearance when completed. The instructions can be a single sheet of paper, with little in the way of circuit explanation. They may be easy to build, and work properly, but little is learned in the process.

Exactly the opposite approach is taken by MARCRAFT International Corporation (P.O. Box 2694, Tri-Cities, WA 99302. Phone: 800-441-6006). It provides several kits with highly-detailed, two-color, heavily-illustrated manuals designed to teach rather than just assemble. The free catalog (a large wall-size two-sided color poster) shows pictures of various kits, from a power supply to analog (swinging needle readout) and digital (number readout) multimeters.

Intended for use in schools, the kits are available in quantity discounts, and the finished products are completely professional in appearance and operation. They appear to be products that you would normally buy pre-assembled, but instead are packaged in kit form.

With each kit you receive a very comprehensive two-color Knowledge Transfer Project manual. The staple-bound, 64-page 8.5-inch by 11-inch manual for the SE-1029 Sonic Rover, for example, contains many photos, two-color line drawings, schematics, and detailed step-by-step assembly and test instructions. The intention here is to teach by doing and testing.

## Building the Sonic Rover

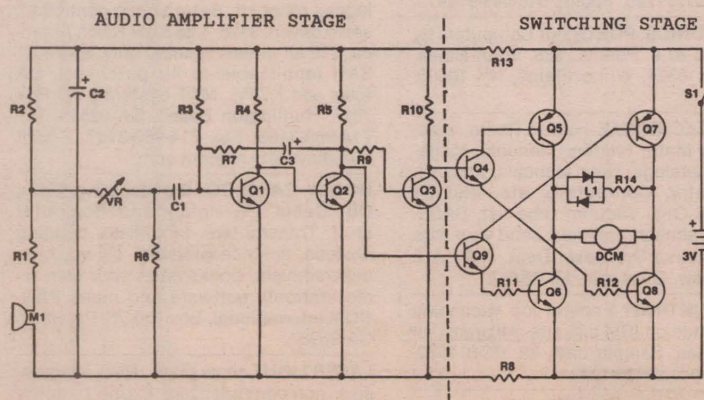
The MARCRAFT SE-1029 Sonic Rover sells for only \$13.95 plus shipping; call the 800 number listed previously to order. The kit consists of everything you need to build and operate the Sonic Rover (S/R) except two AA batteries. Included is a very high-quality drilled printed circuit board with silk-screened part locations on the component side. Most parts are neatly packaged in several plastic pouches. The electronic components (resistors, capacitors, transistors, etc.) are mounted on cardboard strips with printed identification for each part. Many special parts are used, such as molded plastic body parts and gears, so you can't

really build the S/R "from scratch." That's why this is not a construction article, but rather a detailed review of the kit and its circuitry.

## Breadboard

In order to accomplish the step-by-step teaching approach, you are

supplied with an "experimental breadboard." This uses a special self-stick schematic (Figure 1), a polyurethane panel, 53 brass pins, some bare wire, and some colored insulated wire. You stick the schematic on the panel and then follow illustrated manual instructions to insert the pins and bus wires. Each



**FIGURE 1.** Breadboard schematic for the MARCRAFT Model SE-1029 Sonic Rover. The number designations show the locations of solder pins inserted into a polyurethane block. All parts are then mounted for testing and experimentation before building the actual Sonic Rover.



pin has a reference location of a number followed by an "x" as seen in Figure 1.

Next, following detailed instructions, you solder components (resistors, capacitors, transistors, etc.) to the pins as you breadboard and test each part of the circuitry. Once you've completed the breadboard assembly and testing, you unsolder the components and build the actual device.

Before each breadboard construction section of the manual is a discussion that fully explains — with illustrations — the function of that section. After construction of each section, you perform various tests, some requiring a multimeter, oscilloscope, or audio frequency signal generator.

## Fast forward?

If you choose, of course, you can bypass the breadboarding and testing and fast-forward through the manual to the actual construction of the circuit on a printed circuit board, following the step-by-step assembly instructions. Here again, the manual excels in its detail, even including four trouble-shooting flow diagrams for the chassis assembly, audio amplifier stage, switching stage, and time-delay circuit. Various charts show specifications for the motor, two-color LED (light-emitting diode), gear ratios, and even the proper voltages at the terminals of each transistor. This is definitely not intended to be just a put-together-and-run kit!

## Putting It Together

Following the step-by-step

instructions in the manual, I only had a couple of difficulties in the actual assembly of the Sonic Rover. I found several parts missing from

dual-color LED installation. The manual tells you to insert the longer lead into the hole marked "-" but that results in "backwards" operation.

The LED is supposed to light GREEN when the S/R is moving forward, and RED when it is moving backward. It was doing the opposite. The easy "fix" was to just reverse the leads from the manual's description by putting the longer lead in the "+" hole.

Once completely assembled, but before installing the transparent plastic dome, I adjusted the variable resistor so that ambient noise did not trigger motor

nations are shown. All nine transistors supplied with the kit are foreign-made, and with designations that might be hard to locate in this country. Since the specific characteristics of each transistor (three types are used) would dictate the proper associated component values, no values are given. Circuit operation will be discussed in sufficient detail, however, to allow you to use parts you may have on hand if you choose to build similar circuits, and if you are willing to experiment with different resistor values.

The object of this circuit is to detect a sound above the ambient level — such as the clapping of hands, a loud shout, or the bumping of the Sonic Rover into an obstruction — and reverse the motor for a short period, then continue forward motion. The front wheel of the three-wheel chassis is so designed that when the motor reverses, the S/R

The kit has many specially-molded plastic parts, and includes custom decals.

the kit: one gear, two gear shafts, and a 3.3-ohm resistor. These were quickly provided by MARCRAFT when I reported the shortage. As a matter of convenience, the kit includes a Replacement Parts Order Form to report damaged, missing, or defective parts. Furthermore, the manual shows a MARCRAFT part number and photo for every part, making identification easy.

The mechanical assembly consists of several plastic parts — some pre-assembled — to which you add a motor, gear train, battery contacts, and a slide switch. The printed circuit (PC) board assembly contains all the other electronic parts. The assembly is greatly simplified by many color-coded illustrations and the fact that the top of the PC board has silk-screened designations for all parts. Also, having most parts mounted on labelled card strips makes it easy to find the proper resistor, capacitor, and transistor.

I did have a problem with the

reversal, and then watched the S/R go through its antics.

## Circuit Description

While building the S/R provides some construction and soldering experience, a description of how the circuit actually works is important to those intending to further their electronic education. The following description is not intended as an "in-depth" theoretical explanation, but rather as a brief non-mathematical "how-it-works" description that presumes only modest previous electronic knowledge.

For further details, I suggest you refer to *Basic Electronics Theory — With Projects and Experiments* by Delton T. Horn (TAB Books, Blue Ridge Summit, PA 17294-0850. ISBN 0-8306-4200-5. \$24.95), one of the best elementary texts I've found, and now in its 4th edition.

Figure 2 shows the complete circuit, but WITHOUT the breadboard pin locations. Notice that basically there are two sections to this design — the audio amplifier stage and the switching stage.

You may wonder why none of the parts values or transistor design-

turns while moving backwards. When the motor resumes forward motion after a short time delay, the S/R travels straight ahead in the new direction.

## Audio Amplifier Stage

Looking at Figure 2, we'll start with the audio amplifier stage. The microphone, M1, is mounted at the very front of the S/R where it will be the first thing to bump against anything in its path. It is an electret type microphone that contains its own preamplifier, but needs voltage from the circuit.

When switch S1 is closed, positive battery voltage is applied to M1 through resistors R1 and R2. Any sound detected and amplified by M1 changes the voltage at the intersection of R1 and R2. This varies the voltage at the voltage divider network consisting of variable resistor VR, and resistor R6. Since VR is variable, it can be used to adjust the microphone output, and therefore control the microphone sensitivity to prevent the S/R from shifting into

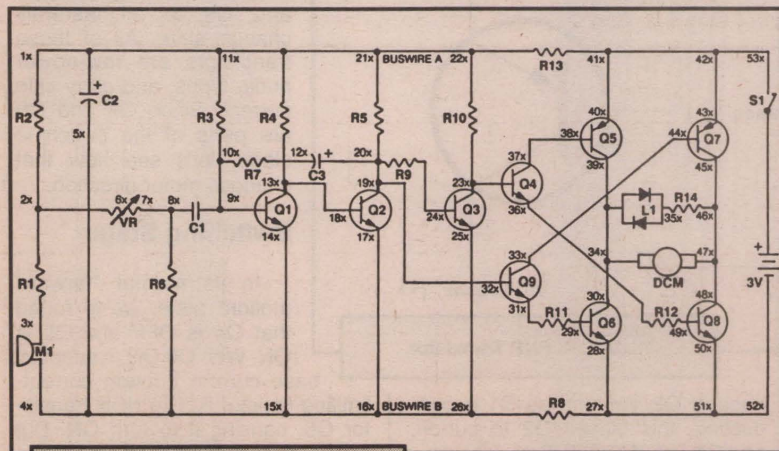


FIGURE 2. Sonic Rover Schematic.



reverse from normal noise levels produced by the motor and gear train.

Sounds received at the microphone produce an alternating voltage at the intersection of VR and R6, and are coupled through capacitor C1 to the first transistor. At this point, let's depart from the circuit explanation to describe briefly how transistors work.

There are many types of transistors: low power, medium power, high power, audio frequency, radio frequency, bipolar, unijunction, field effect, etc. — and all sorts of combinations of each type. The transistors used in this circuit are bipolar audio low and medium power types. There are two types of bipolar transistors: NPN and PNP.

Figure 3 shows the symbol for an NPN transistor, with the three terminals identified: collector, base, and emitter. Notice that the arrowhead on the emitter points AWAY from the base. Figure 4 shows the symbol for a PNP transistor, where the emitter arrowhead points TOWARD the base. Be aware that the emitter, collector, and base leads may be drawn in any of the three positions on some schematics to reduce the crossing of circuit diagram lines, but the emitter is the lead with the arrowhead!

In the explanations that follow, I will use the simple "CURRENT flow" explanation rather than the scholarly "ELECTRON flow" explanation. The difference is this: Current flows from a higher positive voltage to a lower voltage, looking for "ground" or the negative power terminal; electron flow is from negative to positive. **IMPORTANT:** The arrowheads on most symbols for transistors, diodes, and many other electronic components, show the direction of CURRENT flow from positive to negative.

Now, back to the transistors, and how they work. Look at Figure 3 again. NPN transistors have the lowest voltage on the emitter, a small positive "bias" voltage on the base, and a larger positive voltage on the collector. Without getting into complex theory, NPN transistors turn ON when

the bias voltage at the base reaches a point where current flows from base to emitter. This, in effect, opens a gate that allows a larger current flow from the collector

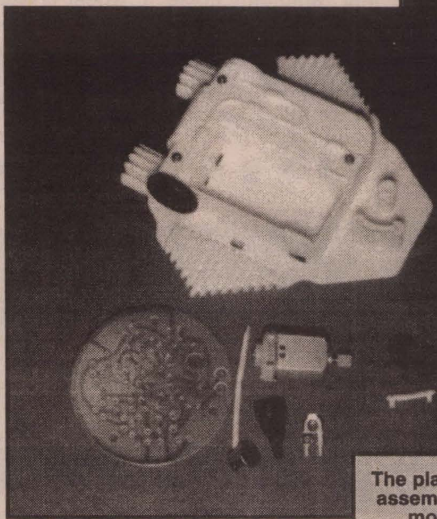
through the emitter. The more base-emitter current, the greater the collector-emitter current, up to "saturation" where the collector-emitter current no longer increases. In other words, for an NPN transistor, positive base bias voltage controls collector-emitter current flow.

Figure 4 shows a PNP transistor, which has everything just the reverse of an NPN transistor. The PNP requires positive voltage on the emitter, a small negative "bias" voltage on the base, and a larger negative voltage on the collector. PNP transistors

ter-collector current flow.

It is important to note that when the bias voltage at the base of a transistor drops below a

The silk-screened printed circuit board (shown here without components installed) fits into the plastic body.



The plastic body comes mostly pre-assembled. You add the gear train, motor, and battery contacts.

turn ON when the negative bias voltage at the base reaches a point where current flows from emitter to base. This, in effect, opens a gate that allows a larger current flow from the emitter through the collector. The more emitter-base current, the greater the

required value for that transistor type, the transistor is OFF, with essentially no current flowing. As the bias increases and current flows through the emitter and collector, it becomes as if the collector and emitter were almost connected together, with a very small voltage between them.

With all this understood (you DO understand, don't you?), now we can go back to Figure 2. NPN transistor Q1 has positive voltage on the collector through resistor R4, the emitter is essentially "grounded"

through resistor R8 back to the negative side of the battery, and a small positive bias voltage on the base through resistor R3 allows a small current to flow through Q1. With Q1 conducting, the collector voltage drops close to the emitter voltage, which is essentially grounded. The collector of Q1 is connected directly to the

bias voltage through resistors R5 and R9 causes Q3 to conduct, with resistor R10 limiting collector current to a safe value. This places Q3's collector essentially at ground through its emitter. Since Q3's collector is directly connected to the base of NPN transistor Q4, then Q4 is OFF.

So, at this point, with no triggering sound coming into the microphone, Q1 is ON, Q2 is OFF,

Q3 is ON, and Q4 is OFF. But notice something else: The collector of Q2, which is almost at maximum voltage since Q2 is OFF, is connected directly to the base of NPN transistor Q9, keeping Q9 ON.

When a sound of sufficient magnitude is received by the microphone, an alternating voltage signal fed to the base of Q1 through coupling capacitor C1 both adds and subtracts from the bias voltage. The component values are such that a NEGATIVE voltage swing of the input signal reduces the base bias on Q1 below the voltage needed for Q1 to conduct, and Q1 is suddenly turned OFF!

The instant Q1 is turned OFF, its collector goes positive (no longer held low by the collector-emitter connection), which, in turn, positively biases Q2's base, and Q2 turns ON. This cuts OFF Q3 and Q9. Since Q3 is now OFF, Q4 has positive voltage bias on its base and Q4 turns ON.

This is how a loud sound — or the microphone bumping into something — causes transistors Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4, and Q9 to all instantly change state. All of these transistors are low-power audio types, and carry little current. Since Q4 and Q9 are parts of the switching stage, let's see how that changes motor direction.

## Switching Stage

In its normal "forward motion" state, we've found that Q4 is OFF and Q9 is ON. With Q9 ON, it supplies base current through current-limiting resistor R11 to NPN transistor Q6, causing it to turn ON. But notice that the collector of Q9 is directly connected to the base of PNP transistor Q7. The emitter of

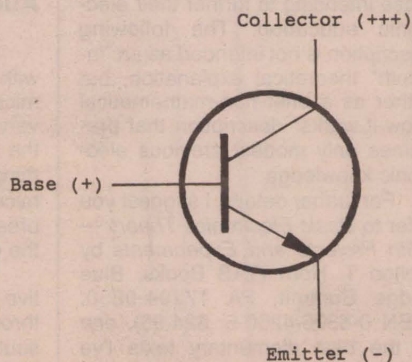


FIGURE 3. NPN Transistor.

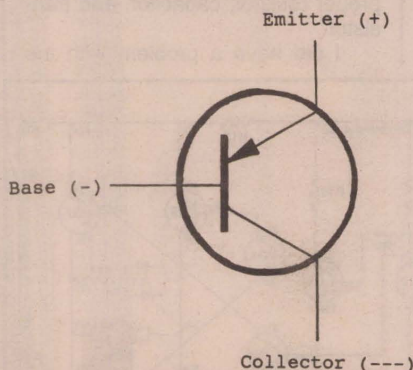


FIGURE 4. PNP Transistor.

emitter-collector current, up to "saturation" where the emitter-collector current no longer increases. In other words, for an PNP transistor, negative base bias voltage controls emit-

ter-collector current flow. As long as Q1 is conducting, this biases Q2 to cut-off, and Q2 is not conducting.

Now look at NPN transistor Q3. Since Q2 is not conducting, positive



Q7 is directly connected to positive voltage when S1 is closed, and with both Q9 and Q6 conducting, Q7's base is pulled toward ground, turning Q7 ON.

While a small base current flows through Q7, a larger emitter-collector current through Q7 flows through limiting resistor R14 and the two-color LED, L1 through Q6 (which is ON), and then to the negative side of the battery. The LED lights GREEN. At the same time, emitter-collector current through Q7 follows a parallel path through the motor (DCM) and Q6. This turns on the motor and the S/R moves forward.

But when the loud sound changes the state of the amplifier transistors, and Q9 is turned OFF, Q4 is turned ON, as previously described. With Q9 OFF, Q6 and Q7 are turned OFF. With Q4 ON, Q5 and Q8 conduct. Current flows through L1, R14, and DCM in the OPPOSITE direction. The LED lights RED, the motor reverses, and the S/R runs backwards. The swiveling front wheel causes the

S/R to turn as it moves backwards.

Transistors Q5 and Q7 are PNP medium-power transistors (since they must carry the relatively high motor current), and Q6 and Q8 are NPN medium-power transistors for the same reason.

### Time Delay Circuit

However, looking again at Q1, it was only the negative halfwave of the loud triggering signal that turned it off. As long as the sound endures, Q1 will be off and the S/R will be running backwards. But what if the sound stops? What will keep the S/R running backwards long enough for it to be aiming in a new direction when it goes forward again?

The "secret" to maintaining backward motion for a defined period of time is a resistance/capacitance (R/C) time delay circuit. In this design, the time delay is provided by resistor R7 and capacitor C3 in series. Both ends of this series combination are tied to positive voltage

through resistors R3 and R5 — but R3 is a very high value compared to R5, so current will flow into the positive (+) end of C3 and through R7, charging C3.

The longer it takes for C3 to charge up to a certain voltage value through R7, the longer the S/R continues to move in reverse. Increasing the value of either R7 or C3 (or both) increases the time delay.

Actually, when you first turn the S/R ON by closing switch S1, it will run in reverse a short time. Why? The values used for biasing transistors Q1, Q2, and Q3 cause Q2 to come ON first, making the switching stage run the motor in reverse. But as C3 charges up, delayed by R7, the positive bias fed back to the base of Q1 allows Q1 to turn ON and "normal" forward motion resumes.

With C3 charged up, when a loud noise triggers Q1 OFF and Q2 ON, C3 discharges quickly through the collector-emitter path of Q2 to ground, but then starts charging

again through R7 until Q1 turns ON again, Q2 turns OFF, and forward motion resumes.

### More Detail?

The 64-page **MARCAFT Knowledge Transfer Project Manual** goes into considerably more detail than the space allowed here, with lots of electron flow diagrams and tests you can perform to clarify my abbreviated explanation.

Although this project appears fairly simple — a little car that goes forward, turns in reverse, and goes forward again — there's a lot going on "under the hood." The modest \$13.95 price of the kit, for all the parts and the excellent manual, would be a wise purchase for anyone that would like some basic groundwork in analog electronics and simple robotics. **NV**

*Since 1961, Fred Blechman has written over 700 magazine articles and five books about electronics, microcomputers, and flying.*

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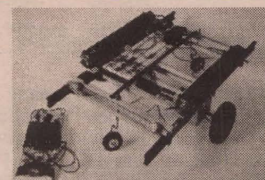
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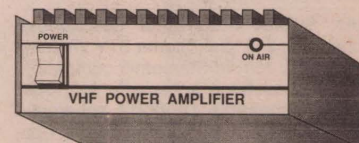
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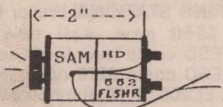
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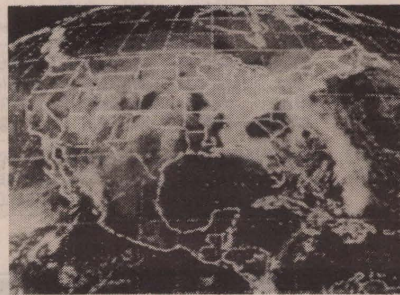
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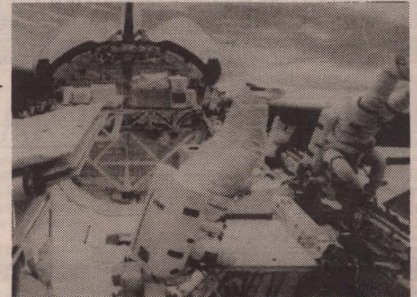


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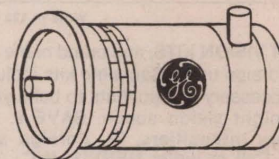
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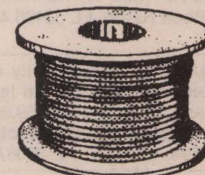
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Run your own Stereo FM radio station! Transmits a stable signal in the 88-108 MHz FM broadcast band up to 1 mile. Detailed manual provides helpful info on FCC regs, antenna ideas and range to expect. Latest design features adjustable line level inputs, pre-emphasis and crystal controlled subcarrier. Connects to any CD or tape player, mike mixer or radio. Includes free tuning tool too! For a pro look add our matching case set with on-board whip antenna.

FM-10A Stereo transmitter kit .....\$34.95  
CFM Case, whip ant set .....\$14.95



### DR. NI-CAD CONDITIONER/FAST CHARGER

Quit spending big bucks for replacement battery packs, rejuvenate and condition your batteries for peak capacity. Advanced circuitry has optimized discharge before charge to eliminate memory effect and to condition batteries that have been poorly cared for in the past. Quick charge rapidly brings battery to full charge in less than an hour—just 15 minutes for some types! And "top-off" charge mode squeezes every last bit of energy into each cell for the absolute most capacity. Switch-mode regulator controls constant current charge while being monitored by a negative delta-V system that cuts off the fast charge at the exact point of full charge—batteries are charged, not cooked! Charges NiCads or NiMH packs from 2 to 10 cells (easily expanded) and current capacities up to 10 Amp-hours. Runs on 12 to 15 VDC. Quit cooking your batteries, buying new packs, waiting hours for recharge, get a Dr. Ni-Cad today! Available in money saving kit form or wired and tested with case at a special price. Kit builders: add our matching case set for a snazzy finish.

DN-1 Dr. Ni-Cad conditioner/fast charge kit .....\$49.95  
CDN Matching case set .....\$14.95  
DN-1WT Fully assembled Dr. Ni-Cad with case .....\$89.95

### SPEED RADAR

New low-cost microwave Doppler radar kit "clocks" cars, planes, boats, horses, bikes or any large moving object. Operates at 2.6 GHz with up to 1/4 mile range. LED digital readout displays speed in miles per hour, kilometers per hour or feet per second! Earphone output allows for listening to actual Doppler shift. Uses two 1-bb coffee cans for antenna (not included) and runs on 12 VDC. Easy to build—all microwave circuitry is PC stripline. ABS plastic case with speedy graphics for a professional look. A very useful and full-of-fun kit.

SG-7 Complete kit .....\$99.95

### STEREO PEAK HOLD BARGRAPH

A bar graph with a peak hold display! Bar graph displays are neat and eye pleasing is their downfall - they just can't capture the peaks. Our kit is like fast display to show the signal and a long persistence display to capture the peaks for hundreds of bucks! We offer 3 models: Linear for general use, VU meters, and Log for power displays. Dual - for stereo - 10 segment display for snazzy, eye grabbing display and easily set ranges for from voltmeters to audio VU meters to audio power amps to SWR meters for easy hook-up to most any device. Add our matching case set.

Bar graph kit .....\$39.95 PH-15 Dual Log bargraph kit .....\$39.95  
Bargraph kit .....\$39.95 CPH Matching case set .....\$14.95

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Case set .....\$79.95

### CRYSTAL RADIO

Relive the radio past with a crystal set like your grandfather built. Uses genuine Galena crystal and catwhisker. Several different types of radios are built, including standard AM broadcast, shortwave and even WW II foxhole style. To compare modern semiconductor detectors, we include a diode for comparison. No soldering required and we even give antenna ideas. Radio for free, get it now before Clinton taxes it!

CS-1 Crystal set kit .....\$19.95

### TOUCH-TONE DECODER

Numbers right off the air, phone or tape. A simple hook-up to any radio line is all that is required to instantly decipher touch-tone phone numbers. A 256 digit memory stores decoded numbers and keeps its memory of power loss. An 8 digit LED display allows you to scroll through the numbers. To make it easy to pick out number groups or codes, between sets of digits that were decoded more than 2 seconds apart. quality crystal controlled decoder is used allowing rapid and reliable numbers at up to 20 digits per second! For a professionally finished look, case set. Start cracking those secret codes tomorrow with the Tone

Decoder kit .....\$99.95 CTG Matching case set .....\$14.95  
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Digital voice storage unit will record your message of up to 20 seconds. split up into four 5 second blocks which can be played separately or for longer messages. An LED display shows message location and for easy operation. Nifty built-in interfaces allow simple connection to for automatic keying when the PTT is initially closed or after it is. You can even loop your rig's mike through the Chatterbox. For contest or, the CB-1 can drive an external speaker. Includes a built-in electret mike. That finishing touch, add our matching case set.

CB-1 Voice recorder kit .....\$59.95 CCB Matching case set .....\$14.95

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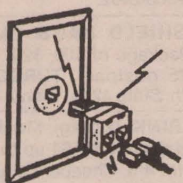
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**WEST AMP-SERVO MOTOR CONTROLLER** Model A6511-10ES. 10 available @ \$50 ea. Call Roger @ GS&E, 716-338-7001. VISA/MC.



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**MICRO IMAGER** Bell & Howell ABR-120, includes ABR-100A recorder and ABR-100 imprinter. Slight cosmetic damage, no manuals. Best offer/trade. Ken Alspaugh, 625 Stemen Rd. NW, Baltimore, OH 43105. 614-862-6053.

**MDS DOWNCONVERTERS, COMMERCIAL BUILT,** Factory new. May be altered to Upconverter-Xmitter, or retuned to Amateur 2300MHz? Or to GOES satellite or MMDS? Complete/power supply and schematic, \$30 + \$5 priority mail. Special: 30" dish and dipole (refurbished) \$20 more. Money Orders/checks OK to Dave Porter, 145 N. 80th Pl, Mesa, AZ 85207. Quantity prices. 602-380-0064.

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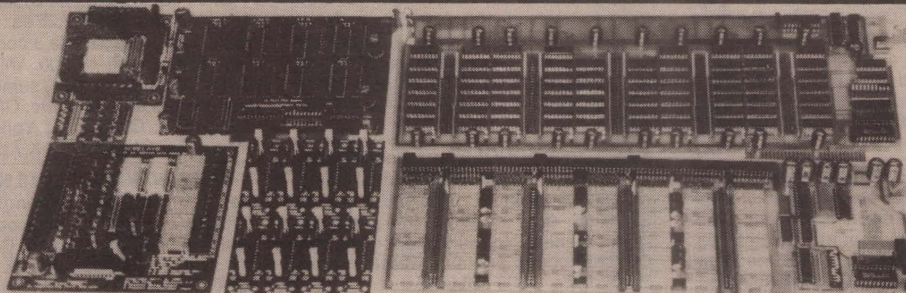
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- Directly drive many popular Solid State Relays.
- Directly drive sensitive mechanical relays.
- Control many different types of devices.
- Monitor wide range of sensors & events.
- Interface to TTL, LS, HCT, ALS, AS, FCT, etc...
- Blows away performance of 8255 I/O boards.
- Outputs source & sink more current than 8255s.
- Powerful yet very inexpensive. With software.
- 16 Byte wide ports. 8 In + 8 Out. 1/2 card size.
- Sustained I/O > 500 K Bytes / Second.
- High noise immunity low load CMOS inputs.
- With power, ground, read & write strobes.
- Cards can share same space via extended I/O.
- Machine pin sockets make field repairs a snap.
- Silk screened, solder masked, & gold plated.
- See SCREWTERM, TERMRACK, SCRELAY8

**SCRELAY64****64 Channel Relay Board**

- 64 SPST 10VA 100 VDC 70 VAC 0.5 AMP relays.
- Use to drive solenoids, valves, relays, contactors.
- 16 Relays per 64 line gold plated header.
- 2 pins per relay line reduces resistance
- Independent A & B lines on all relays.
- High density board reduces computer slots used.
- Sensitive relays minimize power consumption.
- Only 1.0 milliseconds to turn on/off relays.
- Long life relays (10,000,000 operations).
- Cards can share same space via extended I/O.
- Power on reset leaves relays open on power up.
- Uses 16 Byte wide ports. 8 Input + 8 Output.
- Full length PC AT form factor card for 8 bit slot.
- Input ports can read back state of any relay.
- Gold plated 64 line headers support 16 relays ea.
- Silk screened, solder masked, & gold plated.
- Includes manual and software.

**SCPROBE****240 Channel Stimulus/Response**

- Ideal to test cables, wire harnesses, PCBs
- Use for ATE, testing switch matrices & boxes.
- 240 Output paired with 240 Input channels.
- Use to stimulate any line
- Then monitoring all other lines for responses.
- Set port 0 to stimulate any 1 of 240 channels
- Set port 1 to monitor selected channel.
- Read port 0 to determine response.
- Then scan 1 to 240 channels for response.
- Multiple boards may be used in system.
- Open collector outputs with 5.1K pullups.
- Every output paired with an input channel
- Uses only 4 ports in PC I/O space.
- Full size fuse protected PC/AT form factor card.
- Gold plated 50 line headers. 48 signal+pwrr/gnd.
- Machine pin sockets make field repairs a snap.
- Silk screened, solder masked, & gold plated.

**SCREWTERM****16 Channel Screw Terminal Board**

- Directly interfaces to any port on SCPIO16.
- Supports 8 Input + 8 Output channels.
- LED Bargraph Displays monitor inputs & outputs.
- Screw terminals for all I/O, control & power lines.
- Termination resistors increase noise immunity.
- Fuse protected power lines.
- Screw terminal blocks socketed for quick release.
- Minimize your setup time.
- Reduce maintenance and repair costs.
- Saves many hours of building & wire wrapping.
- Shrouded Gold plated header with ejectors.
- Boards are Solder Masked & Silk Screened.
- I/O, Pwr, Gnd, Cntrl identified with legends.
- 3"x3" board with mounting holes & hardware.

**TERMRACK****128 Channel Termination Board**

- Directly interfaces to SCPIO16
- Supports full set of 8 SCPIO16 cables.
- Supports 128 channels. 64 Input / 64 Output.
- 2 solder pads for ea. signal, control, & power line
- Provides simple interface to Solid State Relays.
- Easy interface to many other devices.
- Simple interface to wide range of sensors.
- Saves many hours of building & wire wrapping.
- Shrouded Gold plated headers with ejectors.
- Boards are Solder Masked & Silk Screened.
- I/O, Pwr, Gnd, Cntrl identified with legends.
- Large solder pads with plated through holes.
- Wide dual signal traces increase reliability.
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**SCPIO16 Accessories**

Cable set	Eight 4' cables	32.00
SCRELAY8	8 optos + 8 rlys	129.00
TERMRACK	8 hrs / 128 chnls	35.00
SCREWTERM	1 hdr / 16 chnls	29.00

**SCRELAY64**

64 Relays	495.00
32 Relays	295.00
16 Relays	195.00

**Cable set**

192 Channels	429.00
144 Channels	369.00
96 Channels	299.00
48 Channels	199.00

**Cable set**

<b>SCMIDI16</b>	128 Channels	295.00
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**SCRELAY8****8 Optoisolators + 8 Relays**

- Drive solenoids, valves, relays, & contactors.
- Monitor external events & power sources.
- Directly interface to any port on SCPIO16 board.
- 1500 V optically isolated inputs.
- SPST 10VA 100VDC 70VAC 0.5Amp relays.
- Sensitive relays minimize power consumption.
- LED Bargraphs display input & output status.
- Opto inputs monitor AC/DC 0..32 volt lines.
- Independent A & B lines on all relays
- Power on reset leaves relays open on power up.
- Fuse protected power lines.
- Supports use of optional external power supply.
- I/O, Pwr, Gnd, Cntrl identified with legends.
- 5"x5" board with mounting holes & hardware.

**MIDI****SCMIDI16****MIDI****128 Line MIDI Digital I/O Board**

- Control real world devices from MIDI systems.
- Turn 64 digital devices on/off as music plays.
- Accept commands from up to 64 digital inputs.
- FREE I/O Tester board when you buy SCMIDI16
- Accepts MIDI commands from MIDI controllers
- Programmable MIDI Channel number 1..16
- On board computer converts notes to Outputs
- On board computer converts inputs to Notes
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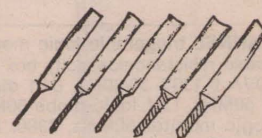
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# THE LASER

## EXPERIMENTER

Conducted by  
Anthony Charlton

Welcome! This issue we take a look at laser surveillance and how this is accomplished. We've been getting some inquiries in this area, and thought it would be a good idea to outlay the principles involved. Although we won't be building a working circuit because of the possible legal and certainly moral issues involved, we'll give you enough information so that you can proceed with the project if you like on your own.

Hi-tech surveillance can involve several methods. You can hide an RF transmitter in the telephone which may parasite off its current source, or "bug" a room with a discrete transmitter containing its own battery supply. However, both of these methods can be detected by a "bug sniffer" — a device that will indicate that an RF transmission is taking place when the bug operates.

Modern electronics can also indicate the frequency band the transmission is taking place on, the intensity of the signal (which would give away the maximum radius of whoever's listening), and the type of modulation being used (which would indicate the sophistication of the listener's equipment and hence give a clue as to his level of professionalism). A simple RF field strength meter can be used with a directional antenna to locate the bug. And then the game's all over for the eaves-

dropper.

When you get REALLY hi-tech like say, governments spying on each other, then the laser is the way to go. Although it can be detected — the one described here is based on a He-Ne laser and would stick out like a fire siren — there are laser frequencies that aren't so easy to detect like infrared, which can be seen only with a CCD camera or image intensifier (nightvision).

For experimental purposes, you can use a hidden transmitter such as the Lazerwave system described in LEdec93, along with a sensitive mike pick-up & amp described in LEfeb94. But one of the most interesting methods to do surveillance is by bouncing the laser beam off the window glass from the area in question, and be able to decode the voice data from the glass and listen to it. Amazing!

### Properties of Glass

This method of surveillance isn't new; the Oct. '87 issue of *Radio-Electronics* (renamed *Electronics Now* several years back), described a working circuit to experiment with the technique. The way laser surveillance works is basically this: Glass isn't a totally solid material. It can be considered a flowing solid, if you think of it in a long enough time frame. I have read somewhere that glass used in ancient cathedrals is actually measurably thicker at the bottom due to the force of gravity acting upon it over time. The consensus is that it's not a result of the fabrication technique of the day either. There is little doubt that glass is semi-flexible when you consider the nature of glass wool insulation, or the way glass can be bent, even at room temperature, when it is drawn out by a glassblower to a fine diameter.

The slightly flexible nature of glass (and certainly plastic, as well) window panes, plus the short wavelength and highly bright concentration of the laser enables one to use an amplitude modulation technique to gather vocal information from persons within a building whose windows are constructed from glass or plastic.

Note Figure 1 The incoming sound wave on the right hand of the sketch shows the sound in a room. Of course, it will consist of many different frequencies and amplitudes simultaneously; the clean, single-frequency, single-amplitude wave is shown just for clarity of illustration of the concept. As the wave passes to the glass, it will vibrate it slightly, but certainly at a lesser displacement than it will air.

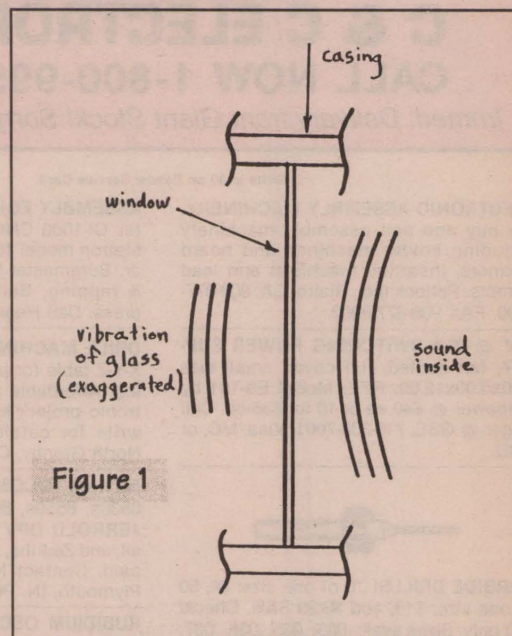


Figure 1

This is analogous to how the hearing sense works. In life-forms that can hear, stimulation occurs within the organ that is called an "ear," although different life-forms can have rather exotic ears; a primary example I can think of is the lateral line that runs down the length of a fish's body, and enables it to respond to hydraulic variations in water pressure.

In the case of humans, the mechanism which responds to the variations in air pressure are tiny nerve fibers deep within the recesses of the inner ear, the ear itself being a sort of concentration device shaped in such a way so that sound waves are funneled to these sensitive nerves whereupon, the sound is transmitted along nerve fibers, and your brain decodes the sound into whatever pattern it has been trained to recognize and interpret. For instance, the snap of a twig to an ancient culture may predict the attack of an animal; the sputtering of an engine in our culture may preclude the failure of an automotive ignition system just as we are trying to pass a tandem-truck on a super-highway; the tone of voice of our spouse or boss may signal an impending disagreement.

Lasers are a fine way to recover information from glass or plastic windows, because they operate at so much higher frequencies than the vibrations the human ear can DIRECTLY perceive. The recovery process is INDIRECT, that is, you can't "hear" what the beam will say directly by your senses without the intermediate step of electronic demodulation and amplification circuits. But the laser beam, being of very short wavelength, can use the aforementioned AM technique to recover the information.

Why? Because the vibration of the window (or as a matter of fact, even a mirror or picture inside the area under surveillance) will vibrate the glass object a millionth of an inch (or more) and in doing so, the beam will be displaced by a small

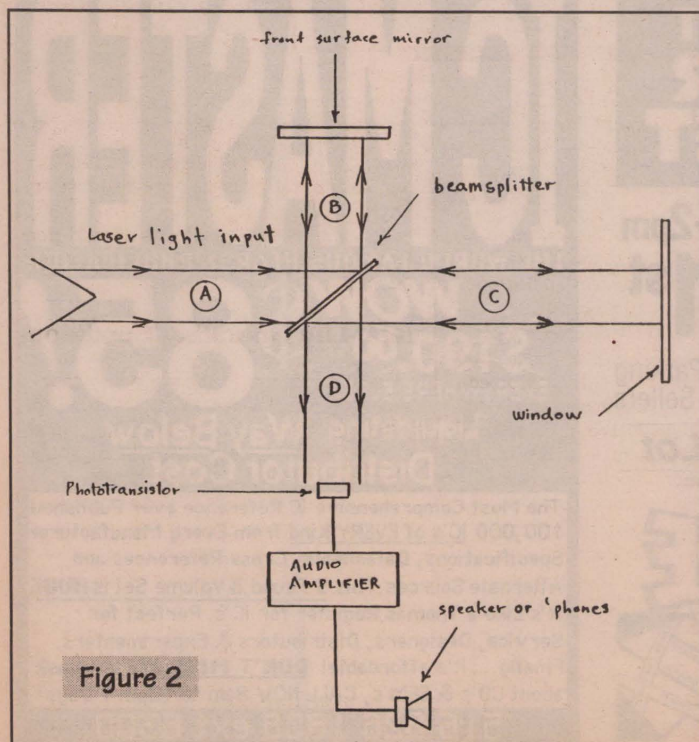


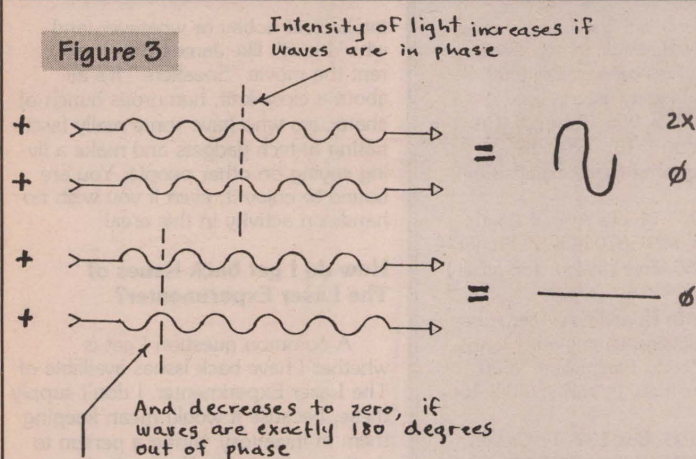
Figure 2



# THE LASER

## EXPERIMENTER

Figure 3



amount, which results in an AM modulation of the beam, or a variation of intensity, that may be decoded into audio. Although, in most cases it isn't practical to do so, the most sensitive type of

proceeds to D) a phototransistor/amplifier combination which ultimately results in the sound we wish to hear at the speaker or headphones. Note the light will travel in both directions from the beamsplitter to the mirror to the glass pane, and may be reflected several times on its way to the phototransistor.

The physical displacement of the glass as it vibrates will shift the lightwave according to the distance of displacement. Let's figure it out. One nanometer is  $3.937 \times 10^{-9}$  inches, and the 632.8 nm wavelength of a helium-neon laser means one wavelength is  $632.8 \times 3.937 \times 10^{-9}$  or  $2.4913 \times 10^{-5}$  or roughly 25 millionths of an inch. One does not need to get a full wavelength of displacement to extract a useful signal; just a fraction of a

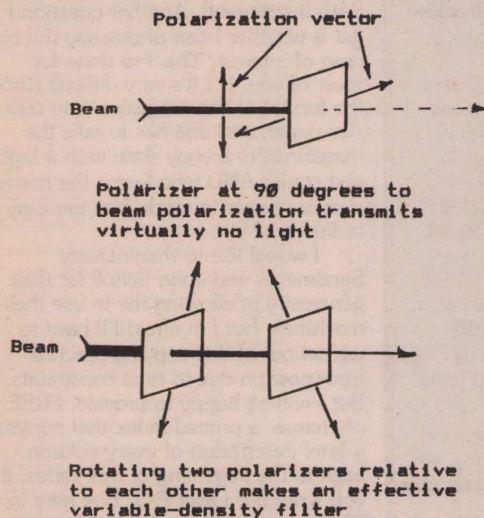


Figure 4 Beam Attenuator

### LASER NEWS AND DEVELOPMENTS

#### Laser Hardens Teeth Against Cavities

Destructive bacteria in the mouth are responsible for the nemesis of all teeth — cavities. The mechanism whereby they do their damage is by secreting acids during the digestion process of converting sugar to energy for bacterial sustenance and replication. The teeth are composed largely of calcium, which dissolves under the prolonged effect of the acids, and thus leads to cavities. That's why dentists warn us incessantly to avoid sugary snacks between meals and to brush after meals, to remove the "fertilizer" — sugar — that results in the growth of these destructive bacteria.

Lasers promise a way in our future to harden teeth against bacterial attack by fusing the enamel at high temperatures and very short pulse durations to form a much stronger defense against bacterial acids. The technique would not damage the interior of the tooth, where its pulp and nerves are located. Conventional hygiene and repair methods are quite effective against cavities, in concert with regular fluoride treatments. But wouldn't it be nice to semi-permanently bid farewell to the dentist?

The University of Rochester and Eastman Dental Center

have tested a technique on extracted teeth that involves fusing the enamel using a carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) infrared pulsed laser operating at 9.3 or 9.6 micrometers (one micrometer = 1,000 nanometers) that is absorbed by the tooth's enamel. Most CO<sub>2</sub> lasers operate at 10.6 micrometers, so this one had to be tuned to a higher frequency to be effective. Roughly 25 pulses, that are each 100 microseconds long, are used in the tests to heat the tooth's enamel up to 1,000 degrees in a split second. That burst of energy is absorbed by the surface of the enamel coating, the treated layer amounting to about a thickness equal to 1/5 of the width of a human hair. Despite this brief treatment, it is reported that the enamel is 70 to 85 percent more resistant to acids.

The two scientists leading this project are John Featherstone, chair of the Department of Oral Sciences at Eastman. He is a chemist and expert on tooth decay. The other scientist is Wolf Seka, who is a laser expert at the University of Rochester's Laboratory for Laser Optics and Associate Professor at the Institute of Optics. Both believe that the heat-treating effect will last for many years, but we will have to wait until more studies are completed before this technique is available at the dentist's office.

Source: Lasers and Optonics

light surveillance occurs if you are using an INTERFEROMETRIC technique, where a reference beam is mixed with a reflected beam via the use of a BEAMSPLITTER, and the two beams are thus re-combined as shown in Figure 2. The laser beam enters at A), and is split into two parts. One goes to B), the front (or first, as it's also called) surface mirror. The other portion goes to C), the window we want to listen to. The return bounce from the mirror and the window are combined by the beamsplitter, producing interference and

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This is a free service to the readers of The Laser Experimenter who wish to get in touch with one another by whichever medium they mutually prefer. To place your "free ad" (no commercial products, please), send your abstract and communication protocol to: The Laser Experimenter, Laser Helpline, P.O. Box 74, Cornwall Bridge, CT 06754.

Byron Goldberg is seeking an inexpensive laser-operated method to measure the presence of flaws as they may develop in plastic and aluminum-sheet home-made high-voltage, variable capacitors. The object is to identify arc tracking across the plates, which predates failure, and such failures occur after a certain time due to the stress of high voltage and the ozone generated by same on the plastic. Oil immersion techniques evidently won't work due to the 40 or so KVAC involved, plus the need for electrical isolation from the operator and the complex seals that would be required. Anyone with ideas in this area are invited to contact Byron at the Laser Experimenter's P.O. Box, for mutual exchanges of knowledge and information.

wavelength that is enough to produce a variable brightness at the receiver is adequate to extract useful information.

Figure 3 shows the interferometric effect of two laser beams being combined. If they are in perfect co-incidence, as shown in the top diagram, the amplitude of the emergent beam is re-inforced. If they are out-of-phase by perfect opposition of

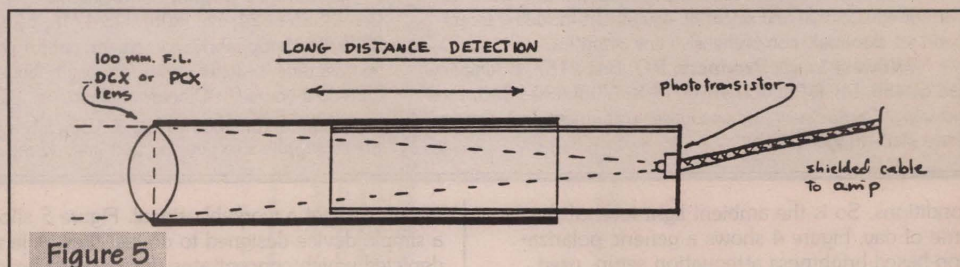


Figure 5

wave polarity, the emergent beam is negated to the point of non-existence. One might correctly imagine that the original beams would have to be aligned perfectly in order to produce either extreme effect.

### Real-Life Operating Conditions

The condition of the window's case-mat, the size of the window, whether the glass is not annealed or annealed (called "break-resistant"), the thickness of the glass, and whether the glass is the "Thermopane™" type — a glass made of two panes cemented together with an air-space in between to lower transmission of temperature differentials — will all affect the performance of the system. The stability of your mounting of both the laser and the receiver is important, especially if you are trying the experiment with the interferometric technique.

Beam enhancement and attenuation needs are both the likely result of real-life



# THE LASER EXPERIMENTER

## SOURCES

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intellectual hobby or whatever (and who doesn't like James Bond, eh?), rent the movie "Sneakers." It's all about a close-knit, humorous bunch of characters who have some really fascinating hi-tech gadgets and make a living spying on other people. You are bound to enjoy it, even if you wish no hands-on activity in this area!

### How do I get back issues of The Laser Experimenter?

A common question I get is whether I have back issues available of The Laser Experimenter. I don't supply these, because it would mean keeping them in inventory, hiring a person to do the mailing, etc. But back issues are available from *Nuts & Volts* at 430 Princeland Court, Corona, CA 91719 for \$5.00 each postpaid. You can get issues back to Dec. '91, and this column began in June '93 (this being the 24th installment). Another question I get is whether I can photocopy the column of interest. This I've done for most of you, but it's very difficult since the format of this magazine is in over-size paper, and one has to take the magazines to a copy shop with a high-end copier AND who keeps the correct oversize paper in stock. Not too easy to find one!

I would like to thank Dusty Sandmeyer and John Scholl for their generosity in allowing me to use their machines. But I'm afraid I'll have to weasel out of this copying practice from now on due to time constraints. But I will be happy to provide, FREE of charge, a printed Index that contains a brief description of every column back to the beginning of this series, if you write our Laser P.O. Box here in

Cornwall, CT. A very positive point is, it's quite possible you'll enjoy the interesting articles appearing in unread issues of *N&V*, which you'd miss if just this column alone was photocopied.

And, as usual, sometimes I can locate and provide or lend material from the reference library for your favorite area of interest as long as lent material is returned, and you pay the postage charges!

Until the next installment of The Laser Experimenter . . . NV

### CLOSING QUOTE:

Closing Quote: "Science is a first-rate piece of furniture for a person's upper chamber if he has common sense on the ground floor."  
— Alfred Lord Tennyson (1809-1892)

Anthony Charlton is an active electronics and science "do-it-yourself" project designer, does custom R & D, and writes technical articles. Previous work experiences include design of hardware & software for micro-processor-based process control systems and electronic design. His hobbies include lasers, gardening, target shooting, and model rocketry.

conditions. So is the ambient light level of the time of day. Figure 4 shows a generic polarization-based brightness attenuation setup, used where the returned beam is too bright for the detector to handle, resulting in a condition called "Swamping." By rotating the polarizers relative to each other and to the polarization vector of the beam, you have control of the beam intensity ranging from the level emerging from the polarizers after absorption when they are exactly aligned, to an almost 100% attenuation when the polarizers are rotated 90 degrees relative to each other.

At the opposite end of the scale, it may be necessary to enhance the brightness of the beam

in order to get a workable signal. Figure 5 shows a simple device designed to do just that. A lens is depicted which concentrates the reflected beam on the phototransistor detector. Two telescoping sections of tubing are used in order to enable focusing of the signal. This allows one to quickly assess audio quality, and adjust it to the needs of the amplifier, by varying the pickup lens-to-detector distance of this simple adjustable optical system.

### A Substitute for Eavesdropping

One method that is excellent for demonstrating AM modulation of a laser beam is to obtain a lightweight mirror and glue it on a ceramic piezoelectric transducer. Sound is then fed into the transducer from a suitable source such as a tape player or radio with an external headphone jack. The modulations are impressed upon the beam, and will appear in a suitable receiver. Such a receiver could be the LAD optical amplifier presented in LEsep93. The combination works quite well. If you are in need of the LAD schematic and a PC board pattern, I'll be happy to provide them free of charge if you write me at The Laser Experimenter's P.O. Box listed elsewhere in this column.

By the way, if you are into espionage as a

The Laser Experimenter is a reader-interactive column. We like to hear from the reader, and in many cases, the best projects have come directly from your suggestions. If there is some particular facet of laser science that interests you, we would welcome hearing from you at: The Laser Experimenter, P.O. Box 74, Cornwall Bridge, CT 06754. Questions, comments, suggestions, and material relating to lasers are all welcome. We would like to publish letters in Reader Feedback occasionally. Indicate whether using your name and address is okay. We can now respond to your letters personally on an "as time permits" basis. Your FAX number, which will be kept confidential, will speed replies.

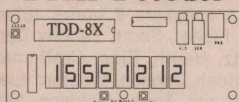


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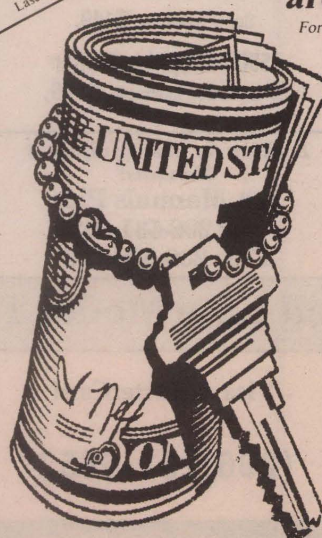
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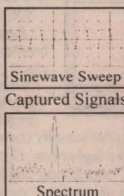
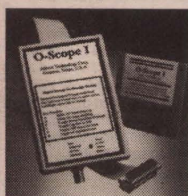
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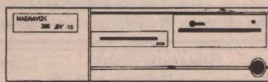
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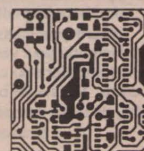
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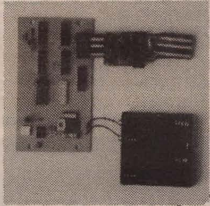
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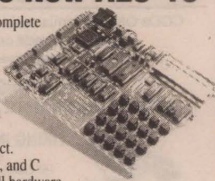
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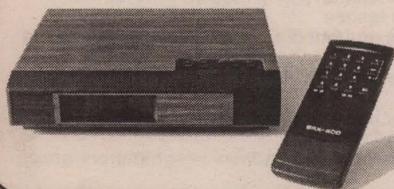


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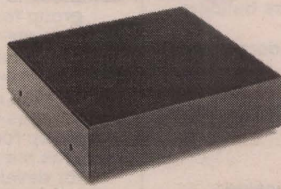
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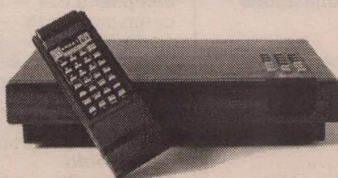
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# The Nuts and Volts Guide to Mining the Internet

by Chris Sakkas

The Internet can be a great resource to the electronics enthusiast. However, given the vast size of this cyberworld, it can be very difficult to find the helpful information that you may need. While many on-line services are now providing electronic mail, Usenet newsgroups, FTP ability, and World Wide Web support, very few tools are provided to help in the search for information. To make the most of your on-line time, this guide points you in the right direction to begin mining the Internet for electronics-related information.

This guide is divided into four sections. The first section covers Usenet newsgroups. These newsgroups furnish a place to discuss topics of special interest. The next section covers the World Wide Web. The Web is a hypertext based system of informational multimedia pages set up by users of the Internet. The third section covers E-Mail newsletters. These newsletters cover special interest discussions that do not have their own newsgroup. Finally, the FTP section covers Internet sites providing downloadable files of interest to the electronics enthusiast.

I hope that this guide saves you time and introduces you to new areas of the Internet. When searching for information on the Internet, knowing where to mine greatly increases your chance of striking gold!

## USENET NEWSGROUPS

### *Electronics related groups*

sci.electronics — General discussion of electronics, much technical information  
sci.electronics.repair — Discussion on repairing electronics  
sci.electronics.cad — CAD discussions for electronics (PCB and schematic capture mainly)  
comp.dsp — Digital Signal Processing discussion group  
comp.home.automation — Home automation discussion group  
comp.robotics — Amateur robotics discussion group  
alt.comp.hardware.homebuilt — Homebrew computer hardware builders discussion group  
rec.radio.amateur.homebrew — Homebrew amateur radio builders discussion group  
comp.sys.intel — Discussion of Intel-based computers  
comp.realtime — Realtime computing issues discussion group  
alt.hackers — Hackers group  
alt.2600 — 2600 hackers group  
sci.virtual-worlds — Virtual Reality discussion group  
sci.virtual-worlds.apps — Applications of Virtual Reality discussion group  
sci.engr.advanced-tv — HDTV discussion group  
comp.dcom.telecom — Telecommunications discussion group

### *Radio related groups*

rec.radio.info — Information about rec.radio groups  
rec.radio.amateur.digital.misc — Amateur radio digital communications group  
rec.radio.scanner — Scanner listeners group  
rec.radio.amateur.antenna — Amateur radio antenna discussion group  
rec.radio.amateur.equipment — Amateur radio equipment discussion group  
rec.radio.amateur.homebrew — Amateur radio homebrew builders group  
rec.radio.amateur.space — Amateur radio satellites and other space related discussion  
rec.radio.amateur.misc — Miscellaneous discussion of amateur radio  
rec.radio.amateur.policy — Laws and policies related to amateur radio  
rec.radio.cb — CB radio discussion group  
rec.radio.noncomm — Noncommercial broadcasters discussion group  
rec.radio.shortwave — Shortwave radio listeners discussion group  
rec.radio.swap — Buying and selling radio related gear  
alt.radio.digital — Digital radio discussion group  
alt.radio.pirate — Pirate radio discussion group

### *Programming related groups*

comp.os.ms-dos.programmer — MSDOS programmers discussion  
alt.ms-dos.programmer — More MSDOS programmers discussion  
comp.os.ms-windows.programmer.graphics — Windows programmers group for graphics  
comp.os.ms-windows.programmer.controls — Windows programmers group for controls  
comp.os.ms-windows.programmer.winhelp — Windows programmers group for developing help files  
comp.os.ms-windows.programmer.drivers — Windows programmers group for writing drivers  
comp.os.ms-windows.programmer.memory — Windows programmers group for discussing memory issues  
comp.os.ms-windows.programmer.multimedia — Windows programmers group for multimedia issues  
comp.os.ms-windows.programmer.ole — Windows programmers group for OLE discussion  
comp.os.ms-windows.programmer.networks — Windows programmers group for discussion of networks  
comp.os.ms-windows.programmer.tools — Windows programmers group for development tools  
comp.os.ms-windows.programmer.misc — Windows programmers group for miscellaneous items  
comp.lang.basic.visual — Discussion of Microsoft's Visual Basic  
comp.lang.basic.misc — Discussion of Basic language, miscellaneous items  
alt.lang.basic — Basic language programmers group  
comp.lang.ada — Ada language programmers group  
comp.lang.c — C language programmers group  
comp.lang.c++ — C++ language programmers group  
comp.lang.forth — Forth language programmers group  
comp.lang.lisp — Lisp language programmers group  
comp.lang.modula2 — Modula2 language programmers group  
comp.lang.postscript — Postscript language programmers group  
comp.lang.prolog — Prolog language programmers group  
comp.lang.pascal — Pascal language programmers group  
rec.games.programmer — Video game programmers group, good technical info  
comp.sys.ibm.pc.soundcard.tech — Technical info on programming soundcards  
comp.sys.ibm.pc.programmer — General IBM PC programmers group

### *Computer and Electronics Business related groups*

biz.comp.hardware — Commercial posts of computer hardware for sale  
biz.comp.services — Commercial posts of computer related services



biz.comp.software — Commercial posts of computer software for sale  
 biz.general — General commercial posts and business discussion  
 biz.misc — Miscellaneous commercial posts  
 misc.entrepreneurs — Entrepreneurial issues discussion  
 biz.jobs.offered — Postings of jobs offered  
 misc.jobs.contract — Discussion and posting of contract jobs (mostly software)  
 misc.jobs.misc — Miscellaneous jobs discussion  
 misc.jobs.offered — Postings of jobs offered (mostly software)  
 misc.jobs.resumes — Postings of resumes  
 alt.computer.consultants — Computer consultants discussion group

### Technical Books related groups

biz.books.technical — Commercial postings of technical books offered  
 alt.books.technical — Discussion of technical books  
 misc.books.technical — Discussion of technical books

### Satellite and Cable related groups

rec.video.satellite.misc — Miscellaneous satellite topics  
 rec.video.satellite.dbs — DBS satellite discussion  
 rec.video.satellite.tvro — TVRO satellite discussion  
 rec.video.cable-tv — Cable TV discussion

## WORLD WIDE WEB PAGES

### General

<http://www.cis.ohio-state.edu/hypertext/faq/usenet/top.html>  
 List of all available Internet FAQs  
<http://alpha.med.pltt.edu:9001/sci.electronics> FAQ in hypertext form  
<http://alfredl.u.washington.edu:8080/~pfloyd/ee/index.html>  
 circuits archive  
<http://www.panix.com/stimpson/index.html>  
 8031 and related microcontroller info  
<http://rel.semi.harris.com/docs/datasheets/HarrisSemiconductor/datasheets>  
<http://epims1.gsfc.nasa.gov/engineering/ee.html>  
 The World-Wide Web Virtual Library: Electrical Engineering  
<http://engr-www.unl.edu/ee/eeshop/eeshop.html>  
 Engineering Electronics Shop Page  
<http://motserv.indirect.com/MotorolaSemiconductor/Products/datasheets>  
<http://piglet.cs.umass.edu:4321/robotics.html>  
 Robotics Internet Resources Page  
[http://www.spie.org/SPIE\(TheInternationalSocietyforOpticalEngineering\)/home](http://www.spie.org/SPIE(TheInternationalSocietyforOpticalEngineering)/home)  
<http://infopad.eecs.berkeley.edu/~burd/gpp/cpu.html>  
 CPU Info Center  
<http://web.cs.ualberta.ca/~wade/HyperHome/>  
 Home Automation Page

### Amateur Radio

<http://www.ee.umanitoba.ca/~tessier/umarsindex.html>  
 Amateur radio related material  
<http://www.acs.oakland.edu/barc.html>  
 Boston Amateur Radio Club Home Page  
<http://w6yx.stanford.edu/w6yx.html>  
 Stanford Amateur Radio Club  
<http://www.acs.ncsu.edu:80/HamRadio/>  
 Amateur Radio Web Server  
<http://www.amsat.org/amsat/AmsatHome.html>  
 AMSAT Home Page  
<http://www.acs.oakland.edu/barc/arrl.html>  
 The American Radio Relay League  
<http://bb.iu.net/infomotion/pkthome.html>  
 The Packet Radio Home Page  
<http://bb.iu.net/infomotion/taprhome.html>  
 Tucson Amateur Packet Radio (TAPR) Home Page

## E-MAIL NEWSLETTERS

[info@arrl.org](mailto:info@arrl.org)  
 Amateur radio relay league information. Send body of message with the word help.  
[pic-request@figment.mit.edu](mailto:pic-request@figment.mit.edu)  
 Mailing list for PIC processors. This address is for requesting addition to the list.  
[mc68hc11-request@hipp.etsu.edu](mailto:mc68hc11-request@hipp.etsu.edu)  
 Mailing list for MC68hc11 processors. This address is for requesting addition to the list.

[listserv@oberon.com](mailto:listserv@oberon.com)  
 Send with subject "subscribe robot-board <real name>" to add to list.  
 Covers 68HC11 based mini-board used in robotics  
[info@circellar.com](mailto:info@circellar.com)  
 Send E-Mail to get information file on services available  
 All Circuit Cellar INK and BYTE related files available

## FTP SITES

### General

<ftp.netcom.com> pub/rander-electronics related material  
<bode.ece.ualberta.ca> pub/cookbook-electronics cookbook  
<pub/electrical-electronics> related material  
<csus.edu> vectrex hacking info  
<tybalt.cco.caltech.edu> pub/Heathhh/sb-Soundblaster related files  
<Princeton.edu> pub/Graphics/GraphiGems/Gems/SRC-Graphic Gems source code  
<evans.ee.adfa.oz.au> /mirrors/tibbs-DSP related stuff  
<ti.com> Texas Instruments FTP site  
<oak.oakland.edu> /pub/msdos/Simtel mirror, includes dirs for electric, engineer, x-10, and much more  
<nic.funet.fi> /pub/cae Computer aided engineering tools (spice, VHDL, etc)  
<rtfm.mit.edu> /pub/usenet-by-group/. Archive of FAQs and others files related to newsgroups  
<garbo.uwasa.fi> /pc-general pc software  
<teeri.oulu.fi> /pub/msdos/programming-DOS game developers material, much technical  
<wuarchive.wustl.edu> Large site containing PC software and much more

### 68HC11

<bode.ee.ualberta.ca> /pub/motorola  
 /pub/motorola/68hc11  
 /pub/motorola/mcu11  
<hipp.etsu.edu> /pub/hc11  
<sugrux.acs.syr.edu> /pub/vr/powerglove/hc11  
<hpcos.col.hp.com> /misc/motorola/68hc11  
<cherupakha.media.mit.edu> /pub/miniboard-robotics related code  
 /pub/6811  
<ftp.funet.fi> /pub/microprocs/6811  
<ernie.uvic.ca> /pub/mcu11  
<ftp.netcom.com> /pub/imagecft C compiler  
<asterix.inescn.pt> /pub/forth/68hc11

### 8051

<ftp.pppl.gov> /pub/8051  
 /pub/incoming  
<ftp.funet.fi> /pub/compilers/8051  
 /pub/microprocs/MCS-51 other subdirectories in /pub/microprocs include:  
 1802, 6805, 6811, 8048, 8096 and many other microprocessors  
<ftp.intel.com> /pubs/mcs51  
 /pub/mcs51/tools-contains various development tools  
<ftp.mcc.ac.uk> more 8051 material  
<ftp.luth.se> /pub/languages/assembler  
<asterix.inescn.pt> /pub/forth/8051-FORTH archive  
<hpcos.col.hp.com> /mirrors/hplb0/forth/8051  
 /misc/ns32k/beowulf/a-8051  
 /mirrors/hplb0/forth/eForth  
 130.123.96.9/giovanni/51forth.zip  
<ftp.kulnet.kuleuven.ac.be> /pub/MCS-51/kell-demo

### PIC

<nic.funet.fi> /pub/microprocs/pic  
<ftp.sics.se> /pub/mchipsoft  
<ftp.parallaxinc.com> Parallax Inc. ftp site with much info on PICs and Stamps  
<wpi.wpi.edu> /stamp Parallax Basic Stamp material

### Home Automation

<oak.oakland.edu> /pub/msdos/x\_10

### Amateur Radio

<garbo.uwasa.fi> /pc/ham amateur radio related material  
<plan9.njlit.edu> /pub/hamradio  
<oak.oakland.edu> /pub/hamradio  
<ftp.cs.buffalo.edu> Ham radio related files  
<nic.funet.fi> /pub/ham



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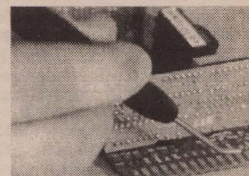
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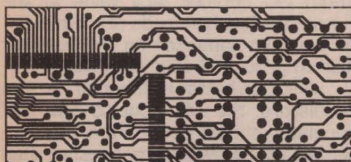
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## TECH FORUM

Continued from page 25

receiver and transmitter RF stages of the TR-33C were designed for the 146-148 MHz range, which was the FM/repeater band segment at the time of TR-33C manufacture. The synthesizer covers the full 144-148 MHz range, but the transceiver will require realignment for full transmit power and full receiver sensitivity below 146 MHz.

**Joe Moell**  
Fullerton, CA

### ANSWER TO #29520 - FEB. 1995

To receive 800 MHz and above frequencies on TV-UHF tuners and variable tuners is easily accomplished. What you need is a circuit which comes pre-built (kits are available) and in essence, chops the real frequency (i.e., 800 MHz) in half. 880 MHz would be received on only 440 MHz. This circuit simply plugs into your antenna port, and your original antenna plugs into the other end of this box. That's it! This frequency converter box is sold by **CRB Research Books (1-800-656-0056)**, for \$94.95/built.

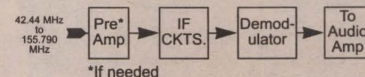
**Tony Padgett**  
Ellaville, GA

### ANSWER TO #39511 - MARCH 1995

There is no easy device you can install in a scanner to replace crystals. One solution I came up with is to convert the received frequency to an intermediate frequency (IF) like an FM radio would. This is illustrated in the block diagram below.

This is one possible solution out of many possible solutions. The criteria for determining the best solution is: **1) How well the circuit performs, 2) Cost, 3) Space limitation 4) Complexity, and 5) Parts availability.**

Also, if you have not looked inside the scanner, take it apart and see how many crystals the scanner needs. Many modern scanners need only one crystal because phase locked loop (PLL) chips are used in scanners. The single crystal would be used for frequency reference purposes by the PLL.



**Dennis Gifford**  
Henagar, AZ

### ANSWER TO #49513 - APRIL 1995

Fifteen years is a very long time for a small company to stay in the electronic business in today's climate. The UA78HGKC that you are looking for is a hybrid high-current adjustable regulator. This regulator was made by Fairchild which has also been out of business a long time. Because of its unique 4 pin TO-3 case it was one of a kind. Soon after, these devices were obsolete when the standard 3 pin adjustable regulators came out. As a result you will have a very hard time finding a new replacement.

Your alternative is to replace it with an up-to-date three terminal

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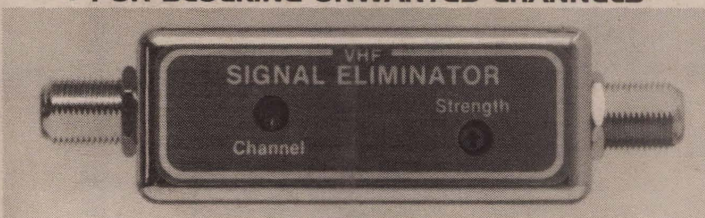
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## TECH FORUM

adjustable regulator such as the LM 338 which is a 5A version of the popular LM317 regulator. This regulator is available by mail order from Digi-Key Corp. The new regulator will require some minor changes to your original circuit. The basic difference between the two regulators is that the new one has only 3 pins and the internal reference is 1.2V and instead of 5V. One of the advantages of this new regulator is that the output could be adjustable from 1.2V up to 30V output. Of course the max. output voltage depends on your power supply. The basic circuit for the LM338 is identical to the LM317 which was published several times in previous issues of *Nuts & Volts* and other magazines.

**Haim Sandel  
Flanders, NJ**

### ANSWER TO #4957 - APRIL 1995

Your question did not mention what kind of computer you have. However, if you have an IBM-PC, the original SoundBlaster card has software which does a respectable job of reading ASCII text files to you.

Here is a batch file which will read any text you have prepared:

```
REM First load the driver
SBTALKER /dBLASTER
REM Then have the text file
spoken out the speaker
SAY %1
REM Then remove the driver
to free memory
REMOVE
```

If you name this batch file README.BAT, you can use it by entering "README whatever.txt" and the file "whatever.txt" will be read to you.

**Ken Clark  
Garden Grove, CA**

### ANSWER TO #3952 - MARCH 1995

There are several companies that specialize in the business of word processor disk conversions. Here are three major firms:

**Pivar Computing Services, Inc.**,  
165 Arlington Heights Road, Buffalo  
Grove, IL 60089, 1-800-CONVERT,  
708-459-6010.

**Shaffstall Corporation**, 1-800-  
357-6250, 317-842-2077, FAX 317-  
842-8294.

**Graphics Unlimited, Inc.**, 3000  
Second Street, North Minneapolis, MN  
55411, 1-800-745-7571, 612-588-  
7571, FAX 612-588-8783.

**J.Q. LaVielle**

### ANSWER TO #4955 - APRIL 1995

From your problem description it is a little difficult to figure out whether the IF Amp oscillates because of an oscillation in your power supply or because of a cross coupling between the two DC outputs or possibly because of some ground loop between the two outputs.

To isolate the problem you should get a hold of an oscilloscope and make sure that the DC outputs are clean of any high-frequency oscillation or noise. Most of the three terminal regulators will oscillate at high frequency if the inputs and outputs are not well bypassed. You are showing on your schematic, capacitors on each input and output of the regulators. You have

to make sure that these capacitors are of good quality and effective at high frequencies such as Tantalum capacitors. If the oscillation still exists try to add in parallel to each capacitor you have, a ceramic capacitor of 0.1 uF. These capacitors must be directly across the regulators terminal and each regulator with its own separate ground wire back to the bulk filter capacitors (2200 uF).

To solve any problem with cross coupling between the two DC outputs, each output must have a separate ground return and wired directly to the ground pin of each regulator. If the problem still exists you may have to decouple each DC output with an LC filter. The inductor value is not very critical, it only has to be rated for the maximum DC current. Any value in the range of a few hundreds uH with a 0.1 uF ceramic capacitor on the receiver side to ground should work well.

Also, for better isolation of the two regulators, the DC input to the 12V regulator should come from the center tap of the transformer rather than from the 24V output. All you need to do is to connect one of the 2200uF from the center tap of the transformer to ground and connect that line to the input of the 12V regulator. This way the 12V and the 24V regulators don't have to dissipate so much power. Each regulator supplies only the current that the output draws and totally eliminates any current loops.

Another possible problem may be that the DC input to the 24V regulator in your configuration is too low. You do not specify the output current on each output. If it is close to 1 amp then the DC output voltage with a 25 VAC transformer may be too low to obtain at least 27VDC (not including the output ripple voltage). The idea in any trouble shooting is to understand and isolate the problem, and then to attack it. There is no reason why this power supply should not work for you.

**Haim Sandel  
Flanders, NJ**

### ANSWER TO #49520 - APRIL 1995

The HP Vectra 286 requires a separate set-up program to set-up the BIOS parameters such as hard drive type, floppy drive type, etc. You may contact me directly and I will mail you a copy of set-up program or you can download it directly from HP's Bulletin Board. HP's BBS number is 408-553-3500.

**Michael E. Young  
Newville, Alabama**

### ANSWER TO #4952 - APRIL 1995

Drivers for the five-year-old HP PaintJet printer Mr. Urbanowicz received for Christmas are indeed hard to find, but he should be aware of several facts regarding printer drivers. The first is that there is usually not any type of generic DOS driver software. The special features of various printers are normally supported by drivers that are included with the particular DOS application. For example, Novell's WordPerfect for DOS includes a ton of printer drivers to allow the program to take advantage of color, fonts, and formatting features specific to a given printer.

Continued on page 129



# MP1

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Continued from page 126

Microsoft solved this type of problem nicely with the introduction of Windows. Once you've installed the proper driver to interface between Windows and a given printer, all Windows applications talk to the Windows printer driver to generate output. Unlike the individual drivers required for each DOS application, Windows software can take advantage of a single driver.

Hewlett-Packard has not abandoned their customers, and the limited number of drivers available for the PaintJet line of printers can be obtained free of charge via modem from the HP Download Service. Anyone requiring drivers for an older printer, or the latest version of a driver for a current printer can use any standard communication program to call 208-344-1691. Several driver archives are online for use with the PaintJet series printer.

**Damien Thorn**  
Stockton, CA

## ANSWER TO #39516 - MARCH 1995

The congress uses a distributed system for the Senate and House chambers. This system uses speakers mounted in each desk and a computerized control system that adjusts speaker volume according to the microphones being used. When someone is speaking, his loudspeaker is turned off and those that are near him are reduced in volume.

Committee rooms and gallery

areas use a distributed speaker system to reduce feedback and the effects of room reverberation.

**Dennis Daugherty**  
Russellville, KY

## ANS. TO #49516, PART 1 - APRIL 1995

It isn't clear that you've strung any wire yet. If not, I'd recommend running at least three wires and using a standard current-loop set-up. However, to answer the question you asked requires a different approach.

Probably the best answer to Part 1 of your question is to use regular old external modems at each end of the wire and supply your own CO (central office) voltage just like the telephone company does. This satisfies your two-wire requirement, and gives you your bi-directional communications at whatever baud rate your modems will allow. Trying to use earth ground as one of the wires is asking for reliability problems. I'll leave the problems of stringing a two-mile twisted pair into the "Great Abyss" to you.

For around-the-lab use, a regulated 12-volt supply works fine as a CO eliminator if you place a big inductor in series with it. Without the inductor, supply regulation greatly attenuates the audio signals. The secondary or primary of a standard 24-volt filament transformer will work fine for this. (DON'T plug it in, just use it as a choke.) Try each side of the transformer to see which winding does a better job, since transformer windings vary.

For a two-mile length of wire, you may need a higher voltage, or a constant-current supply. Try testing with two cheap electronic telephones first. They'll be useful anyway, as explained later. If you're using something higher than 12 or 13 volts, leave the two phones connected for a day or so to make sure some parts do not overheat. (No sense burning out a modem or two.) The phones, modems, and the CO supply should all be connected in parallel. Make sure to use phone surge suppressors and lightning arrestors at both ends of the long wire to avoid some nasty surprises during thunderstorms.

When your "really private" phone line is working, you and your friend can use it to talk over the coordination of the next steps. Once you're both ready to try the modems, you'll need to force one of the modems to "answer the phone." For this, you can supply your own ringing voltage. For safety's sake, this can be approximated by stacking about eight or nine 9V batteries in series to get 70+ volts, and then rapidly switching the polarity. (Using transformer-isolated 120 volt AC bursts works also, but with a two mile wire, who knows who is connecting what to points somewhere in between. Be safe, use 9V batteries. They'll last years.)

Cross-connect the DPDT switch so each of the extreme positions presents a different battery polarity to the modem. Rapidly flipping a center-off DPDT switch back and forth usually works. (The reason for the center-off

position is so you can stop the voltage supply when the modem answers.) With a bat-handled switch and a fast hand, you should obtain a 140 P-P "squarewave" at about 8 Hz. Connect this ringing circuit in parallel to the other equipment.

Tell your friend to command his modem to dial you. He can do this by sending it an "ATDT9876543210" string through the RS-232 port, or using his software to dial as if he were hooking to a BBS. After you hear his first few touch tones in your ear, disconnect from the long wire joining you, hang up your phone, and toggle the "ringing" switch madly for about 2 seconds. Then center the switch for about 4 seconds. Repeat as necessary. Your phone will ring (haltingly, no doubt), but this will usually get the modem to pick up the line and begin protocol negotiations. (That is, if you've remembered to set your modem into "answer mode" first.) You'll hear the modem's relay click when it answers if you listen for it. You'll also hear the answer tone in your ear if you pick up your phone for a moment during the 4 second rest periods.

When your modem picks up the phone, re-connect your set-up to the long wire going to your friend and make sure to center the DPDT "ringer" switch. If both your modem speakers are configured for this, you will both hear the answer tones and negotiations until they are complete. If either has remained off-hook to listen in,

Continued on page 132

# N.E.W.

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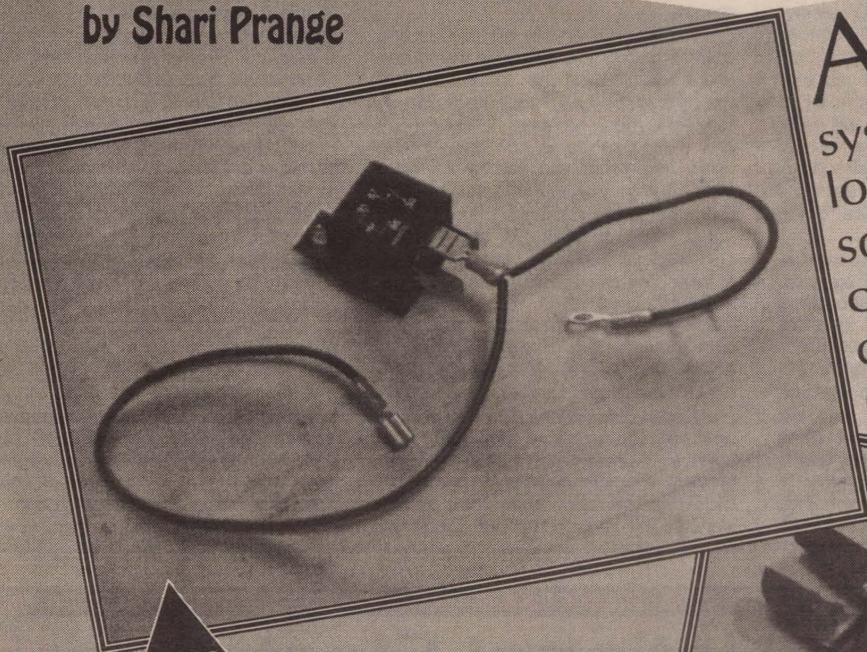
# Electric Car Conversion

Part 14

## LOW-CURRENT WIRING

by Shari Prange

Although an electric car is powered by a high-voltage system, it still needs a separate low-voltage system for accessories and some control circuits. Part of this circuit is the car's original 12-volt system. Other parts are added or modified by the person doing the conversion.



There are several uses for small relays in an electric car's low current system.

A good quality crimping tool and good quality connectors are essential.

### Technique

The procedures used on the low-current wiring system should follow standard automotive wiring practices. These practices include specifications for the size of the wire used, types of connectors, and how the wires are routed and secured.

An automobile is a harsh environment for wiring. It is subject to temperature extremes, moisture, dust, and road vibrations. A low-current wiring failure can stop the car, or start a fire, just as quickly as a failure in the high-current system.

### Wire Gauge

The proper gauge of wire for a specific application is determined by two factors. The first is the amount of electricity it will be carrying. This is usually displayed on a chart showing various amperages at one fixed voltage. It is not enough to check the current level on the chart. The voltage must also match. For example, 25 amps on a 12-volt system requires a different wire gauge than 25 amps on a 6-volt system.

The other factor is the length of the wire. The

longer the wire, the more resistance it has, and the more heat it will throw off. For the same voltage and amperage, a longer run may require a heavier gauge of wire.

Although very fine wires are sometimes adequate, they can be difficult to work with and secure in automotive connectors. For most automotive 12-volt applications drawing less than 12 amps, 16 gauge wire is used. For higher current draws, 10 gauge may be substituted.

### Connections

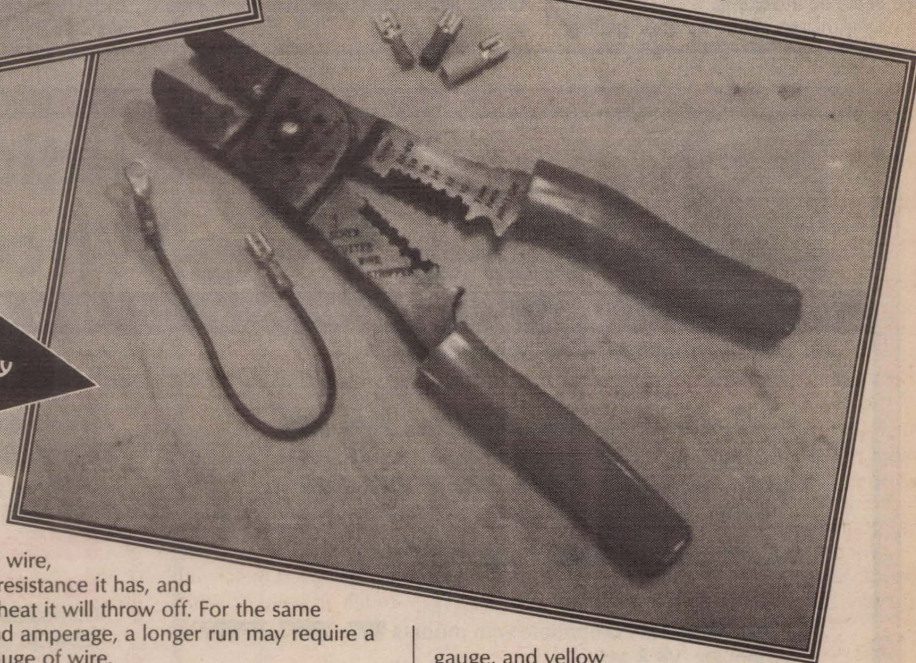
Good connections are essential. This means automotive quality connectors properly crimped on with a good quality tool. It also means using the right size connector for the job. Crimp-on connectors are color-coded for the wire size they will accept: red for 22-18 gauge wire, blue for 16-14

gauge, and yellow for 12-10 gauge.

Sometimes a siamese connection will be made, with two 16 gauge wires stripped, twisted together, and crimped into the same connector. In this case, use the next size larger connector.

### Measuring

It is common to need to run wires from one end of the car to the other. When this occurs, a good rule of thumb is to cut 1 1/2 times the length of the car in wire. This will give you enough to cover all the twists and turns the wire takes along its path. You will need to trim a little to fit the far end, but you won't come up short.





# Electric Car Conversion

## Color Codes & Documentation

Wires are color-coded for identification. Try to follow the wiring protocols for your model of car. For example, if the manual tells you that brown wires are always ground, use brown wires for any grounds you add. If you need to use one of the car's original wires and splice an extension on it, try to match the original wire color with the extension.

Many wires may have a base color and a contrasting stripe or dots. You can simulate this by matching the base color with your new wire, and marking bands or dots of contrasting color using model or touch-up paint.

Document thoroughly any wires you add or change. Draw color wiring diagrams. If you ever need to troubleshoot or modify your wiring, documentation will be critical.

## Looms

For both aesthetic and safety reasons, wires should be gathered into looms and routed along the periphery of the car to their destinations. You may be able to secure your loom to the car's original loom in many places. The "explosion in a spaghetti factory" style of wiring is the hallmark of an automotive amateur.

For running wires the length of the car, four-in-one trailer wire makes a neat instant loom. This is a ribbon of four 16 gauge wires lightly bonded together. They come in a variety of color combinations. As each wire needs to exit from the loom, it can be peeled apart from the others.

Whenever you are running a loom fore-and-aft, it's a good idea to include two to four extra 16 gauge wires. Someday you might want to add something to the car, and it will be handy to have wires already in place. Be sure to document these spares in your wiring diagram.

## Wire Protection

Wires need to be protected from cuts and abrasions. For this reason, they should never be stretched tight, especially around corners — even rounded corners. Under the constant motion of a car, a hard round surface will still rub away the insulation on a wire.

On the other hand, they should not have so much slack that there are hanging loops of wire waiting to catch on something. A wire should be like a leash on a well-trained dog: not tight enough to choke the dog, and not loose enough to drag on the ground.

Once you have gathered the wires into a loom, you can give them extra protection with some kind of sheath. For short runs, you can use heatshrink tube.

However, heatshrink tubes, like diamonds, are forever. Once in place, the only way to change your mind is to cut them open, at the risk of slicing wire insulation. It is also difficult to peel out one wire mid-point on a loom encased in heatshrink.

Other options include spiral wrap and Flex Guard. Spiral wrap is just what it sounds like: a spiral of protective material that can be wrapped around the loom. It can be unwrapped easily if you need to make changes, and individual wires can be brought out of the loom between loops of the spiral.

Flex Guard is a ribbed flexible plastic tube with a slit down its length. You feed the loom in — and extract any individual wires you need — through the slit, and secure the tube at intervals with tie wraps.

The end result is very clean and professional looking.

You can wrap wires in electrical tape. However, if you remove it later, it leaves the wires sticky. Also, unless it is done with a careful hand, it looks ugly and kludgy.

Any time wire must pass through a hole in the sheet metal, the hole should be grommited. If you cannot find a grommet of the proper size, you can make one. Use a piece of automotive fuel line with a braided cloth exterior, such as VW uses.

Slice one side of it lengthwise. Curl it with the slice outside, and fit it into the hole, with the metal edge safely tucked inside the slice. Secure it with body trim cement.

## Fuse Blocks & Terminal Blocks

You will be adding several components to the 12-volt system. It's a good idea to fuse each one separately. The cleanest way to do this is to run one keyed ignition 12-volt wire into a fuse block, and feed all the components from there.

Similarly, if you have several components that need to be grounded, you can ground them all at one terminal block.

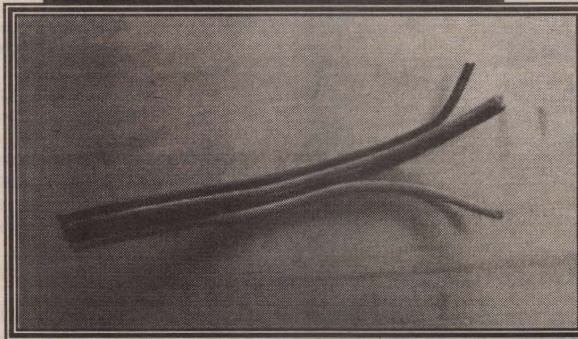
## Grounds

It used to be simple to ground a wire in a car. You simply punched a hole in some convenient sheet metal and screwed it down. Today's paint systems, however, won't allow that anymore.

Most modern cars have several designated ground points, which are indicated in the wiring diagram. Use these whenever possible.

If you must make your own ground, sand the area down thoroughly to bare metal. After your

**Four-in-one trailer lead makes a neat and convenient instant loom.**



ground is made, protect any exposed metal with touch-up paint or some other rustproof coating.

## Dash Indicator Lights

Some of the dash indicator lights may have new uses in your electric car. For example, the alternator light can be grounded so that it will stay on whenever the key is on. Since an electric car makes no noise sitting still, it can be handy to have some feedback to indicate that the car is turned on.

Another light, such as the oil pressure light, can be wired to a temperature sensor in the motor. (The Advanced D.C. motors come with this sensor built in, and wire leads attached.)

This light will serve as a motor overheat warning light. You will never see it in normal use, so if it ever does come on, it indicates a serious problem needing immediate attention.

## Relays

There are several places in an electric car where relays are useful. These are applications in which you want one function to automatically start (or prohibit) another function.

An example is the charger interlock relay. This relay automatically cuts power to the main contactor whenever the charger is engaged. It prevents you from driving away while still plugged in.

Relays can also be used to bypass power cut-offs in some circumstances. For example, the Curtis/PMC controller has a microswitch on the throttle potbox. This microswitch cuts off all battery pack power to the main contactor and controller whenever the throttle is released. This is a "dead-man switch" safety feature.

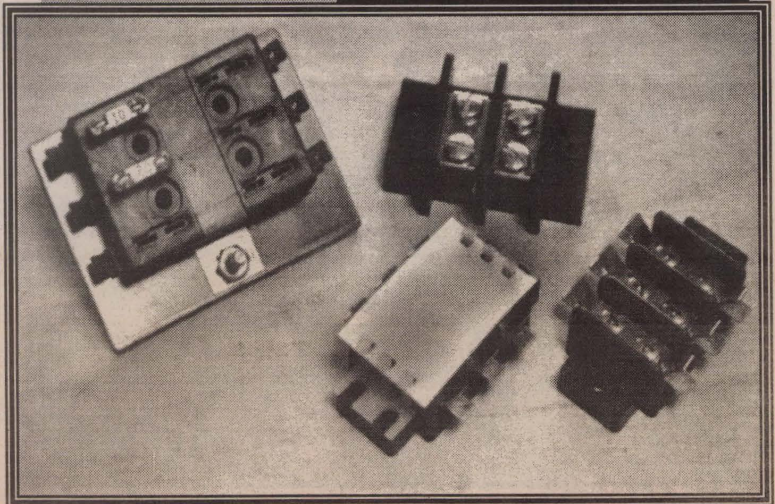
Relays can be used to continue to feed battery pack power to the voltmeter and the DC/DC converter (which charges the 12-volt auxiliary battery). In this way, these functions are not interrupted every time the throttle is released, but the safety feature is maintained.

A third application is a load-carrying device. You may want to re-use an original car wire for a heavier application. Instead of replacing the wire with a heavier gauge, you can use the wire to trigger a relay, which then remotely switches another, higher current circuit of larger gauge wire. The original wire simply carries a signal, and the larger wire does the actual work.

## Attention to Detail

One of the most common problems in gas cars is a failure in the electrical system. The electric conversion relies on a similar low-current control and accessory system. It is essential to design this system with care and automotive quality standards to insure reliability of operation. **NU**

**A fuse block (left) and terminal blocks (right) are easy ways to connect many wires to the same power source or ground.**





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## TECH FORUM

Continued from page 129

make sure you and your friend hang up both phones ASAP. ("Listening in" will attenuate the signals and introduce stray noises, both unwanted effects.) Left to themselves the modems should then figure out what speed they can achieve through their automatic negotiations.

At this point, if you're both using external modems, you can simply hook serial cables to the modems and your have your RS-232 connection.

In case one modem or the other gets reset, or the CO supply power cord gets kicked out of the wall, you'll have to go through the ringing steps again to re-initiate the connection.

**Ken Clark  
Garden Grove, CA**

### ANSWER TO #4953 - APRIL 1995

From reader Eschbaugh's question I assume his dot matrix printer is a Commodore compatible, one that uses the proprietary Commodore serial interface (plugs into the disk drive connector).

Cardco and Micrografix are among the many vendors who manufactured Commodore-to-Centronics-parallel interfaces that are compatible with the C64 and VIC20, as well as Mr. Eschbaugh's C128. All will work with some degree of success with the "newer IBM compatible printers" Mr. Eschbaugh wants to use. These interfaces are more complex than a simple cable. They require enough intelligence to be able to recognize the printer's device number in the serial data stream, convert the Commodore-unique printer codes to conventional codes (Commodore CHR\$(15) codes are changed to CHR\$(20), for example). Commodore used a secondary address scheme to trigger special functions on its printers and a good interface will capture that output and convert it, as well.

Printer interfaces should be available on the used and surplus market, as well as from the few remaining dealers who sell new Commodore compatible hardware. Readers who buy used interfaces should be sure to get documentation with them. Finding the right combination of DIP switch settings or special CHR\$( ) codes without good docs will be a challenge.

The now out-of-print *More on the Sixtyfour* by H.C. Wagner (Hofaker) describes a simple 11 wire User Port to Centronics cable that allows a C64/C128 to send signals to a Centronics printer. While the cable is simple, a machine language driver (listing is in the book) is needed to trap the Commodore printer data stream and redirect it to the User Port. This system will work for any user written code or most BASIC programs. Commercial programs such as word processors will probably ignore or overwrite Wagner's driver making it impractical for serious printer work.

**Noel Nyman  
Seattle, WA**

### ANSWER TO 49522 - APRIL 1995

CLASS stands for Custom Local Area Signaling Service and is a set of features presented by Regional Bell Operating Companies (RBOCs) and independent telephone companies.

CLASS includes call-forwarding, voice mail, and Calling Number Delivery (CND). CND messages come in two types, the "single format" message, which contains only time and calling number and the "multiple format" message which contains additional data such as the calling party's name. It's possible your telephone company is delivering one of these messages and the box you purchased is expecting the other. It should be possible to switch your caller-ID service to send the right format, but that's something you'll have to take up with your service provider. A call to the ID box manufacturer may be helpful.

More data on CLASS services is available from the technical arm of Bell, BELLCORE. They can be reached at 800-521-2673. The CLASS document number is: TR-TSY-000030 "SPCS Customer Premises Equipment Data Interface."

**George Scott  
Alexandria, VA**

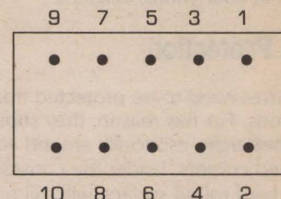
### ANSWER TO #39515 - MARCH 1955

The Tandy CM-8 Color monitor (26-3215) is a 640 x 192 - 80 column RGB monitor for use on the Radio Shack Color Computer 3. I have enclosed a pinout from the Color Computer Manual 81101790A. You may be able to adapt a VGA to RGB cable to the monitor or build your own cable. Hope this will help.

#### RGB Monitor Jack Pin Location

Looking at the outside of the RGB OUT jack on the bottom of the computer:

- |           |                      |
|-----------|----------------------|
| 1. Ground | 6. Polarity (No Pin) |
| 2. Ground | 7. Sound             |
| 3. Red    | 8. Hsync             |
| 4. Green  | 9. Vsync             |
| 5. Blue   | 10. No Connection    |



**Pete Bumgardner  
Decatur, TN**

### ANSWER TO 4959 - APRIL 1995

Relative position encoding is not an expensive undertaking, thanks to the large variety of encoders designed to support the robust printer market. The Hewlett-Packard HEDS 5500 series encoders are typical of this type and feature an operating temperature range of -40 to 100 degrees C. It is accurate to 10 minutes of arc and requires only a single 5V supply. These encoders are about one cubic inch in size.

The encoder supplies two TTL outputs, in phase quadrature with each other. By monitoring these outputs, you can determine when and in which direction the shaft endcoder has moved.

Further data can be obtained from your local HP sales outlet or:

Hewlett Packard, P.O. Box 10301, Palo Alto, CA 94303.

**George Scott  
Alexandria, VA**



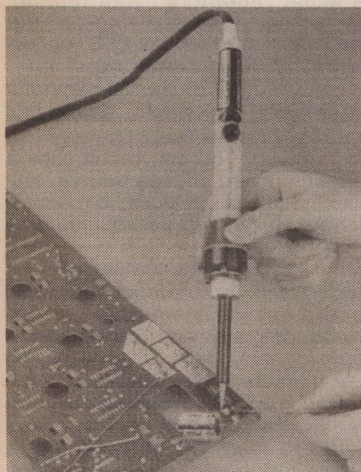
## New Product News

be tied to user circuitry or to the PB-51/11 during programming. A three pin header on the board provides communication with a PC's printer port. If desired, RS-232 buffering can be added to the 89C51's UART in the prototyping area. This can be linked to the serial port on a host PC. Finally, an on-board regulator allows the LITTLE BYTE-51 to be used with an unregulated supply source of 9 VDC.

For more information, contact:

**ALLEN SYSTEMS**  
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### SUPER SENSOR 100 SOLDERING IRON



A new soldering iron that features a sensor controlled automatic temperature adjustability for use at low temperature ranges to solder and desolder sensitive electronic components is being introduced by Bonkote America.

The Bonkote Super Sensor 100 Soldering Iron #SS1005B features a ceramic tip with a built-in sensor for maintaining variable temperatures from 220°C to 450°C with  $\pm 4\%$  accuracy. Providing a dial control in the handle to select the temperature and a flashing neon lamp for verification, this iron is ready to solder within 40 seconds.

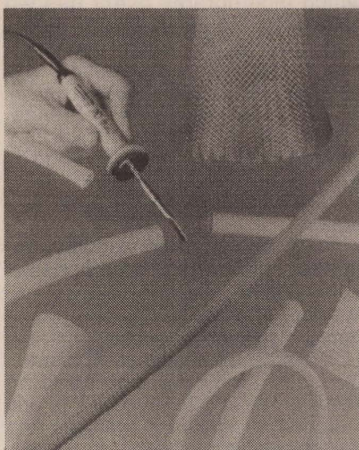
Available with interchangeable ceramic solder tips, the Bonkote Super Sensor 100 Soldering Iron incorporates zero-switching to minimize the affect of noise. The heater rating is 120V @ 40W with 18W actual power consumption and the insulation resistance is at least 50 megohms @ 400°C after 1500 hours of constant use.

The Bonkote Super Sensor 100 Soldering Iron is priced at \$125.00 (list).

For more information, contact:

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### LIGHTWEIGHT HOT KNIFE



A lightweight, easy to handle hot knife that quickly cuts, melts, and seals woven plastic sleeving to prevent fraying is available from Hot Tools.

The Hot Tool WB-1 Hot Knife concentrates 850°F heat in the tip to simultaneously cut and melt woven plastic sleeving and create a beaded edge that won't unravel. Featuring a wooden handle that stays cool because the heating element is directly under the tip, this tool weighs less than one ounce and is only 6-3/4" long.

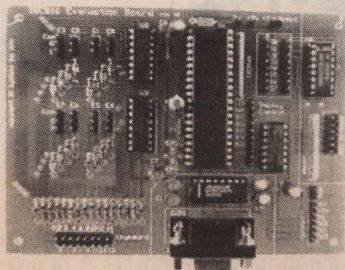
Ergonomically tapered to comfortably fit into the hand, the lightweight Hot Tool WB-1 Hot Knife heats up fully in less than a minute and is suitable for high volume use. This hot knife is ideal for cutting and sealing sail cloth and other synthetics including Nylon®, Dacron®, Pellon®, and Mylar®.

The Hot Tool WB-1 Hot Knife is priced at \$24.95 (list), complete with a tip. Replacement tips are \$3.95 ea. and slide-on without screws or threads.

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### IQC 816 INTERFACE



IQ Systems, Inc. announces the IQC 816, the first in a series of chips to greatly simplify the incorpo-

ration of encoders, displays, keyboards, switches, sound, and speech in electronic products. The product family is founded on a new command set that provides for a standardized software interface to man/machine I/O, regardless of the host processor type.

The IQC 816 is the first chip in this family and can support or drive the following:

- 1) 32 digits of LED display, addressed as 4 displays of 8 digits. Displays can be concatenated for more than 8 digits or reduced in width for increased brightness. The 816 provides numerous display smarts including, left/right formatting, flashing and bright up cursors, alpha decode, programmable display width, etc. A high scan rate ensures no display flicker.

- 2) 32 segments of LCD display, plus support of 4 x 40 lines of LCD alpha numeric smart display. The LCD displays have identical software control format and capabilities to the LED displays.

- 3) 16 non-multiplexed outputs to drive actuators, relays, or incandescent bulbs.

- 4) 8 rotary encoders with full quadrature decoding. Each encoder is supported by an 8 bit up/down counter.

- 5) 48 standard switches, or 176 with shift, control, and alternate key modifiers. Switches are debounced and can either have 2 key lock out, auto repeat, and control modifiers or have N key roll over and entries in the output buffer for both depression and release. These switch types can be mixed.

- 6) The output buffer is 8 bytes deep and records both switch scan codes and the address of any encoders that have changed state.

- 7) Sound generator with programmable frequency and duration.

- 8) UART with speeds of up to 19.2K baud. The IQC 816 performs error checking on the UART (RS232) link, this can be optionally turned off. The 816 also parses incoming messages to ensure they are syntactically correct. If errors are detected, then the message is discarded and an error code is returned to the host.

The software interface is flexible and yet easy to use. Commands are in ASCII and framed between braces ('{' and '}'). The goal is to standardize the command set to the man machine interface in much the same way as the interface to modems was standardized with the Hayes 'AT' command set. Such a standardization will allow companies to rapidly prototype this critical part of product design and refine it, without jeopardizing time to market or product cost.

The IQC 816 is available now in 40 pin DIP packaging for \$9.95 in 1000s, and \$19.95 in single quantities. The chip is also available in 44 pin PLCC and PQFP packages, and both 5V and 3V technology.

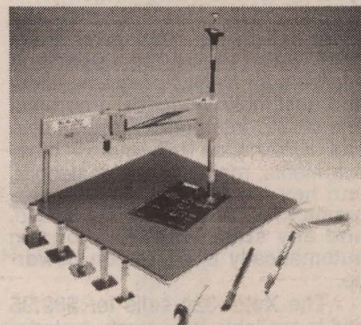
An evaluation kit is available for \$95.00. This kit enables a designer

to plug on displays, encoders, speaker etc., and then couple to any host with a UART. The kit contains 'C' drivers for the IBM PC and numerous application examples.

For more information, contact:

**IQ SYSTEMS, INC.**  
20 CHURCH HILL RD., DEPT. NV  
NEWTOWN, CT 06470  
203-270-8667

### REWORK MINI-STENCIL SYSTEM



TopLine's latest innovative offering is the MSP-100 mini-stencil system. It is an all-new way to simply and accurately apply clean solder paste to rework surface mount components.

The MSP-100 comes complete with six popular stencils. The QFP 100 and 208; PLCC 68; BQFP 132; TSOP 32; and BGA 225. Also included are the base plate, a metal squeegee, and the placement mechanisms itself.

Additional stencils, including specially-built custom designs, can be obtained to add to the MSP-100 system. Any size BGA stencil (side mounts) can also be obtained.

For further information and pricing, please contact:

**TOPLINE**  
310-433-7000 FAX: 310-498-0490.

### NEW XPLORE-32c PERSONAL



### DIGITAL CONTROLLER

Blue Earth Research introduces the new Xplor-32c, the latest model in the Xplor Series of personal digital controllers (PDCs). The Xplor Series PDCs are designed for embedded control, limits monitoring, and data logging applications. The Xplor-32c supports all the standard features of the Xplor Series including an Intel 80C32 CPU, Xicor 8K



# New Product News

byte EEPROM, serial port, and +5V regulator. It also includes screw terminals for all I/O connections, a power input jack, and a serial port connector, all mounted inside a 2 1/2" x 5" x 1" protective enclosure.

Each of the Xplor-32c's 12 digital I/O lines include a socket block that provides solderless connections for interface components such as resistors, capacitors, or transistors.

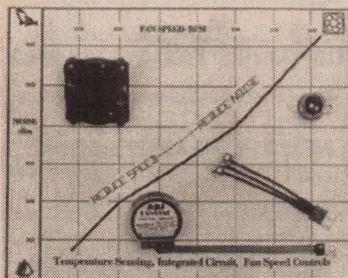
The Xplor-32c's EEPROM features concurrent read write technology, which allows the device to be read while it is being written to. A BASIC interpreter occupies the lower half of the block-protectable EEPROM, leaving the upper half available for BASIC programs, data, and assembly language programs. The BASIC interpreter includes several utilities such as frequency measurements, real time clock/calendar, and hex file loading. BASIC programs may be interactively edited, and any stored BASIC program automatically executes on power-up.

The Xplor-32c sells for \$89.95 and is available from stock. A starter package sells for \$129.95 and includes the Xplor-32c, user's manual, PC serial interface cable, 9V power supply, and application disk. The disk includes an 8052 assembler and a customized terminal program with a BASIC line editor. BASIC and assembly language software examples are also included.

For more information, contact:

**BLUE EARTH RESEARCH**  
165 WEST LIND CT., DEPT. NV  
MANKATO, MN 56001  
507-387-4001 FAX: 507-387-4008  
E-Mail: tom.bachmann@industry.net

## IC FAN SPEED CONTROLLER



**M**DJ, Inc. introduces a complete line of integrated circuit temperature sensing, fan speed controllers. This controller series is named "THERMOCHIP" and is now available. Fan speed reduction yields lower noise and extended fan and filter life.

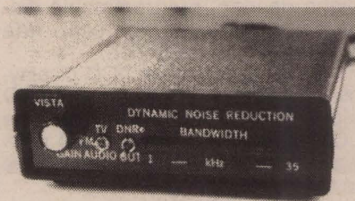
THERMOCHIP supplies voltages from 5 to 15 VDC. It has outputs for AC & DC fans to 300 watts, local or remote temperature sensing. Potentiometric, resistor or factory setpoints are available. Fan failure alarm output is available. Power supply current is less than 200 micro amps. Proportional temperature indication output is available.

Single & dual setpoints -- single setpoint with alarm is standard. Available in TO-220 and Hardened industrial, potted units. Accuracy to .5% some models, 1% is standard. Temperature sensing range from -50C to +130C.

For more information, contact:

**MDJ, INC.**  
P.O. BOX 1019, DEPT. NV  
GLEN ALPINE, NC 28628  
704-584-4007 FAX: 704-584-7000

## UNIVERSAL STEREO DYNAMIC NOISE REDUCTION COMPONENT



**V**ista's universal stereo Dynamic Noise Reduction (DNR) component does not require encoded material to achieve 10 dB on noise reduction from virtually any line level source material-disc, FM or TV broadcast, and tape. The DNR employs National Semiconductors patented psychoacoustical noise masking and adaptive filter.

The device should be installed after any signal preamplifiers and before any volume controls or tone control circuits. Because the DNR can handle line-level signals from 300 mV to 3V RMS, a good location is at the tape monitor I/O or alternately in a signal processing loop. It can also be installed at the line output of a stereo TV to hi-fi amplifier to improve the quality of the audio.

Once installed, only one adjustment is required. An LED bargraph display shows the instantaneous bandwidth from 1-35 KHz. A front panel switch allows A/B comparison of the DNR's effectiveness to be made by forcing the bandwidth open to 50 KHz.

The Dynamic Noise Reduction kit is \$95.00 + S&H. It is also available wired and tested for \$139.00 + S&H.

For more information, contact:

**VISTA**  
P.O. BOX 1425, DEPT. NV  
BOLINGBROOK, IL 60440  
708-378-5534

## UNIVERSAL SCPC XE-1000



**T**he new Universal SCPC XE-1000 Audio Receiver is the latest state-of-the-art microprocessor-con-

trolled audio broadcast receiver which incorporates every needed feature for broadcast-quality reception of all SCPC audio networks. Full flexibility contained in one receiver allows the reception of all SCPC channels on any satellite. There are no costly frequency boards as the SCPC XE-1000 is fully frequency agile and fully transponder agile with a push of a button.

Full readout of transponder, frequency, bandwidth, de-emphasis, companding, channel name, and memory channel in use are prominently displayed on an easy-to-read LCD display of 2 lines at 20 characters per line. All companding boards, 1:1, 2:1, 3:1 are built in and included as standard features and are selectable alongwith de-emphasis selection.

The SCPC XE-1000 has 50 channel non-volatile memories, which are recalled with the touch of a single button to select any SCPC channel that you place in memory, along with the parameters that are used for the channel. Frequencies, transponders, and all parameters are entered by front key pad. Two high-quality phase locked loop synthesized frequency converters are used to achieve stable reception in the receiver.

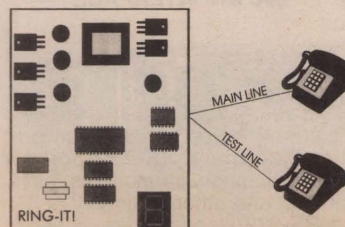
A totally new audio section produces high-quality, low distortion broadcast-quality to two 600 ohm line outputs, plus 4 ohm speaker output, and front panel headphone monitoring jack. The input frequency of the XE-1000 receiver is 950 to 1450 MHz from a stable phase lock loop LNB at dish. A quality 75 ohm RG-6 coax line is used from antenna to receiver. All C-Band and Ku-Band channels are compatible with the XE-1000.

Standard rack mounting of 19" wide, 10" deep, 1.75" high, with 115 VAC, 60 cycle power requirements.

For further details, contact:

**UNIVERSAL ELECTRONICS, INC.**  
4555 GROVES RD., STE. 13,  
DEPT. NV  
COLUMBUS, OH 43232  
614-866-4605 FAX: 614-866-1201

## PHONE LINE SIMULATOR KIT



**D**igital Products Company announces Ring-IT! A microprocessor controlled telephone line simulator. With it you can easily evaluate all types of standard telephone equipment. And because it is

offered only as a kit, you can own one for a fraction of the cost of commercial systems by building it yourself.

It can be used to test or demonstrate any standard telephone, answering machine, fax unit, voice mail system, or modem. In fact, almost anything that you can connect to a phone line can be tested or demonstrated using Ring-IT.

Telephone equipment that is plugged into this handy test system will behave just as if it was connected to a real telephone line.

An LED type digital readout is used to display the DTMF digits that are dialed, so you can even verify operation of TouchTone type push-button phones.

You can choose between five different test modes that allow standard telephone line emulation or special repetitive cycle testing, including automatic ring-up. For extra convenience, the LED readout shows the test mode in-use.

An internal 20 Hz ring generator uses digital precision to ensure that most any type of telephone gear can be rung-up. The ring circuit uses a superimposed voltage source, just like the phone company, to maintain compatibility with all popular telephone products.

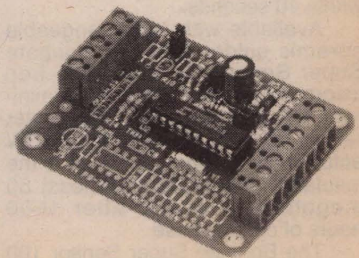
The kit comes complete with a high-quality two piece printed circuit board set, all electronic components, programmed microprocessor, transformers, and a 25 page technical manual. All you need to finish the kit is a good soldering iron, and a small enclosure of your choice. If you are more adventuresome, a "basic" kit is offered that includes just the circuit board, programmed microprocessor, and technical manual.

The kit's price is only \$145.00. The "basic" kit is \$53.95 & S&H.

For more details, contact:

**DIGITAL PRODUCTS COMPANY**  
134 WINDSTAR CIR., DEPT. NV  
FOLSOM, CA 95630  
24Hr Voice/FAX 916-985-7219.

## 16-BIT A/D CONVERTER MODULE



**B**lue Earth Research introduces the SI-01 Sensor Interface Module for converting the output of various analog sensors to a digital format. The SI-01 was designed to be used with high-precision sensors, especially those having a millivolt level output signal. The digital out-



# New Product News

put can be read by many popular microcontrollers, including all of the single board controllers manufactured by Blue Earth Research.

The SI-01 is based on a single channel 16-bit delta-sigma type analog-to-digital converter with a two-wire digital output. The ADC can operate in bipolar mode for  $\pm 2.5V$  differential inputs or unipolar mode for 0-2.5V differential or single-ended inputs. The common mode range for differential inputs is 0-5 volts. Up to 20 conversions per second can be performed.

An external 9-16V power supply can be used to power the SI-01, which includes an on-board 5-volt regulator. Series resistors are present on all signal lines for transient and out-of-range voltage protection. Screw terminals are provided for all I/O connections.

Several options are available, including temperature compensated sensor excitation, and an oscillator circuit for measuring the output of capacitive type (e.g., humidity) sensors. A protective plastic enclosure is also available.

The standard SI-01 is priced at \$59.95 and is available from stock. It includes complete documentation along with BASIC and 8051 Assembly Language software examples.

For more information, contact:

**BLUE EARTH RESEARCH**  
165 WEST LIND CT., DEPT. NV  
MANKATO, MN 56001  
507-387-4001 FAX: 507-387-4008  
E-Mail: tom.bachmann@industry.net

## IEEE-488.2/GPIB CONTROLLER FOR PORTABLE COMPUTERS



ICS Electronics Corporation announces a new IEEE-488.2 controller module that lets any IBM compatible desktop or portable computer control GPIB bus devices from its parallel port. Model 4818, GPIB controller is an external module that works with standard and enhanced parallel printer ports to convert the computer into an IEEE-488.2 bus controller. The 4818 does not interfere with the operation of existing printers, security keys, or other devices that use the computer's parallel port.

The 4818 is a small 6.3"x 3.75" module that connects between the computer's parallel port and printer. The 4818 monitors the output from the computer's parallel port and automatically routes all GPIB commands out its IEEE-488 connector to the GPIB bus. Responses from

the GPIB device are sent back through the printer port to the computer. The 4818 passes all non-GPIB commands and data to the printer output connector. The 4818 is powered from the computer's auxiliary keyboard connector and it does not require an external power supply. LEDs on the 4818 provide the user with a visual indication of its status.

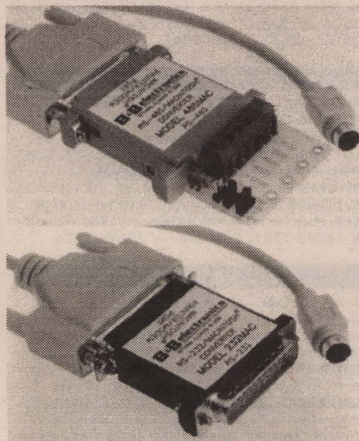
The 4818's software includes ICS's 488 driver libraries, program example, and an Interactive Command Line program that lets a user control GPIB devices from the keyboard without having to write a program. The 488 Driver Libraries support Quick Basic, Visual Basic, C and C++ programs, and include all of the required IEEE 488.2 controller protocols. The 4818 can execute programs written for ICS's 488-PC2 GPIB controller card by relinking the existing programs with the new 488 Driver Library.

The Model 4818, GPIB Controller includes the computer connection cables, adapters, 488 driver software, and instruction manual. Price is \$395.00 each.

For more information, contact:

**ICS ELECTRONICS CORP.**  
473 LOS COCHES ST., DEPT. NV  
MILPITAS, CA 95035-5422  
408-263-5500

## TWO NEW MACINTOSH SERIAL CONVERTERS



The 232MAC and 485MAC Serial converters are now available from B&B Electronics Manufacturing Company. Both new Macintosh based products are priced at \$74.95.

The 232MAC converts a Macintosh printer or modem port into a standard RS-232 port for communicating with modems, serial printers, and other devices that use the RS-232 standard. The 232MAC not only adapts the Macintosh mini-din connector to the DB25 connector, but also is an active device that uses RS-232 driver/receiver ICs to comply fully with the RS-232 standard. The 232MAC has a DB25 male connector for the RS-232 con-

nection and supports transmit & receive data, request to send, clear to send, and carrier detect.

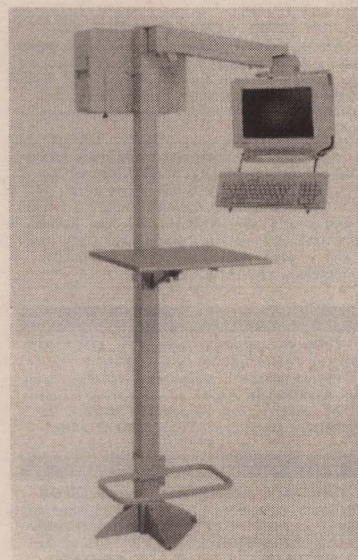
The 485MAC allows your Macintosh printer or modem port to connect directly to RS-422 equipment, or to a multidrop RS-485 system transmit & receive data are converted from the Mac serial port to a balanced differential signal that fully complies with the RS-485 standard. The RS-485 side of the converter brings out the transmit lines and receive lines on screw down terminal blocks for easy connection to RS-422/485 two-wire or four-wire systems. Jumpers are provided for automatic send data control or hardware handshake control of the RS-485 driver and receiver.

Both the 232MAC and 485MAC converters require 12 VDC at about 100mA and include a six foot cable for connection to a Macintosh. A power supply is available for use with both converters (Models 232PS and 485PS, \$14.95 each).

For more information contact:

**B&B ELECTRONICS MFG. CO.**  
707 DAYTON ROAD  
P.O. BOX 1040, DEPT. NV  
OTTAWA, IL 61350  
815-434-0846  
24-HR FAX: 815-434-7094  
24-HR BBS 815-434-2927

## THE COMMAND POST



Ergotron, Inc. announces the availability of another in its line of Ergonomic Computer WorkCenters. The Command Post is a computer/video display mounting column that can be used in manufacturing plants, assembly lines, commercial kitchens, and restaurant video display locations. It saves floor space in areas where floor space is at a premium by providing computer/video access without using worksurface space.

Mounted to the floor, The Command Post uses less than two

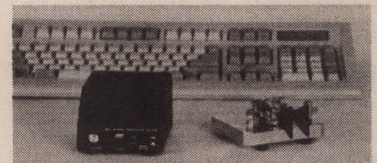
square feet of floor space and when mounted overhead uses no floor space at all. Workers can access computerized records, recipes, or procedures that might otherwise have not been immediately available. In addition, the monitor can be positioned and repositioned to the correct height, distance, and angle for operators of any size.

The Command Post features Ergotron's patented ergonomic monitor suspension technology, a rugged mounting column, steel components, and several installation options. Optional accessories include a foot rest, collapsible work-surface, and keyboard holders. The Command Post is priced starting at \$750.00.

For more information, contact:

**ERGOTRON, INC.**  
3450 YANKEE DR., STE. 100  
DEPT. NV  
ST. PAUL, MN 55121-1627  
612-452-8135, 1-800-888-8458  
FAX: 612-454-8346

## SUPER CW KEYBOARD



MFJ Enterprises, Inc. announces the MFJ-452 Super CW Keyboard with Perpetual memory, only \$129.95.

The MFJ-452 CW Keyboard has a two-line LCD display and includes an RFI suppressed keyboard.

The MFJ-452 features eight 250 character nonvolatile message memories, a 150 character type-ahead buffer, an iambic keyer, and a powerful "Morse Code Trainer."

When you purchase the MFJ-452, you will be sending effortless CW as soon as you turn it on. There is no computer to boot up, no program to load, you just start typing.

The MFJ-452 includes Perpetual Memory which means you can save your messages and settings up to 20 years without power or batteries.

MFJ gives you an easy-to-read LCD display that simultaneously shows you what you're sending out on another. You can review stored messages, keyboard settings, and spot typing errors that can be quickly corrected by backspacing. The LCD display will also eliminate those painful "neck-typing" strains. The LCD is displayed on a sloped front panel and has a contrast control that can be seen by even the "red-eyed" HAM.

The CW keyboard (included) has RFI suppression, it won't lock up or send characters you don't want because of the RF and you won't hear any digital hash in your receiver. There aren't any complex



# New Product News

strokes here either.

MFJ offers the SingleTouch function keys which make it simple to store and recall messages, set speed, weight and tone, set up serial numbering, turn on and off the transmitter tune, and it also features a keying and handkey mode.

With the MFJ-452, commonly used prosigns are assigned keys for easy use. You can also create any prosign by pressing Alt and any characters. The 452 also features an iambic keyer for fast break-in; plug in an iambic paddle and you can even use it as a full featured keyer. Pause your playing buffer or message or insert your comments with your paddle and then resume playing.

The MFJ-452 also features a powerful and educational "Morse Code Trainer." You can practice or

teach Morse code in Farnsworth or normal code. You can select letters, numbers, punctuation, or prosigns in any combination to practice and use standard 5, random 1 to 8 character groups, or select specific six character sets.

The MFJ-452 also includes extra side effects, like the speaker, sidetone, volume control, and jack for external speaker or earphones.

The MFJ-452's AT101 compatible keyboard plugs into compact 3-1/2 x 2-1/2 x 3-1/2 inch interface. Use a 12 VDC or 110 VAC with MFJ-1312B, \$12.95.

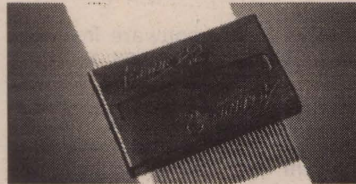
MFJ-452X is the exact same model as MFJ-452, but comes without the keyboard, at only \$99.95.

Both models come with MFJ's now famous "No Matter What" one year unconditional guarantee.

For more information, contact:

**MFJ ENTERPRISES, INC.**  
P.O. BOX 494, DEPT. NV  
MISSISSIPPI STATE, MS 39762  
601-323-5869 FAX: 601-323-6551  
1-800-647-1800

## RIBBON CABLE TERMINATOR



Aeronics, Inc. announces the availability of its newest SCSI terminator connectivity solution, the 68 Position IDC 0.025 Pitch Ribbon

Cable terminator.

The 68 Position IDC ribbon cable terminator provides a simple and inexpensive method of increasing SCSI bus performance.

The terminator easily clamps onto an existing SCSI ribbon cable and eliminates the standard passive terminators usually found on OEM peripherals.

The 68 Position IDC ribbon cable terminator is available in seven electrical configurations, including active, high current active, forced perfect, differential, and passive terminators.

For more details, contact:

**AERONICS, INC.**  
12741 RESEARCH BLVD., STE. 500  
DEPT. NV  
AUSTIN, TX 78759  
512-258-2303 FAX: 512-258-4392

## Events

## CALENDAR

Continued from page 75

Grand Prize drawing 2:30pm. **ADMISSION:** \$7, under 6 free. **FEATURES:** C - DP - E - EX - FM - FP - F/R - H. **DEALER INFO:** Outdoor flea market \$4 per vehicle + admission. Electricity not available. For information including commercial booth and club exhibit information contact Electronics Fair at PO Box 26331, St. Paul MN 55126 or by calling, 612-653-9999.

### JUNE 17

**OH - MILFORD** — Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Milford ARC. **LOCATION:** Live Oaks Career Development Center, 5956 Buckwheat Rd. **HOURS:** 8am-2pm. **ADMISSION:** \$4 adv., \$5 door, under 12 free. **TALK-IN:** 147.345 +. **FEATURES:** CB - EX - F/R. **CONTACT:** Gerry, 513-677-9255.

**MI - MIDLAND** — 20th Annual Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Midland ARC. **LOCATION:** Midland National Guard Armory. **HOURS:** 8am-1pm. **ADMISSION:** \$4. **TALK-IN:** 147.00 +. **FEATURES:** DP - E - EX - F/R. **DEALER INFO:** 8' tables \$10 adv., \$15 door. Set-up 6:30am. **CONTACT:** MARC Hamfest, PO Box 1049, Midland MI 48641. 517-832-3053 evs.

### JUNE 18

**IN - CROWN POINT** — Dad's Day Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Lake County ARC. **LOCATION:** Lake County Fairgrounds. **CONTACT:** John Gianotti, K9GW, 1513 Camellia Dr., Munster IN 46321. 219-922-1065.

**MI - MADISON HEIGHTS** — Computer Trade Show. **LOCATION:** UF & CW Hall, 876 Horace Brown Dr., 1 block E of I-75, 3 blocks S of 13 Mile Road. **HOURS:** 10am-4pm. **ADMISSION:** Adults \$4, seniors & students w/ID \$3, under 12 free w/adult. **FEATURES:** C - DP. **CONTACT:** Computers & You, 313-283-1754.

**MI - MONROE** — Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Midland ARC. **LOCATION:** Monroe County Fairgrounds M-50 at Rasinville Road. **HOURS:** 8am-2pm. **ADMISSION:** \$3 adv., \$4 door. **FEATURES:** EX - FM - H. **DEALER INFO:** 8' indoor tables \$10, 8' outdoor space \$3. Dealer Info, Judy Kraatz, 2275 Nadeau Rd., Monroe MI 48161. 313-289-2638. **CONTACT:** Fred Lux, WDBITZ, PO Box 982, Monroe MI 48161. 313-243-1053.

**OH - MACEDONIA** — Hamfest & Computer Show. **SPONSOR:** Cuyahoga ARS. **LOCATION:** Nordonia High School. **HOURS:** 8am-1pm. **ADMISSION:** \$3 adv., \$4 door. **TALK-IN:** 146.82(-). **FEATURES:** C - DP - H. **DEALER INFO:** Indoor spaces \$11 (includes table & 1 admission), outdoor spaces \$4. **CONTACT:** Rich James or Cars 1995 Hamfest, 7620 Crestwood Lane, Northfield OH 44067. 216-468-2035.

### JUNE 24

**MI - LIVONIA** — Computer Trade Show. **LOCATION:** Livonia Elks Lodge Hall, 31117 Plymouth Rd., 1 block E of Merriman. **HOURS:** 10am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** Adults \$4, seniors & students w/ID \$3, under 12 free w/adult. **FEATURES:** C - DP. **CONTACT:** Computers & You, 313-283-1754.

**MI - WESTLAND** — Great Lakes Computer Expo & Sale. **SPONSOR:** Progressive Computer Productions. **LOCATION:** Wayne-Ford Civic League, 1645

Wayne Rd, 1 blk S of Ford Rd. **HOURS:** 10am-4pm. **ADMISSION:** Adults \$4, seniors/students \$3, under 12 free w/adult. **FEATURES:** C - DP - FP - F/R - S. **DEALER INFO:** Covered 8' table \$35 ea. **CONTACT:** Progressive Computer Productions, 23814 Michigan Ave., Ste. 237, Dearborn MI 48124. 313-425-9276.

### JUNE 25

**IL - GLEN ELLYN** — Computer Central. **LOCATION:** College of DuPage, Park Blvd. & College Rd. **HOURS:** 9:30am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** Adults \$6, 8-12 \$2, under 8 free. \$1 off reg. adult admission w/this ad. **FEATURES:** AC - C - FP. **CONTACT:** Computer Central, Jay B. Robinson, 708-940-7547.

**MI - ANN ARBOR** — Colossal Computer Sale. **LOCATION:** Jewish Community Center. **LOCATION:** Washtenaw Community College's Morris Lawrence Bldg. **HOURS:** 9:30am-4pm. **ADMISSION:** \$4. **FEATURES:** C - S. **DEALER INFO:** Vendor tables \$40. **CONTACT:** 313-971-0990 - Jewish Community Center.

**MI - WATERFORD** — Computer Trade Show. **LOCATION:** NOCC CAI Building, 5640 Williams Lake Rd., between Airport Rd. & R/R tracks; at Exit 89 off I-75 go W 3 miles to Walton Blvd., turn right & go approx. 1 mile. **HOURS:** 10am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** Adults \$4, seniors & students w/ID \$3, under 12 free w/adult. **FEATURES:** C - DP. **CONTACT:** Computers & You, 313-283-1754.

### JULY 1

**MI - TROY** — Computer Trade Show. **LOCATION:** American Polish Cultural Center, 2975 E. Maple Rd. (15 Mile) corner of DeQuindre. **HOURS:** 10am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** Adults \$4; Seniors & students w/ID \$3; under 12 free w/adult. **FEATURES:** C - DP. **CONTACT:** Computers & You, 313-283-1754.

### JULY 8

**WI - OAK CREEK** — 26th Annual Swapfest. **SPONSOR:** South Milwaukee ARC. **LOCATION:** American Legion Post #434, 9327 S. Shepard Ave. **HOURS:** 7am-2pm. **ADMISSION:** \$4. **TALK-IN:** 146.52 Simplex. **FEATURES:** DP - EX - FP - F/R. **CONTACT:** 414-762-3235.

### JULY 14-16

**MT - EAST GLACIER** — Montana State Convention/Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Montana State Convention & Glacier/Waterton Int'l Hamfest. **CONTACT:** Darrell Thomas, N7KOR, 743 33rd Ave. NE, Great Falls MT 59404. 406-453-8574.

### JULY 15

**IN - INDIANAPOLIS** — Indianapolis Computer Fair. **LOCATION:** Quality Inn East, 3525 N. Shadeland Ave., near Pendleton Pike. **HOURS:** 10am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** \$4, under 12 free. **FEATURES:** C - DP. **CONTACT:** Ben Yanto, AGI Computer Fairs. \*

### JULY 16

**IL - ORLAND PARK** — The Orland Park Computer Show. **LOCATION:** Orland Park Civic Center, 147th

St. & LaGrange Rd (Rt. 45). **HOURS:** 9:30am - 3pm. **ADMISSION:** Adults \$5 - \$1 off with copy of this ad, 8-12 yrs \$2, under 8 free. **FEATURES:** AC - C - CB - DP - FP - F/R - All indoors. **CONTACT:** 24-hour Hotline 708-974-3123.

**OH - VAN WERT** — Hamfest '95. **SPONSOR:** Van Wert ARC. **LOCATION:** Van Wert County Fairgrounds, Commercial Bldg. US 127 South. **HOURS:** 8am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** \$4. **TALK-IN:** 146.850. **FEATURES:** C - CB - DP - E - EX - FP - F/R - H - T. **DEALER INFO:** 8' tables \$10 + admission, space only \$6 + admission, trunk sales \$6 + admission. **CONTACT:** Bob High 419-795-5763 before 5pm; Bob WDBLPY 419-238-1877 after 5pm.

### JULY 23

**IL - SUGAR GROVE** — ARRL Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Fox River Radio League. **CONTACT:** James E. Von Olmhausen, N9U2C, 405 Davis Rd., Batavia IL 60510-1306. 708-879-3042.

### JULY 28-29

**OK - OKLAHOMA CITY** — Ham Holidays '95. **SPONSOR:** Central Oklahoma Radio Amateurs. **LOCATION:** Oklahoma State Fair Park, Arts & Crafts Bldg. **HOURS:** Fri. 5pm-8pm; Sat. 8am-5pm. **ADMISSION:** \$6 adv., \$8 door. **TALK-IN:** 146.67. **FEATURES:** C - CB - DP - EX - F - FM - FP - F/R - H - RV - S. **DEALER INFO:** Flea Market \$10/table. **CONTACT:** Ham Holidays '95, PO Box 851281, Yukon OK 73085-1281. CompuServe 75672.3475.

### JULY 29

**MI - WESTLAND** — Great Lakes Computer Expo & Sale. **SPONSOR:** Progressive Computer Productions. **LOCATION:** Wayne-Ford Civic League, 1645 Wayne Rd, 1 blk S of Ford Rd. **HOURS:** 10am-4pm. **ADMISSION:** Adults \$4, Seniors/Students \$3, under 12 free w/adult. **FEATURES:** C - DP - FP - F/R - S. **DEALER INFO:** Covered 8' table \$35 ea. **CONTACT:** Progressive Computer Productions, 23814 Michigan Ave., Ste 237, Dearborn MI 48124. 313-425-9276.

**OH - XENIA** — Hamfest & Computer Expo. **LOCATION:** Heartland Flea Market & Bingo Hall, Corner of Allison. **HOURS:** 8am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** Free. **FEATURES:** FP - T. **DEALER INFO:** Inside space, \$15 per table, \$25 per table w/electric, tailgate spaces \$10. **CONTACT:** High Noon Trading Co., 4230 Dayton-Xenia Rd, Ste 500, Beavercreek OH 45432. 513-429-5403.

**TX - TEXAS CITY** — ARRL Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Tidelands ARS. **CONTACT:** Bill Steele, WA5WVP, PO Box 892, Texas City TX 77590. 409-948-0308.

### JULY 30

**IL - GLEN ELLYN** — Computer Central. **LOCATION:** College of DuPage, Park Blvd. & College Rd. **HOURS:** 9:30am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** Adults \$6, 8-12 \$2, under 8 free. \$1 off reg. adult admission w/this ad. **FEATURES:** AC - C - FP. **CONTACT:** Computer Central, Jay B. Robinson, 708-940-7547.

**IL - STICKNEY** — ARRL Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** DuPage ARC. **CONTACT:** Edwin Weinstein, WD9AYR, 7511

Walnut Ave., Woodridge IL 60517. 708-985-0527.

**MI - PORT HURON** — ARRL Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Eastern Michigan ARC. **CONTACT:** Henry Kohl, K8DD, 1640 Henry St., Port Huron, MI 48060. 810-982-7088.

## EASTERN REGION

### MAY 6

**MD - STEVENSVILLE** — Hamfest & Computer Flea Market. **SPONSOR:** Kent Island ARC. **LOCATION:** Grasonville VFW, located behind Sleep Inn. **HOURS:** 8am-2pm. **ADMISSION:** \$4 donation, tailgate free. **TALK-IN:** 146.94/146.34. **FEATURES:** C - DP - FM - F/R - H - T. **DEALER INFO:** Tables & tailgating spaces are free w/admission. **CONTACT:** Glen, WN3G, @ 410-643-1125; Jim, K3UBC, @ 410-643-3338.

**NJ - WAYNE** — Computer Show. **LOCATION:** William Paterson College, Recreation Center, near I-80, Rt. 23 & Rt. 46. **HOURS:** 9:30am-4:30pm. **FEATURES:** C. **DEALER INFO:** 500+ tables. **CONTACT:** KGP Computer Show. \*

**NY - OWEGO** — Southern Tier Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Southern Tier ARC. **LOCATION:** Marvin Park Fairgrounds, Rt. 17C & Exit 64. **HOURS:** 8am-4pm. **ADMISSION:** \$3 adv., \$4 door, tailgate \$2 extra. **TALK-IN:** 146.16/76 & 146.52/52. **FEATURES:** B - CB - EX - F - FM - F/R - H - T. **DEALER INFO:** Tables \$15. **CONTACT:** STARC, POB 7082, Endicott NY 13761-7082.

**PA - ELIZABETHTOWN** — Computer Show/Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Susquehanna Valley Repeater Assn. **LOCATION:** Elizabethtown Area High School. **HOURS:** 8am-7. **ADMISSION:** \$5 - under 12 free. **TALK-IN:** 147.105 449.525. **FEATURES:** C - EX - F/R - H - T. **DEALER INFO:** Indoor tables \$10. Tailgating - admission + \$3. Set-up 6am. **CONTACT:** Richard Clark, KC3DR, 485 Maytown Rd., Elizabethtown, PA 17022. 717-361-8202.

**SC - GREENVILLE** — Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Blue Ridge ARS. **LOCATION:** Anderson County Fairgrounds. **HOURS:** 8am-5pm. **ADMISSION:** \$4 adv., \$5 door, under 12 free. **TALK-IN:** 146.01/146.61, 146.22/146.82. **FEATURES:** DP - EX - F/R - RV - H - T. **DEALER INFO:** Indoor flea market tables \$11, outdoor tailgating - 1 10' space free w/paid admission, add 1 space \$5 each. Set-up Fri. 6pm-9pm, Sat. 6am-8am. **CONTACT:** Jeff, WA4ETF, or Kay, KE4NHX, Borke, 403 Aster Dr., Simpsonville SC 29681. 803-967-3284, or E-Mail borke@aol.com.

**VA - MANASSAS** — Computer Show & Sale. **SPONSOR:** MarketPro. **LOCATION:** Prince William County Fairgrounds (Manassas Fairgrounds). **HOURS:** 9:30am-4:30pm. **ADMISSION:** \$6. **FEATURES:** C - FP. **CONTACT:** MarketPro, POB 41044, Bethesda MD 20814. 301-530-2355.

### MAY 6-7

**AL - BESSEMER** — Birmingham Area Computer



# Events CALENDAR

Show. **LOCATION:** Bessemer Civic Center, 1130 9th Ave, Exit 108 at I-20/I-59. **HOURS:** Sat: 9am-5pm, Sun: 10am-4pm. **ADMISSION:** \$5 both days, \$4 Sun, only. **FEATURES:** AC - C - DP - F/R. **DEALER INFO:** 8 tables \$35. **CONTACT:** Computer Show, POB 295, Riverdale GA 30274. 404-907-6225.

**PA - ALLENTOWN** — Computer Show & Sale. **SPONSOR:** MarketPro. **LOCATION:** Allentown Fairgrounds. **HOURS:** 9:30am-4:30pm. **ADMISSION:** \$6. **FEATURES:** C - FP. **CONTACT:** MarketPro, POB 41044, Bethesda MD 20814. 301-530-2355.

**PA - NORTH WALES** — PC Dealer Showcase. **SPONSOR:** StarWare. **LOCATION:** Montgomery Mall, Rt. 309 & 202. **HOURS:** Sat: 10am-9:30pm, Sun: Noon-5pm. **ADMISSION:** Free. **FEATURES:** AC - C - FP. **DEALER INFO:** Tables \$95 ea. per day. **CONTACT:** StarWare, 610-584-8770.

## MAY 7

**MA - TAUNTON** — Computer Shows & Sales. **SPONSOR:** Northern Computer Shows. **LOCATION:** Taunton Holiday Inn, Exit 9 off I-495, between Rt. 24 & I-95. **HOURS:** 10am-3:30pm. **ADMISSION:** \$7, under 14 free w/adult. **FEATURES:** C. **DEALER INFO:** Setup 8am. **CONTACT:** Northern Computer Shows.\*

**NY - SELDEN** — Amateur Radio Auction. **SPONSOR:** Radio Central ARC. **LOCATION:** Suffolk Community College. **HOURS:** 8:30am-7. **ADMISSION:** \$3. **TALK-IN:** 145.15/42, 449.525/2A. **FEATURES:** FP - F/R. **DEALER INFO:** Tables - free. Set-up 7am. **CONTACT:** Emil Tillona, KD1F, 516-696-0610; John Mark, KB2QQ, 516-689-6343.

**NY - YONKERS** — Giant Electronic Fleamarket. **SPONSOR:** Metro 70cm Network. **LOCATION:** Lincoln High School, Kneeland Ave. **HOURS:** 9am-3pm rain or shine. **ADMISSION:** \$5, under 12 free. **TALK-IN:** 440.425MHz PL 156.7, 223.760MHz PL 67.0, 146.910Hz, 443.350MHz PL 156.7. **FEATURES:** DP - EX - FP - F/R. **DEALER INFO:** Setup 7am. \$19 1st table, \$15 ea. All tables 30"x5", or bring your own at \$14 per 6' space. Tables \$25 ea. at door, \$20 per 6' space. Full payment due w/registration. **CONTACT:** Otto Supliski, WB2SLQ, 914-969-1053.

**PA - WRIGHTSTOWN** — Hamfest '95. **SPONSOR:** Warminster ARC. **LOCATION:** Middletown Grange Fairgrounds, Penn's Park Rd. **HOURS:** 7am-2pm. **ADMISSION:** \$6. **FEATURES:** C - FP. **CONTACT:** MarketPro, POB 41044, Bethesda MD 20814. 301-530-2355.

**VA - ANNANDALE** — Computer Show & Sale. **SPONSOR:** MarketPro. **LOCATION:** Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA). **HOURS:** 9:30am-4:30pm. **ADMISSION:** \$6. **FEATURES:** C - FP. **CONTACT:** MarketPro, POB 41044, Bethesda MD 20814. 301-530-2355.

## MAY 13

**MD - BOWIE** — Computer Show & Sale. **SPONSOR:** MarketPro. **LOCATION:** Bowie State College. **HOURS:** 10am-4pm. **ADMISSION:** \$6. **FEATURES:** C - FP. **CONTACT:** MarketPro, POB 41044, Bethesda MD 20814. 301-530-2355.

**NH - PORTSMOUTH** — Computer Shows & Sales. **SPONSOR:** Northern Computer Shows. **LOCATION:** Rockingham Park, Exit 5 off I-95 to Rt. 1 Bypass South. **HOURS:** 10am-3:30pm. **ADMISSION:** \$7, under 14 free w/adult. **FEATURES:** C. **DEALER INFO:** Setup 8am. **CONTACT:** Northern Computer Shows.\*

**OH - TOLEDO** — Computer Show & Sale. **SPONSOR:** MarketPro. **LOCATION:** Seagate Convention Center. **HOURS:** 10am-4pm. **ADMISSION:** \$6. **FEATURES:** C - FP. **CONTACT:** MarketPro, POB 41044, Bethesda MD 20814. 301-530-2355.

## MAY 13-14

**PA - PLYMOUTH MEETING** — PC Dealer Showcase. **SPONSOR:** StarWare. **LOCATION:** Plymouth Meeting Mall, PA Tpke. Exit 25. **HOURS:** Sat: 10am-9:30pm, Sun: Noon-5pm. **ADMISSION:** Free. **FEATURES:** AC - C - FP. **DEALER INFO:** Tables \$95 ea. per day. **CONTACT:** StarWare, 610-584-8770.

## MAY 14

**MD - HAGERSTOWN** — Great Hagerstown Hamfest & Computer Show. **SPONSOR:** Antietam Radio Assoc. W3CWC. **LOCATION:** Hagerstown Jr. College, Athletic & Recreation Center. **HOURS:** 8:30am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** \$5, under 12 free. **FEATURES:** C - DP - EX - H - T. **DEALER INFO:** Tailgate spaces \$5 - first come, first serve. Indoor tables - \$15 adv., \$20 door. Set up 6:30pm-9:30pm. **CONTACT:** Fred Bailey, N3HTN, 301-416-8079, 301-714-0688.

**WV - WHEELING** — 18th Annual Wheeling Hamfest/Computer Show. **SPONSOR:** Triple States Ra-

dio Amateur Club. **LOCATION:** Wheeling Park, off I-70. **HOURS:** 8am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** \$2 adv., \$3 door. Women & 17 or younger, free. **TALK-IN:** 146.910 & 146.715. **FEATURES:** B - C - CB - DP - EX - FM - FP - F/R - H - RV-S - S - T. **DEALER INFO:** Flea market free w/admission. Set up 6am. Tables sliding scale amount. **CONTACT:** TSRAC, Box 240, RR#1, Adena OH 43901. Ph/FAX 614-546-3930.

## MAY 19-20

**VA - EMPORIA** — Vintage Radio Trade/Show. **SPONSOR:** Vintage Radio Unique Society. **LOCATION:** Holiday Inn & WEVA. Corner of I-95 & Hwy 58 (east side). **HOURS:** Fri, 12pm-4pm; Sat, 8am-4pm. **ADMISSION:** \$3 both days, over 59 \$1. **TALK-IN:** CB. **CONTACT:** Jerry Sears, WB4JGZ, 312 Auburndale St., Winston-Salem NC 27104. 910-765-4302.

## MAY 19-20-21

**NY - ROCHESTER** — 61st Annual Hamfest & Computer Show. Combined with the Atlantic Division/New York State ARRL Convention. **LOCATION:** Monroe County Fairgrounds, Rt. 15A & Calkins Rd. **ADMISSION:** \$6, adv., \$8 door. **FEATURES:** B - C - CB - FM - H. **DEALER INFO:** Flea market - 10 x 20 tailgate space \$10. **CONTACT:** Rochester Hamfest, 716-424-7184.

## MAY 20

**KY - PADUCAH** — Dukefest ARRL Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Paducah ARA. **LOCATION:** Cherry Convention Center. **HOURS:** 8am-7. **ADMISSION:** \$5. **TALK-IN:** 147.060. **FEATURES:** EX - F - FM - F/R. **DEALER INFO:** 8' tables, \$5. **CONTACT:** David Fraser, KQ4IU, 5715 Blandville Rd., Paducah KY 42001. 502-554-7999.

**NJ - BELVIDERE** — ARRL Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Cherryville Repeater Assn. **LOCATION:** Marty Grozinski, NS2K, 6 Kirkbridge Rd., Flemington NJ 08822. 908-806-6944.

**NJ - PHILLIPSBURG** — Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Cherryville Repeater Assn. **LOCATION:** Warren County Farmers Fairgrounds. **HOURS:** 8am-2pm. **ADMISSION:** \$6, under 12 free. **TALK-IN:** 147.375 & 600 @ 6am. **FEATURES:** C - CB - DP - E - EX - F - FM - FP - H - T. **DEALER INFO:** Indoor tables \$15, electric \$5 extra, tailgate spaces \$10. Set-up 6am. **CONTACT:** Keith Burt, KF5KF, 908-788-4080, before 10pm, 908-526-4958/FAX.

**NJ - WILMINGTON** — Computer Show. **LOCATION:** Shriner's, N of Boston at I-93 Exit #39, right at bottom of ramp, follow signs. **HOURS:** 9:30am-4:30pm. **FEATURES:** C. **DEALER INFO:** 500+ tables. **CONTACT:** KGP Computer Show.\*

**PA - EPHRATA** — Lancaster County Hamfest & Computer. **SPONSOR:** Ephrata Area Repeater Society. **LOCATION:** Ephrata Senior High School, 803 Oak Blvd. **HOURS:** 8am-7. **ADMISSION:** \$4, children free. **TALK-IN:** 145.450 444.650. **FEATURES:** EX - F/R. **DEALER INFO:** Inside 8' table \$6 + admission, tailgating (2 spaces) \$3 + admission, Electricity \$1 extra. **CONTACT:** EARS, 906 Clearview Ave., Ephrata PA 17522.

**PA - LEBANON** — Computer Show & Sale. **SPONSOR:** MarketPro. **LOCATION:** Lebanon Valley Expo Center. **HOURS:** 10am-4pm. **ADMISSION:** \$6. **FEATURES:** C - FP. **CONTACT:** MarketPro, POB 41044, Bethesda MD 20814. 301-530-2355.

**RI - FORESTDALE** — Flea Market & Auction. **SPONSOR:** Rhode Island FM Repe. **LOCATION:** VFW Hall, Rt. 146. **HOURS:** 8am-7. **CONTACT:** Rick KIKYI, 401-725-7595.

**VA - ROANOKE** — Mayfest '95. **SPONSOR:** Roanoke Valley ARC. **LOCATION:** Roanoke Civic Center. **HOURS:** 9am-4pm. **ADMISSION:** \$5 adv., \$6 door. **TALK-IN:** 146.985 (-600) 442.50+. **FEATURES:** EX - F. **DEALER INFO:** Commercial, 8' table \$20; Inside flea market 8' table \$10 + admission; Tailgate space \$5 + admission/Electric hookup \$15. Set-up 6am. Doug Moore, K4WVS, 703-343-6794(h), 703-342-8513(w), 703-342-1250(f). **CONTACT:** RVARC, PO Box 2002, Roanoke, VA 24009.

## MAY 20-21

**AL - BIRMINGHAM** — ARRL Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Birmingham ARC. **CONTACT:** Bill Levey, WA4FAT, 2953 Donita Dr., Birmingham AL 35243. 205-967-6122.

**NJ - PHILLIPSBURG** — PC Dealer Showcase. **SPONSOR:** StarWare. **LOCATION:** Phillipsburg Mall, Rt. 22. **HOURS:** Sat: 10am-9:30pm, Sun: 11am-5pm. **ADMISSION:** Free. **FEATURES:** AC - C - FP. **DEALER INFO:** Tables \$95 ea. per day. **CONTACT:** StarWare, 610-584-8770.

## MAY 21

**MA - CAMBRIDGE** — Tailgate Electronics, Computer & Amateur Radio Flea Market. **SPONSOR:** MIT Radio Society and Harvard Wireless Club. **LOCATION:** Albany & Main Sts. **HOURS:** 9am-2pm rain or shine. **ADMISSION:** \$2. **TALK-IN:** 146.52, 449.725/444.725 - pl 2A - W1XMR. **FEATURES:** C

- FP - H - T. **DEALER INFO:** Tailgate room for 600 sellers. \$10 per space at gate, \$8 adv. Includes 1 admission. Setup 7am. For info call 617-253-3776. Mail advance reservations before the 5th. **CONTACT:** WIGSL, POB 397082 MIT BR., Cambridge MA 02139.

**NH - PORTSMOUTH** — Computer Shows & Sales. **SPONSOR:** Northern Computer Shows. **LOCATION:** Frank Jones Center, Exit 5 off I-95 to Rt. 1 Bypass South. **HOURS:** 10am-3:30pm. **ADMISSION:** \$7, under 14 free w/adult. **FEATURES:** C. **DEALER INFO:** Setup 8am. **CONTACT:** Northern Computer Shows.\*

**NY - WOODBURY** — Hamfair. **SPONSOR:** Long Island Mobile ARC. **LOCATION:** Briarcliffe College, 250 Crossways Park Dr. **HOURS:** 9am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** \$6. **YL's & children free. TALK-IN:** 146.25. **FEATURES:** C - CB - DP - EX - FP - F/R - H. **DEALER INFO:** Space \$15 @ door, no advance. **CONTACT:** Neil Hartman, WE2V, 516-462-5549. Mark Nadel, NK2T, 516-796-2366.

## MAY 26-27

**MS - PASCAGOULA** — Hamfest '95. **SPONSOR:** Jackson County ARC. **LOCATION:** Jackson County Fairgrounds. **HOURS:** Fri, 6-9, Sat, 8-3. **ADMISSION:** \$2, under 12 free. **TALK-IN:** 144.51/145.11. **FEATURES:** DP - EX - F - RV-S - T. **DEALER INFO:** Winston Dunn K15ZH, 601-762-8070. **CONTACT:** Charles "Kim" Kimmerly, N5XGI, 601-826-5811.

## MAY 27

**CT - VERNON** — Harford Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Natchaug ARC. **LOCATION:** Tolland Agricultural Center. **CONTACT:** Wayne, 203-487-1921.

**FL - FORT LAUDERDALE** — Narisaam Computer Show. **SPONSOR:** Narisaam, Inc. **LOCATION:** Holiday Inn West, 5100 N State Rd. 7. **HOURS:** 9:30am-3:30pm. **ADMISSION:** \$5, \$4 w/ad, under 12 free. **FEATURES:** AC - C - FP. **CONTACT:** Narisaam.\*

**NC - DURHAM** — 21st Annual DUR-Ham-Fest. **SPONSOR:** Durham FM Assn. **LOCATION:** South Square Mall, at the front of the mall on Business 15/501. **HOURS:** 8am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** \$4 adv., \$5 door. **TALK-IN:** 147.225(up), Hillsborough, 145.45(dn). **DEALER INFO:** Tables, adv. \$10, door \$12. Tailgaters \$5 + admission. **CONTACT:** Rodney Draughton, KD4KMI, Rt. 4 Box 205, Rougemont, NC 27572. 910-364-7420.

## MAY 27-28

**MD - GAITHERSBURG** — Computer Show & Sale. **SPONSOR:** MarketPro. **LOCATION:** Montgomery County Fairgrounds. **HOURS:** 9:30am-4:30pm. **ADMISSION:** \$6. **FEATURES:** C - FP. **CONTACT:** MarketPro, POB 41044, Bethesda MD 20814. 301-530-2355.

**PA - KING OF PRUSSIA** — Computer Show & Sale. **SPONSOR:** MarketPro. **LOCATION:** Valley Forge Convention Center. **HOURS:** 9:30am-4:30pm. **ADMISSION:** \$6.50. **FEATURES:** C - FP. **CONTACT:** MarketPro, POB 41044, Bethesda MD 20814. 301-530-2355.

## MAY 28

**FL - WEST PALM BEACH** — Narisaam Computer Show. **SPONSOR:** Narisaam, Inc. **LOCATION:** Palm Beach Airport Hilton, 150 Australian Ave. **HOURS:** 10am-4pm. **ADMISSION:** \$5, \$4 w/ad, under 12 free. **FEATURES:** AC - C - FP. **CONTACT:** Narisaam.\*

**MD - WEST FRIENDSHIP** — Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Maryland FM Assoc. **LOCATION:** Howard County Fairgrounds, Rt. 144. **HOURS:** 8am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** \$5 donation. **TALK-IN:** 146.16/76, 223.16/76 & 449.00/4.00. **FEATURES:** CB - FM - FP - F/R. **DEALER INFO:** Tables: \$15 adv., \$20 door. **CONTACT:** Melvin Seyle WA3KZR, 15809 Pointer Ridge Dr., Bowie MD 20716. 301-249-6147.

**NY - POUGHKEEPSIE** — Mt. Beacon Hamfest. **LOCATION:** Arlington Senior High School, North Campus. **HOURS:** 8am-1pm. **ADMISSION:** \$5, spouses & kids. **TALK-IN:** 146.97MHz(-). **FEATURES:** C - E - EX - FM - FP - H - T. **DEALER INFO:** Tailgating or OWN indoor table, \$6 (includes 1 free admission). Tables, adv. \$8, Door \$10 (1 free admission, 1 table). **CONTACT:** Ken Akasofu, KL7JCO, 316 Titusville Rd. #4, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603-2944. 914-485-9617.

## JUNE 3

**MD - HAVRE DE GRACE** — Computer Show & Sale. **SPONSOR:** GOOD Shows. **LOCATION:** Havre de Grace Community Center. **HOURS:** 9am-4pm. **ADMISSION:** \$4, under 12 free w/adult. **FEATURES:** C - DP - E. **CONTACT:** GOOD Shows, 2106 Hampshire Dr. 1/2, Fallston MD 21047. 410-893-0093.

**NC - WILMINGTON** — 3rd Annual 1995 Seafest. **SPONSOR:** Azalea Coast ARC. **LOCATION:** Trask Coliseum at UNCW. **HOURS:** 9am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** \$5 adv., \$6 door. **TALK-IN:** 147.180. **FEATURES:** AC - CB - DP - EX - FM - FP - F/R. **DEALER INFO:** Tables \$10 + admission, electric hook-ups \$5. **CONTACT:** ACARC, PO Box 4044, Wilmington

NC 28406. 910-686-4325, nights.

**NH - MANCHESTER** — Computer Shows & Sales. **SPONSOR:** Northern Computer Shows. **LOCATION:** Expo Complex at Holiday Inn, Center of NH, I-293 Exit 5 or 6. **HOURS:** 10am-3:30pm. **ADMISSION:** \$7, under 14 free w/adult. **FEATURES:** C. **DEALER INFO:** Setup 8am. **CONTACT:** Northern Computer Shows.\*

**NY - ROME** — ARRL Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Rome Radio Club. **CONTACT:** Russell Schorer, KB2MAS, POB 327, Clark Mills NY 13321. 315-853-8739.

**OH - DAYTON** — Computer Show & Sale. **SPONSOR:** MarketPro. **LOCATION:** Montgomery County Fairgrounds. **HOURS:** 10am-4pm. **ADMISSION:** \$6. **FEATURES:** C - FP. **CONTACT:** MarketPro, POB 41044, Bethesda MD 20814. 301-530-2355.

**PA - FORT WASHINGTON** — Computer Show. **LOCATION:** Expo Center, near Philadelphia, PA Turnpike Exit #26, 1/2 mi. to light, turn right & follow signs. **HOURS:** 10am-3pm. **FEATURES:** C. **DEALER INFO:** 500+ tables. **CONTACT:** KGP Computer Show.\*

**VA - ANNANDALE** — Computer Show & Sale. **SPONSOR:** MarketPro. **LOCATION:** Northern Virginia Community College. **HOURS:** 10am-4pm. **ADMISSION:** \$6. **FEATURES:** C - FP. **CONTACT:** MarketPro, POB 41044, Bethesda MD 20814. 301-530-2355.

## JUNE 4

**CT - NEWINGTON** — Amateur Radio & Electronics Flea Market. **SPONSOR:** Newington ARL. **LOCATION:** Newington High School, Willard Ave, Rt. 173. **HOURS:** 9am-1pm. **ADMISSION:** \$4. **TALK-IN:** 145.45, 146.52 Simplex. **FEATURES:** CB - E - EX - H - T. **DEALER INFO:** Tables: \$15, adv., \$20 door. **CONTACT:** Fred Jarvis, N1KWJ c/o NARL, 34 Meadow St., Newington CT 06111.

**MD - BOWIE** — Computer Show & Sale. **SPONSOR:** MarketPro. **LOCATION:** Bowie State College. **HOURS:** 10am-4pm. **ADMISSION:** \$6. **FEATURES:** C - FP. **CONTACT:** MarketPro, POB 41044, Bethesda MD 20814. 301-530-2355.

**NH - CONTOOCCOOK** — Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Contoocook Valley ARC. **ADMISSION:** \$2. **DEALER INFO:** Sellers \$6. **CONTACT:** John, N1FOJ, 603-746-4817.

**OH - COLUMBUS** — Computer Show & Sale. **SPONSOR:** MarketPro. **LOCATION:** Ohio State Fairgrounds, Expositions Center. **HOURS:** 10am-4pm. **ADMISSION:** \$6. **FEATURES:** C - FP. **CONTACT:** MarketPro, POB 41044, Bethesda MD 20814. 301-530-2355.

**PA - BUTLER** — 41st Breezeshooters' Hamfest. **LOCATION:** Butler Farm Showgrounds. **HOURS:** 8am-4pm. **ADMISSION:** \$1, under 12 free. **TALK-IN:** 147.96/36. **FEATURES:** CB - F - F/R - H - T. **DEALER INFO:** Tailgating space \$1. Dealer tables \$15. **CONTACT:** Breezeshooters' Hotline, 412-828-3694.

**PA - TAMAQUA** — ARRL Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Tamaqua Area Side Band ARA & Anthracite Rptr. Assoc. **CONTACT:** Allen R. Breiner, W3TI, 212 Race St., Tamaqua PA 18252. 717-668-3098.

**VA - MANASSAS** — Hamfest & Computer Show. **SPONSOR:** Ole Virginia Hams. **LOCATION:** Prince William County Fairgrounds, 166 West to Rt. 234, South on Rt. 234. **HOURS:** 8am-4pm. **ADMISSION:** \$5. **TALK-IN:** 146.37/146.97 223.06/224.66. **FEATURES:** C - CB - DP - E - FM - FP - F/R - H - RV-S - T. **DEALER INFO:** Contact Joe, K4FTT, 703-257-9719. **CONTACT:** Mary Lou, KB4EP, 703-369-2877.

## JUNE 10

**CT - GOSHEN** — ARRL Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Southern Berkshire ARC. **CONTACT:** Sid Shore, K1SS, 205 Sharon Valley Rd., Sharon CT 06069. 203-364-0480.

**NC - WINSTON-SALEM** — Hamfest & Computer Fair. **SPONSOR:** Forsyth ARC. **LOCATION:** Dixie Classic Fairgrounds. **HOURS:** 8am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** \$6 adv., \$7 door. **TALK-IN:** 146.04/64. **FEATURES:** AC - C - CB - DP - E - EX - FM - FP - F/R - H - RV-H - S - T. **DEALER INFO:** Tailgate space \$3. Covered outdoor space, call. Indoor table w/chair \$10. **CONTACT:** Bill Patterson, K4DRGB, POB 11361, Winston-Salem NC 27116. 910-723-7788.

**NJ - EDISON** — Computer Show. **LOCATION:** Raritan Center Exposition Hall, NJ Tpke. Exit #10, right at toll, follow signs; near SI & NYC. **HOURS:** 9:30am-4:30pm. **FEATURES:** C. **DEALER INFO:** 1,000+ tables. **CONTACT:** KGP Computer Show.\*

## JUNE 11

**KY - COVINGTON** — Ham-O-Rama '95. **SPONSOR:** Northern Kentucky ARC. **LOCATION:** Erlanger Lions' Park. **HOURS:** 8am-7. **ADMISSION:** \$4 adv., \$5 door, under 13 free. **TALK-IN:** 147.255+. **FEATURES:** DP - F - F/R - H. **DEALER INFO:** Indoor table \$15, Flea market space \$2 (no table). Set-up 6am. **CONTACT:** KC4FET % NKARC, PO Box 1062, Covington KY 41012. 606-341-



# EVENTS CALENDAR

1213, FAX 606-384-4002.

**NY - LANCASTER** — 7th Annual Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Lancaster ARC. **LOCATION:** Darien Center Firehall. **HOURS:** 6am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** \$4 adv., \$5 door. **TALK-IN:** 147.255 + 600, 443.850 + 5MHz. **FEATURES:** DP - FM - F/R. **DEALER INFO:** Indoor tables \$10 first, \$5 add'l. **CONTACT:** Luke Calliano, N2GDU, 1105 Ransom Rd., Lancaster NY 14086. 716-683-8880.

**NY - QUEENS** — Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Hall of Science ARC. **LOCATION:** New York Hall of Science, parking lot, Flushing Meadows Park, 47-01 111th St., Queens. **HOURS:** 9am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** \$5, under 12 free. **TALK-IN:** 444.200, WB2ZZO Repeat, 146.52 Simplex. **FEATURES:** C - CB - DP - F/R - H. **DEALER INFO:** Space \$10, includes one admission. Set-up 7:30am. **CONTACT:** For further information call at night only: Charles Becker, WA2JUL, 516-694-3955. Arnie Schiffman, WB2YXB, 716-693-0172.

**PA - HANOVER** — Pleasant Hill Computer & Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Hanover Area Hamming Assn. **LOCATION:** Pleasant Hill Fire Co. Fairgrounds, 5 miles south of Hanover on Rt. 94. **HOURS:** 8am-7. **ADMISSION:** \$5, under 12 free. **TALK-IN:** 146.895. **FEATURES:** C - EX - F/R - H - T. **DEALER INFO:** Indoor Tables \$10 ea, Tailgate admission + \$3 per space. Set-up 6am. **CONTACT:** Roger Gibson, N3ICJ, POB 820, Hanover PA 17331. 410-239-8451.

**PA - WINFIELD** — Central Pennsylvania Ham & Computer Fest. **SPONSOR:** Susquehanna Valley ARC & Milton ARC. **LOCATION:** Union Township Fire Co. Carnival Grounds, US Rt. 15, 5 mi South of Lewisburg. **HOURS:** 8am-7. **ADMISSION:** \$4 door only, under 12 free. **TALK-IN:** 146.37/146.97, 147.78/147.18, 146.52. **TALK-IN:** C - DP - E - F/R - H - T. **DEALER INFO:** Tailgating \$1 space. **CONTACT:** David Welker, AA3BO, 717-286-0787. SVARC, PO Box 73, Hummels Wharf PA 17831-0073.

## JUNE 16-17

**GA - ALBANY** — ARRL Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Albany GA ARC. **CONTACT:** John Crosby, K4KA, 308 Residence Ave., Albany GA 31701. 912-883-7373.

## JUNE 17

**MA - MARLBOROUGH** — Computer Show. **LOCATION:** Royal Plaza Trade Center, near Boston Mass Pike to I-495 N, Exit #24-B, 1/2 mile on right on Rt. 20. **HOURS:** 10am-3pm. **FEATURES:** C. **DEALER INFO:** 500+ tables. **CONTACT:** KGP Computer Show.\*

**ME - HERMON** — ARRL Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Pine State ARC. **CONTACT:** Roger Dole, KATKS, RR 2, Box 730, Bangor ME 04401. 207-848-3846.

**NJ - DUNELLEN** — Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Raritan Valley Radio Club, Inc. **LOCATION:** Columbia Park, near intersection of Rt. 529 & 28. **HOURS:** 8am-2pm. **ADMISSION:** \$5. **TALK-IN:** 146.025/625, 146.520 Simplex. **FEATURES:** F/R. **DEALER INFO:** Spaces \$5 + admission. **CONTACT:** John Manna, WA2F, 908-722-9045. Bob Pearson WB2CVL, 908-846-2056 before 8pm.

**NY - CORTLAND** — 13th Annual Cortland Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Skyline ARC. **LOCATION:** Cortland County Fairgrounds, Exit 12 from Interstate 81, then South on 281 to Fisher Ave. **HOURS:** 7am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** \$4 adv., \$5 door, under 14 free. **TALK-IN:** 147.180 (+600). **FEATURES:** C - CB - DP - EX - FM - F/R - H. **DEALER INFO:** Tables \$10 ea, Flea Market tailgates \$2/space + admission. **CONTACT:** SARCH/Hamfest, PO Box 5241, Cortland NY 13045. 607-756-6550 eves.

**PA - LANCASTER** — Computer & Electronics Show & Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Red Rose Repeater Assn. **LOCATION:** Centerville Junior High School, 865 Centerville Rd. **HOURS:** 9am-2pm. **ADMISSION:** \$5 under 14 free. **TALK-IN:** 147.015 + 449.575. **FEATURES:** C - DP - E - FP - T. **DEALER INFO:** Indoor table, admission + \$10 ea; tailgate space, admission + \$5 ea. **CONTACT:** RRRRA, PO Box 8316, Lancaster PA 17604. Mark Walton, 717-560-2321. 717-560-2920 FAX.

**TN - NASHVILLE** — Hamfest Nashville. **SPONSOR:** Nashville ARC. **LOCATION:** Tennessee State Fairgrounds, Agriculture Bldg. **HOURS:** 8am-5pm. **ADMISSION:** \$5. **TALK-IN:** 145.47. **FEATURES:** AC - DP - H. **DEALER INFO:** Tables \$10 (vendor admission free). **CONTACT:** Murray Jones, K4ANH, 615-824-7216.

**VT - RUTLAND** — Vermont State Convention. **CONTACT:** Justin Barton, WA1ITZ, 3 Crab Apple Ridge, Randolph VT 05060-9709.

## JUNE 17-18

**PA - LANGHORNE** — PC Dealer Showcase. **SPONSOR:** StarWare. **LOCATION:** Oxford Valley Mall, Rt. 1. **HOURS:** Sat: 10am-9:30pm, Sun: Noon-5pm. **ADMISSION:** Free. **FEATURES:** AC - C - FP. **DEALER INFO:** Tables \$95 ea. per day. **CONTACT:** StarWare, 610-584-8770.

## JUNE 18

**MA - CAMBRIDGE** — Tailgate Electronics, Computer & Amateur Radio Flea Market. **SPONSOR:** MIT Radio Society and Harvard Wireless Club. **LOCATION:** Albany & Main Sts. **HOURS:** 9am-2pm rain or shine. **ADMISSION:** \$2. **TALK-IN:** 146.52, 449.725/444.725 - pl 2A - W1XMR. **FEATURES:** C - F - H - T. **DEALER INFO:** Tailgate room for 600 sellers, \$10 per space at gate, \$8 adv. includes 1 admission. Setup 7am. For info call 617-253-3776. Mail advance reservations before the 5th. **CONTACT:** WIGSL, POB 397082 MIT BR., Cambridge MA 02139.

**MA - TAUNTON** — Computer Shows & Sales. **SPONSOR:** Northern Computer Shows. **LOCATION:** Taunton Holiday Inn, Exit 9 off I-495, between Rt. 24 & I-95. **HOURS:** 10am-3:30pm. **ADMISSION:** \$7, under 14 free w/adult. **FEATURES:** C. **DEALER INFO:** Setup 8am. **CONTACT:** Northern Computer Shows.\*

**MD - WALKERSVILLE** — Annual Fathers Day Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Frederick ARC. **LOCATION:** Volunteer Fire Company Carnival Grounds, 4 miles north of Frederick, off Rt. 194. **HOURS:** 8am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** \$5. **TALK-IN:** 146.52 Simplex, 147.06 (+) repeater, 448.425 (-) repeater. **FEATURES:** C - CB - E - FM - F/R - H - T. **DEALER INFO:** Tailgating, \$5 per space. **CONTACT:** FARC, POB 1260, Frederick MD 21702. 301-695-2633 6393.

**NC - RALEIGH** — Computer Fair & Sale. **SPONSOR:** Tri-State Fairs. **LOCATION:** North Raleigh Hilton - 3415 Wake Forest Rd. Across the street from Raleigh Community Hospital. **HOURS:** 10am-3:30pm. **ADMISSION:** \$5, \$4 after 1pm, under 10 free. **FEATURES:** C - FP. **CONTACT:** Tri-State Fairs, 919-571-7764.

## JUNE 21-22-23

**MA - BOSTON** — Electronic Trade Show. **LOCATION:** Hynes Civic Center. **CONTACT:** 1-800-223-7126.

## JUNE 24

**NC - SPRUCE PINE** — Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Maryland ARC. **LOCATION:** Maryland Community College Campus, US 19E North of Spruce Pine. **HOURS:** 8am-7. **TALK-IN:** 147.375 +, 145.310. **FEATURES:** DP - EX - F/R - T. **DEALER INFO:** 12' tables \$10. **CONTACT:** Frank Stone, WA3KSN, 704-675-9083. David Biddix, KD4PXS, 704-765-7351/days, 704-765-4223/evenings.

## JUNE 24-25

**PA - HARRISBURG** — PC Dealer Showcase. **SPONSOR:** StarWare. **LOCATION:** Harrisburg East Mall, I-83 & Paxton St. **HOURS:** Sat: 10am-9:30pm, Sun: Noon-5pm. **ADMISSION:** Free. **FEATURES:** AC - C. **DEALER INFO:** Tables \$95 ea. per day. **CONTACT:** StarWare, 610-584-8770.

## JUNE 25

**ME - PORTLAND** — Computer Shows & Sales. **SPONSOR:** Northern Computer Shows. **LOCATION:** Verrillo's Conv. Ctr. at Howard Johnson Motor Lodge, I-95 (Maine Tpke.) Exit 8. **HOURS:** 10am-3:30pm. **ADMISSION:** \$7, under 14 free w/adult. **FEATURES:** C. **DEALER INFO:** Setup 8am. **CONTACT:** Northern Computer Shows.\*

## JULY 1

**NC - MOORE COUNTY** — Mid-Atlantic Star Party & Swap Meet. **LOCATION:** Boy Scout Camp Reeves, S of Robbins. **HOURS:** 8am-5pm. **ADMISSION:** \$10. **FEATURES:** C - CB - DP - E - FM - F/R - RV - S. **DEALER INFO:** One space free w/paid admission. **CONTACT:** E-Mail: starman@email.unc.edu. Voice Mail: 919-362-5194 or send SASE to: MASP, Occaneechee Council BSA, POB 41229, Raleigh NC 27629.

## JULY 2

**PA - LEHMAN** — 16th Annual Wilkes-Barre Hamfest & Computer Fest. **SPONSOR:** Murgas ARC. **LOCATION:** Luzerne County Fairgrounds, Rt. 118. **HOURS:** 8am-7. **ADMISSION:** \$3 adv., \$4 door, XYL & under 16 free. **TALK-IN:** 146.52 146.61. **FEATURES:** C - CB - DP - E - EX - FM - F/R - H. **DEALER INFO:** Inside table \$12, 8' outside space, 1 free with admission, add'l space \$5. **CONTACT:** KA3A: 717-824-5724, days; 717-825-3940, eves.

## JULY 4

**PA - HARRISBURG** — 23rd Annual Firecracker Hamfest & Computer Show. **SPONSOR:** Harrisburg ARC. **LOCATION:** Bressler Picnic Ground. **HOURS:** 8am-7. **ADMISSION:** \$4 XYL, YL & Kids free. **TALK-IN:** 146.16/76MHz 146.52MHz Simplex. **FEATURES:** DP - F/R. **DEALER INFO:** Tables w/electricity, Adv. \$12, Door \$15, Tailgate Space \$5. Set-up 6am. **CONTACT:** 717-232-6087.

## JULY 8

**NC - SALISBURY** — The Firecracker Hamfest.

**SPONSOR:** North Carolina Alligators Group. **LOCATION:** Civic Center. **LOCATION:** Civic Center. **HOURS:** 8am-7. **ADMISSION:** \$3 adv., \$4 door, XYL's free. **TALK-IN:** 146.625. **FEATURES:** AC - EX - FM - F/R - H. **DEALER INFO:** Inside flea market tables \$5 + admission, set-up 9pm Fri. 7/7, or 7am Sat. 7/8. **CONTACT:** Walter "Alligator" Bastow, 3045 High Rock Rd., Gold Hill NC 28071.

## JULY 8-9

**IN - INDIANAPOLIS** — Convention. **SPONSOR:** Central Division Convention. **CONTACT:** Jim Rinehart, WB9CEP, 1455 N Shannon Ave., Indianapolis IN 46201. 317-356-1908.

## JULY 9

**MD - BALTIMORE** — Hamfest & Computer Fest. **SPONSOR:** Baltimore Radio Amateur Television Society. **LOCATION:** Timonium Fairgrounds, York Rd off I-695, I-83. **ADMISSION:** Under 12 free. **TALK-IN:** 147.03 + 224.96(-). **FEATURES:** AC - C - DP - EX - FM - F/R - T. **CONTACT:** BRATS, PO Box 5915, Baltimore MD 21208. 410-467-4634.

**NY - ALEXANDER** — Batavia Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Genesee Radio Amateurs. **LOCATION:** Alexander Fireman's Grounds, 8mi south of Village of Alexander on Rt. 98. **ADMISSION:** \$3 adv., \$5 door, under 12 free. **FEATURES:** FM - F/R. **DEALER INFO:** 8' table \$15, flea market space \$1, \$2 under cover. Dealer contact: Deb Johnson 716-757-9213. **CONTACT:** Knute Carlson, 26 Burke Dr., Batavia NY 14020. 716-343-5580.

## JULY 15

**ME - CLINTON** — ARRL Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Maine Council of AR Clubs. **CONTACT:** Robin Walls, N1NFK, 34 Tufton St., Brunswick ME 04011. 207-442-9405.

**NC - CARY** — 23rd Annual Mid-Summer Swapfest. **SPONSOR:** Cary ARC. **LOCATION:** Cary Community Center. **HOURS:** 8am-7. **ADMISSION:** \$4 adv., \$5 door. **TALK-IN:** 147.75/15. **FEATURES:** DP. **DEALER INFO:** 6' tables, \$10 each. **CONTACT:** CARC, PO Box 53, Cary NC 27512.

## JULY 15-16

**GA - ATLANTA** — 1995 Atlanta Hamfestival. **LOCATION:** Cobb Galleria Center, US Hwy 41. **HOURS:** Sat. 9-4, Sun. 9-3. **ADMISSION:** \$6 adv., \$8 door. **TALK-IN:** 2 meters at 146.82. **FEATURES:** C - CB - DP - E - EX - F - FM - H - T. **DEALER INFO:** 8' Flea Market table \$25, Tailgate spot \$10. **CONTACT:** Atlanta Hamfestival, PO Box 80947, Atlanta, GA 30366.

**GA - PERRY** — Southeast Computer & Camera Fair. **LOCATION:** Georgia National Fairgrounds, Heritage Hall, 401 Larry Walker Pkwy, I-75 Exit 42. **HOURS:** 10am-4pm. **ADMISSION:** Adults \$3, Seniors \$2.50, Age 6-12 \$1, under 6 free. Immediate family \$7. **FEATURES:** AC - C - CB - FM - FP - F/R - RV-S. **DEALER INFO:** 8' table \$40. **CONTACT:** Southeast Model Train & Toy Shows, PO Box 360033, Decatur GA 30036. 404-987-2773.

## JULY 16

**MA - CAMBRIDGE** — Tailgate Electronics, Computer & Amateur Radio Flea Market. **SPONSOR:** MIT Radio Society and Harvard Wireless Club. **LOCATION:** Albany & Main Sts. **HOURS:** 9am-2pm rain or shine. **ADMISSION:** \$2. **TALK-IN:** 146.52, 449.725/444.725 - pl 2A - W1XMR. **FEATURES:** C - F - H - T. **DEALER INFO:** Tailgate room for 600 sellers, \$10 per space at gate, \$8 adv. includes 1 admission. Setup 7am. For info call 617-253-3776. Mail advance reservations before the 5th. **CONTACT:** WIGSL, POB 397082 MIT BR., Cambridge MA 02139.

## JULY 22

**NH - NASHUA** — Flea Market. **SPONSOR:** New England Antique Radio Club Resurrection Center Church. **ADMISSION:** \$5 at 8am; \$1 at 9am. **CONTACT:** 617-923-2665.

## JULY 23

**MD - BRUNSWICK** — Sweatfest '95. **SPONSOR:** Mid Atlantic DX & Repeater Assn. **LOCATION:** Brunswick Train Museum. The MARC Train Station. **ADMISSION:** \$5. **TALK-IN:** 147.060 448.125MHz repeaters. **FEATURES:** CB - EX - FM - F/R - S. **DEALER INFO:** Indoor Space \$20, Covered Flea Market \$10, Flea market \$5. **CONTACT:** MADRA Sweatfest '95, 230 N. Potomac St. #28, Hagerstown MD 21740. Voice BBS 301-416-8447 Box 109.

**PA - INDIANA** — 3rd Annual Hamfest & Computer Fair. **SPONSOR:** Indiana County ARC. **LOCATION:** Red Barn Sportman Club. **HOURS:** 8am-7. **ADMISSION:** \$2, under 12 free. **TALK-IN:** 146.91. **FEATURES:** C - DP - H - T. **DEALER INFO:** Inside tables \$15, 2 for \$25, 5 for \$50; Outdoor tables \$10, 3 for \$25 under a pavilion; Tailgate \$5/space. **CONTACT:** Tim Ringle, WA3W, 412-349-8847. Gary Robinson, K3SIX, 412-459-8941.

## JULY 29

**FL - TAMPA** — 4th Annual "Last Minute" Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Univ. of South Florida Radio & Electronics Club. **LOCATION:** University of South Florida on Fletcher Ave between I-75 & I-275. **HOURS:** 9am-3pm. **ADMISSION:** \$3.75. **TALK-IN:** 147.240. **FEATURES:** AC - EX. **DEALER INFO:** Swap Tables \$10 + admission. Set-up, Fri. 6pm-9pm, Sat. at 8am. **CONTACT:** USF-REC Hamfest, CTR 2416, Tampa FL 33620.

**NC - HAYWOOD COUNTY** — 20th Annual Western Carolina Hamfest. **SPONSOR:** Western Carolina ARS. **LOCATION:** Haywood County Fairgrounds. **HOURS:** 8am-4pm. **ADMISSION:** \$4 adv., \$5 door. **TALK-IN:** 146.76 146.91. **FEATURES:** EX - F - H. **DEALER INFO:** 8' x 8' covered tailgate space \$5 + admission, tables \$8 per, uncovered tailgate space admission only. **CONTACT:** Tom Queen, 704-258-2639.

**NJ - PENNSAUKEN** — Computer Show. **LOCATION:** South Jersey Expo Center, off NJ Tpke. Exit #4 on Rt. 73. **HOURS:** 10am-3pm. **FEATURES:** C. **DEALER INFO:** 500+ tables. **CONTACT:** KGP Computer Show.\*

**PA - BERWICK** — Hamfest-Computerfest. **SPONSOR:** Columbia Montour ARC. **LOCATION:** Nesco- cock Township Firehall Grounds, 5.2 mi South of Berwick on Rt. 93. **HOURS:** 8am-7. **ADMISSION:** \$3 XYL & under 12 free. **TALK-IN:** 147.225 (+600), 146.52 Simplex. **FEATURES:** EX - F/R. **DEALER INFO:** Indoor table \$10 + admission, tailgating space \$1 + admission. Set-up 6am. **CONTACT:** Dave, WC3A, 717-752-6851.

## JULY 29-30

**NH - MANCHESTER** — Convention. **SPONSOR:** New England Division Convention. **CONTACT:** Alan Shuman, N1FIK, 297 Wear Rd., New Boston NH 03070. 603-487-3333.

# EVENTS CALENDAR Month at a Glance

## MAY 1995

### MAY 6

AL - Bessemer - Birmingham Area Computer Show  
AR - Russellville - ARRL Hamfest  
CA - Santa Barbara - Computer Marketplace  
CA - Santee - Ham Radio/Computer/Electronics Swapmeet  
IN - Indianapolis - AGI Computer Fair\*  
MD - Stevensville - Hamfest & Computer Flea Market  
MI - Taylor - Computers & You Computer Show  
NJ - Wayne - KGP Computer Show\*  
NY - Oswego - Southern Tier Hamfest  
OH - Akron - Electronics Fair  
PA - Elizabethtown - Computer Show/Hamfest  
SC - Greenville - Hamfest & Computer Flea Market  
TX - Amarillo - ARRL Hamfest  
VA - Manassas - MarketPro Computer Show\*

### MAY 6-7

PA - Allentown - MarketPro Computer Show\*  
PA - North Wales - PC Dealer Showcase  
TX - Abilene - ARRL West Texas Convention & Hamfest

### MAY 7

CA - Livermore - Swapmeet  
CA - Santa Rosa - MarketPro Computer Show\*  
IN - South Bend - Camera/Computer Swap Meet  
MA - Taunton - Northern Computer Show\*  
MI - Lansing - Computers & You Computer Show  
MN - Bemidji - Hamfest  
NY - Selden - Amateur Radio Auction  
NY - Yonkers - Giant Electronic Fleamarket  
OH - Cleveland - Computer Mania  
OH - Columbus - Computer Festival  
OH - Lisbon - 1995 Columbiana County Hamfest  
PA - Wrightstown - 21st Annual Hamfest '95  
VA - Annandale - MarketPro Computer Show\*

### MAY 12-13

IN - Kokomo - 24th Regional Radio Festival  
NE - South Sioux City - Iowa State Convention & Hamboore

### MAY 13

CA - Fontana - Amateur Radio & Electronic Swapmeet  
LA - Springhill - North LA/South AR Hamfest  
MD - Bowie - MarketPro Computer Show\*  
NH - Portsmouth - Northern Computer Show\*  
OH - Toledo - Computer Mania  
OH - Toledo - MarketPro Computer Show\*  
WI - Manitowoc - Lakeshore Hamfest & Swapfest

### MAY 13-14

CA - Pomona - Computer Marketplace  
CA - Sacramento - MarketPro Computer Show\*  
PA - Plymouth Meeting - PC Dealer Showcase

### MAY 14

CA - San Diego - MarketPro Computer Show\*  
IA - Marshalltown - Hamfest '95  
MD - Hagerstown - Hamfest/Computer Show  
MI - Dearborn - Computers & You Computer Show  
OH - Athens - 16th Annual Hamfest  
OH - Medina - Medina County Hamfest '95  
WV - Wheeling - 18th Annual Hamfest/Computer Show



# EVENTS CALENDAR

## MAY 19-20

VA - Emporia - Vintage Radio Trade/Show

## MAY 19-20-21

NY - Rochester - Hamfest/Computer Show/State Conv.  
SD - Hot Springs - Dakota Division Ham Radio Convention

## MAY 20

CA - Fresno - MarketPro Computer Show\*  
CA - Pomona - Radio & Electronics Swapmeet  
CA - Santee - Ham Radio, Computer & Electronic Swapmeet  
CO - Colorado Springs - Swapfest  
IN - Indianapolis - AGI Computer Fair\*  
KY - Paducah - Dukefest  
MA - Wilmington - KGP Computer Show\*  
MI - Westland - Great Lakes Computer Expo & Sale  
MO - Festus - Cave Fest '95  
MO - Kansas City - Missouri State Convention  
MS - Pascagoula - Ham Fest '95  
NJ - Belvidere - ARRL Hamfest  
NJ - Phillipsburg - Hamfest  
PA - Ephrata - Lancaster County Hamfest & Computers  
PA - Lebanon - MarketPro Computer Show\*  
RI - Forestdale - Flea Market & Auction  
TX - Arlington - Calculator/Antique Instrument Convention  
VA - Roanoke - Mayfest '95

## May 20-21

AL - Birmingham - ARRL Hamfest  
NJ - Phillipsburg - PC Dealer Showcase  
NM - Ruidoso - ARRL Hamfest  
OH - Cincinnati - Computer Fair  
WA - Yakima - ARRL Hamfest

## MAY 21

AZ - Phoenix - Computer & Electronics Swapmeet  
CA - San Rafael - MarketPro Computer Show\*  
CA - Stockton - MarketPro Computer Show\*  
IA - Burlington - ARRL Hamfest  
IL - Glen Ellyn - Computer Central Computer Show  
IL - Peotone - ARRL Hamfest  
IN - Wabash - 27th Annual WCARC Hamfest  
MA - Cambridge - MIT Fleamarket  
MI - Madison Heights - Computers & You Computer Show  
NH - Portsmouth - Northern Computer Show\*  
NY - Woodbury - Long Island Hamfair  
OH - Findlay - Computer Festival

## MAY 26-27

MS - Pascagoula - Ham Fest '95

## MAY 26-27-28

OK - Tulsa - Green Country Hamfest/Oklahoma State Conv.

## MAY 27

CT - Vernon - Hartford Hamfest  
FL - Ft. Lauderdale - Narsaam Computer Show\*  
MI - Troy - Computers & You Computer Show  
NC - Durham - 21st Annual DUR-HAM-FEST

## MAY 27-28

MD - Gaithersburg - MarketPro Computer Show\*  
PA - King of Prussia - MarketPro Computer Show\*  
WY - Casper - ARRL Hamfest

## MAY 28

FL - West Palm Beach - Narsaam Computer Show\*  
IL - Chicago - Hamfest  
IL - Orland Park - Orland Park Computer Show  
MD - West Friendship - Memorial Day Hamfest  
NY - Poughkeepsie - Mt. Beacon Hamfest  
OH - Youngstown - 10th Annual Hamfest & Computer Show

## JUNE 1995

### JUNE 2-3-4

OR - Seaside - SEAPAC Ham Convention

### JUNE 3

CA - Santee - Ham Radio, Computer & Electronic Swapmeet  
CO - Loveland - Superfest Swapmeet  
MD - Havre de Grace - Computer Show & Sale  
MI - Grand Rapids - 15th Annual Hamfestival  
NC - Wilmington - 3rd Annual 1995 Seafest  
NH - Manchester - Northern Computer Show\*  
NY - Rome - ARRL Hamfest  
OH - Dayton - MarketPro Computer Show  
PA - Ft. Washington - KGP Computer Show\*  
VA - Annandale - MarketPro Computer Show\*

### JUNE 3-4

CA - Pomona - Computer Marketplace

### JUNE 4

CA - Livermore - Swapmeet  
CT - Newington - Amateur Radio & Electronics Flea Market  
IL - Princeton - Hamfest & Computer Show  
IN - Evansville - Hamfest, Computer & Electronics Show  
KS - Salina - Hamfest  
MD - Bowie - MarketPro Computer Show\*  
MI - Chelsea - 18th Annual Swap & Shop  
NH - Contooscook - Hamfest  
OH - Columbus - MarketPro Computer Show\*  
OH - Dayton - PC Buyers Mart  
PA - Butler - 41st BreezeShooters' Hamfest  
PA - Tamaqua - ARRL Hamfest  
VA - Manassas - Hamfest & Computer Show

### JUNE 9-10-11

TX - Arlington - '95 West Gulf Div ARRL Convention

### JUNE 10

CA - Fontana - Amateur Radio & Electronic Swapmeet  
CT - Goshen - ARRL Hamfest  
IN - Indianapolis - AGI Computer Fair\*  
NC - Winston-Salem - Hamfest, Computer & Electronics Fair  
NJ - Edison - KGP Computer Show\*

### JUNE 11

IL - Orland Park - Orland Park Computer Show  
IL - Willow Springs - 18th Annual Hamfest  
KY - Covington - Ham-O-Rama '95  
MI - Dearborn - Computers & You Computer Show

NY - Lancaster - 7th Annual Hamfest

NY - Queens - Hamfest

PA - Hanover - Pleasant Hill Computer Show & Hamfest

PA - Winfield - Central Pennsylvania Ham & Computerfest

### JUNE 16-17

GA - Albany - Non-ARRL Hamfest  
MN - Maplewood - Electronics Fair '95

### JUNE 17

CA - Santee - Ham Radio, Computer & Electronic Swapmeet  
MA - Marlborough - KGP Computer Show\*  
ME - Hermon - ARRL Hamfest  
MI - Midland - 20th Annual Hamfest  
NJ - Dunellen - Hamfest  
NY - Cortland - 13th Annual Hamfest  
OH - Milford - Fifth Annual MARC Hamfest  
PA - Lancaster - Computer/Electronics Show & Hamfest  
TN - Nashville - Hamfest Nashville  
VT - Rutland - Vermont State Convention

### JUNE 17-18

PA - Langhorne - PC Dealer Showcase

### JUNE 18

IN - Crown Point - Dad's Day Hamfest  
MA - Cambridge - MIT Flea Market  
MA - Taunton - Northern Computer Show\*  
MD - Walkersville - Annual Father's Day Hamfest  
MI - Madison Heights - Computers & You Computer Show  
MI - Monroe - Hamfest  
NC - Raleigh - Computer Fair & Sale  
OH - Macedonia - Hamfest & Computer Show

### JUNE 21-22-23

MA - Boston - Electronic Trade Show

### JUNE 24

MI - Livonia - Computers & You Computer Show  
MI - Westland - Great Lakes Computer Expo & Sale  
NC - Spruce Pine - Hamfest

### JUNE 24-25

PA - Harrisburg - PC Dealer Showcase

### JUNE 25

IL - Glen Ellyn - Computer Central  
ME - Portland - Northern Computer Show\*  
MI - Ann Arbor - Colossal Computer Sale  
MI - Waterford - Computers & You Computer Show

## JULY 1995

### JULY 1

CA - Santee - Ham Radio, Computer & Electronic Swapmeet  
MI - Troy - Computers & You Computer Show  
NC - Moore County - Mid-Atlantic Star Party & Swap Meet

### JULY 2

CA - Livermore - Swapmeet  
PA - Lehman - 16th Annual Hamfest & Computerfest

### JULY 4

PA - Harrisburg - Fire Cracker Hamfest/Computer Show

### JULY 8

CA - Fontana - Amateur Radio & Electronic Swapmeet  
NC - Salisbury - The Firecracker Hamfest  
WI - Oak Creek - 26th Annual Swapfest

### JULY 8-9

IN - Indianapolis - Central Division Convention

### JULY 9

MD - Baltimore - Hamfest & Computer Fest  
NY - Alexander - 1995 Batavia Hamfest

### JULY 14-15-16

ID - Boise - Convention 1995  
MT - East Glacier - Montana State Convention & Hamfest

### JULY 15

CA - Santee - Ham Radio, Computer & Electronic Swapmeet  
IN - Indianapolis - AGI Computer Fair\*  
ME - Clinton - ARRL Hamfest  
NC - Cary - 23rd Annual Mid-Summer Swapfest

### JULY 15-16

GA - Atlanta - 1995 Atlanta Hamfestival  
GA - Perry - Southwest Computer & Camera Fair

### JULY 16

AZ - Phoenix - Computer & Electronic Swapmeet  
IL - Orland Park - Orland Park Computer Show  
MA - Cambridge - MIT Fleamarket  
OH - Van Wert - Hamfest '95

### JULY 22

NH - Nashua - Flea Market

### JULY 23

IL - Sugar Grove - ARRL Hamfest  
MD - Brunswick - Sweatfest '95  
PA - Indiana - 3rd Annual Hamfest & Computer Fair

### JULY 28-29

OK - Oklahoma City - Ham Holidays '95

### JULY 29

FL - Tampa - 4th Annual "Last Minute" Hamfest  
MI - Westland - Great Lakes Computer Expo & Sale  
NC - Haywood County - 20th Western Carolina Hamfest  
NJ - Pennsauken - KGP Computer Show\*  
OH - Xenia - Hamfest & Computer Expo  
PA - Berwick - Hamfest - Computerfest  
TX - Texas City - ARRL Hamfest

### JULY 29-30

NH - Manchester - New England Division Convention

### JULY 30

IL - Glen Ellyn - Computer Central  
IL - Stickney - ARRL Hamfest  
MI - Port Huron - ARRL Hamfest

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# 500 miles from nowhere, it'll give you a cold drink or a warm burger...

*This NASA-inspired portable fridge outperforms conventional fridges, replaces the ice chest, and alternates as a food warmer!*

by Brad P. Richardson



Recognize the ice cooler in this picture? Surprisingly enough, there isn't one. What you see is a Koolatron, an invention that replaces the traditional

ice cooler, and its many limitations, with a technology even more sophisticated than your home fridge and far better suited to travel. What's more, Koolatron is not just a refrigerator—it's also a food warmer!

**NASA-inspired portable refrigerator.** Because of the tough demands of space travel, scientists had to find something more dependable and less bulky than traditional refrigeration coils and compressors. Finally, research led them to discover a miraculous solid-state component—the thermoelectric module.

Besides a small fan, Koolatron has no moving parts to wear out or break down. And it's not affected by tilting, jarring or vibration, which often cause home fridges to fail. The governing module, no bigger than a matchbook, delivers the cooling power of a full 10-pound block of ice.

**From satellites to station wagons.** Thermoelectric temperature control has been proven with over 25 years of use in the most rigorous space and laboratory applications. Koolatron is the first manufacturer to make this technology available to families, fishermen, boaters, campers and hunters—to anyone on the move.

Home refrigeration has come a long way since the ice box and blocks of ice. But when we travel, we go back to messy ice coolers and soggy, even spoiled food. Now for the price of a good cooler and one or two seasons of buying ice, (about five family restaurant meals) all the advantages of home cooling are available for travel—electronically!

**Consider your last trip.** You finally got away on your vacation, and are cruising comfortably in the car along a busy interstate with only a few rest stops or restaurants.

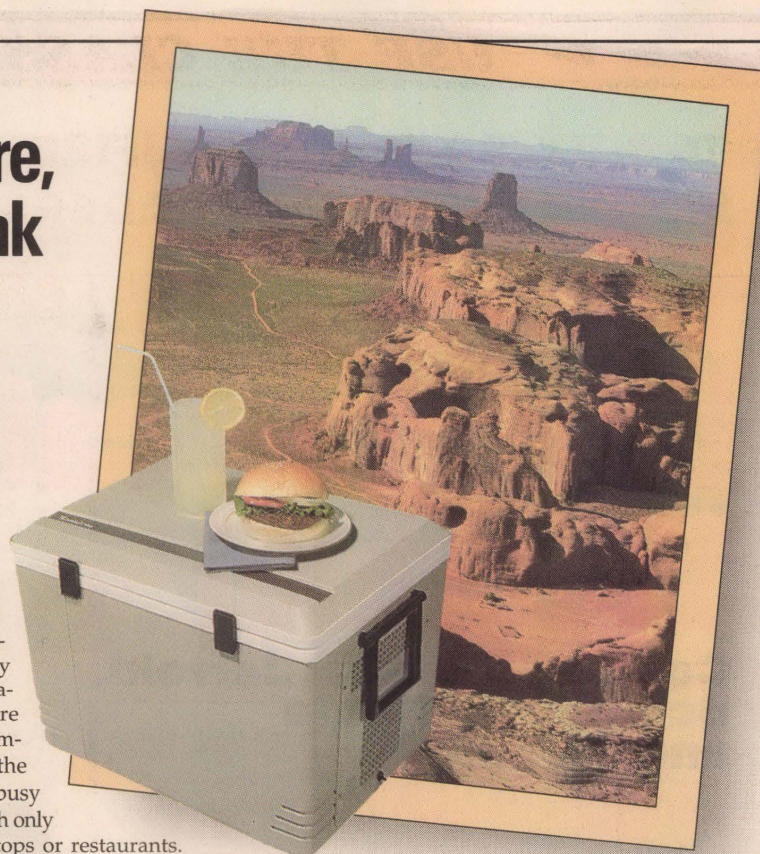
The kids are hungry. But your Koolatron is stocked with fruit, sandwiches, drinks and fried chicken—all fresh and cold. Everybody helps themselves. You have saved valuable vacation time and avoided another expensive restaurant bill.

**Hot or cold.** With the switch of a plug, Koolatron becomes a food warmer for casseroles, burgers—even a baby's bottle. It heats up to 125 degrees. And because there are no

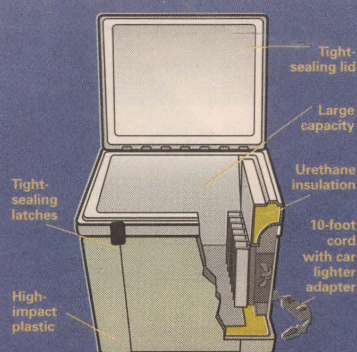
temperamental compressors or gases, it works perfectly under all circumstances—even when upside down. Empty, the large model weighs only 12 pounds. And the smaller one weighs just seven. Full, the large model holds up to 40 12-ounce cans, and the smaller one holds six.

**Just load it up and plug it in.** On motor trips, plug Koolatron into your car's cigarette lighter. It uses less power than a tail-light. If you decide to carry it to a picnic spot or a fishing hole, the Koolatron will hold its cooling capacity for up to 24 hours. If you leave it plugged into your battery with the engine off, it will consume only three amps of power.

**Factory-direct offer.** Because Comtrad is bringing this offer to you directly, you can save the cost of middlemen and retail mark-ups. For a limited time only, you can get Koolatron's advanced technology at the special



## The refrigerator from outer space



**T**he secret of the Koolatron cooler/warmer is a mini thermoelectric module that effectively replaces the bulky piping coils, loud motors and temperamental compressors used in conventional refrigeration. In the cool mode, the Koolatron reduces the outside temperature by 40° F. With the switch of a plug, it becomes a food warmer, going up to 125°.

introductory price of just \$99. Call today and take advantage of this promotional pricing!

**Try it risk free.** As with all of our products, Koolatron is backed by Comtrad's exclusive 30-day risk-free home trial. Try it! And if you're not completely satisfied, return Koolatron within 30 days for a full refund—"No Questions Asked." It is also backed by a full one-year manufacturer's limited warranty. Most orders are processed within 72 hours and shipped UPS.

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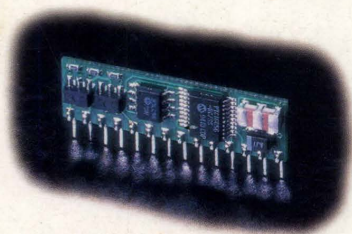


# BASIC STAMP MODULES!®

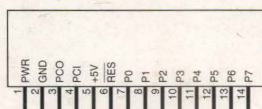
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BS1-IC



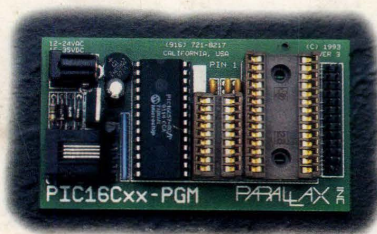
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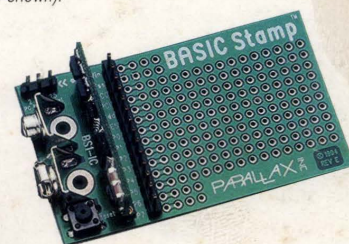
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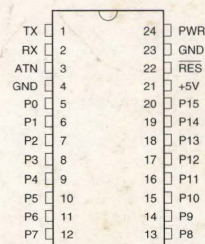
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