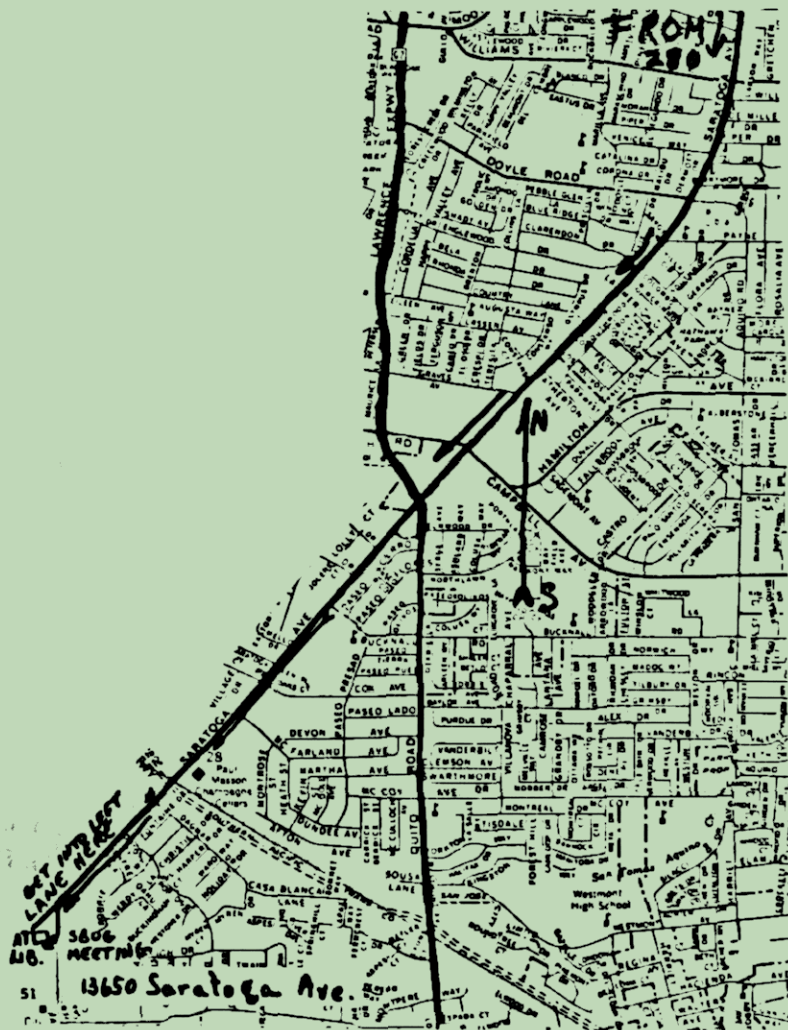




DYNAMIC MEMORIES

FEBRUARY

1987



SBUG STEERING COMMITTEE

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SBUG ALL (408) 249-8259

If the need arises feel free to give anyone of us a call.

THE EDITOR'S BYTES AND BITES

The eternal Apple has blossomed with new fruit. In case your mind is not as poetic as mine, Apple computers has a new Apple model on the market. It is selling well and is in short supply at dealers.

I have never placed a pinky on an Apple keyboard. That doesn't completely disqualify me from making certain judgements and comments on Apple vis-a-vis its competitors. For example: I made up an Apple system from the ads, using the least expensive items possible. This system would be equal to my XT, two floppies, HD, 640K, color monitor. It would cost me \$2500, a K more than mine cost me. There is nothing I know of, nothing mentioned in the literature that it will do that mine won't do.

The Apple has one thing going for it. All the competitors of its time are passe', Dundee. The Ayatollah Khomeini has been around for a long time, too. Apple has always cost more than its competitors, that is a good part of the reason I started with Radio Shack. Apple has been ruthless in its treatment of its users. With all its faults Radio Shack kept the faith with its users when it upgraded.

What is the moral of all this? I won't argue it. Apples have always made a lot of trouble in this weary world.

SOUTHBAY USERS' GROUP

SBUG Financial Statement
January 14, 1987

Receipts:	January	Y-T-Date	% Used	Budget
Members dues	100.00	100.00	10.00%	1000.00
SBUG BBS Dues	0.00	.00	.00%	120.00
Disk Library	6.00	6.00	5.00%	120.00
Load80	16.00	16.00	5.33%	300.00
Documentation	0.00	.00	.00%	20.00
Interest	0.00	.00	.00%	10.00

Total Receipts	122.00	122.00	7.77%	1570.00
Disbursements:				
Phone	0.00	.00	.00%	110.00
Utilities	0.00	.00	.00%	150.00
Printing	0.00	.00	.00%	650.00
Postage	0.00	.00	.00%	250.00
P O Box	0.00	.00	.00%	26.00
Bank charges	4.00	4.00	40.00%	10.00
Disk Library	10.00	10.00	20.00%	50.00
Documentation	0.00	.00	.00%	50.00
SBUG BBS	0.00	.00	.00%	100.00
Misc. Expenses	0.00	.00	.00%	25.00

Total Disbursements	14.00	14.00	.99%	1421.00
Beginning				
Cash Balance	314.31	314.31	100.00%	314.31
Net Receipts	108.00	108.00	72.48%	149.00
Ending Balance	422.31	422.31	91.15%	463.31

THE PERILS AND PLEASURES OF A HARD DISK

Just as the plunging prices of floppy drives made me and many others multiple drive owners, so the same phenomenon with respect to hard disks have made us hard disk owners. Adding floppy drives to my Model 4 gave me a total of 1.2 megabytes of storage space. All that space made me feel like an emperor and I worked very commodiously even though I never took all the advantage of it that I could have. I never, for example, fixed my NEWDOS so that it could access the extra drives which would have been an occasional time saver.

Adding the extra drives cost only the price of the drives themselves plus an occasional repair. No new techniques had to be learned unless one wished to be an efficient store-keeper in which case it was just a matter of planning to take best advantage of an existing, familiar technology.

The hard disk is quite another thing. Here there are new techniques to be learned and above all new decisions to be made as to backup methods as you will see shortly when this ancient hard disk mariner begins his sea story. First let us speak of the techniques of using the hard disk.

Speed and massive amounts of storage space is what a hard disk gives you. On the Model 4, when it accessed drive 3 for a word processor file, I usually had time to light a very soggy cigar, if I smoked soggy cigars. (Pass) The hard disk's delay is hardly appreciable in many cases. The minimum storage, 5 megabytes, looks like a lot to a floppy user, and the typical 20 Meg looks enormous.

All this is very fine, but there are some costs. A floppy user has learned early or late to backup, backup, backup. Backing up a hard disk gets a little complicated. There are several ways to backup a hard disk and I'll explore a couple of them here.

Of the commercial backup programs the most popular is Fastback which I have in my inventory. Fastback is very quick. When it is used on a frequent basis it backups only those programs which have had file changes since the last backup. Fastback, however, will only backup to your hard disk. If your hard disk goes down no information is available for you to work with on your floppies. Presumably you have copies of your application programs on floppies. Your data would be under Fastback in a form readable only on the hard disk. How do you work until your hard disk is functioning?

But wait!! there's more!! as they say on TV when they're trying to sell you a Ginzu knife. If your hard disk goes down you have to take processor and all, in for repair. I was backing my data up on floppies without Fastback and it can

be loaded back onto the floppies and used. Any short time emergency work can be done under this system, but if the processor has to go into the shop you're short a computer anyway.

Working with 4 floppies if one goes down, the handicap is minimal. The worst that can happen is to have drive 0 go down, and even a notech like myself can get around that with a little study. (And a little help from his compadres).

All this came to my attention because my system developed what is apparently a hard disk problem. At the shop I was told that the hard disk might have to be changed with the consequent loss of all the data on it. As I explained above I won't really lose any considerable amount of data. If I had worked with Fastback I would be able to load the new hard disk up as soon as I get the processor and hard disk back. As it is, I will have to reload all my application programs plus utilities plus data, one by one, a matter of several hours.

Off hand it would seem that the best way to work is with Fastback or a similar. There's another angle though. I am writing this with my Model 4 while Xavier Tarragon (XT) languishes. Any text files that I have copied to floppies can be moved over to the 4 via a utility such as TRSCROSS or SOFTRENDS' XPORT.

This really seems to be the solution for anyone who has constant and immediate need of a computer. A Model III can be obtained from Gerry McKee for a pittance. His pittance may not be your pittance, but I am sure you will ultimately come to an agreement. The two car family has long been established in our America. We must now usher in the two computer family. SBUG, always trendy, has been in the forefront because we have several of these modern families.

I have already moved database files from the 4 to the XT via XPORT. I see no reason why they shouldn't go the other way too. Spreadsheets? I think they can go back and forth too.

WHEN IS A COMPUTER USELESS?

This is just amongst us kids. Too many people would answer the above question with a resounding ALWAYS. First let us define who needs a computer in his home. Computer hobbyists are not included. They would have computers even if all they did was to count the dewdrops on the roses. People who are secretaries or treasurers of clubs including the Flat Earth Society are obvious candidates. Most collectors (unless they collect large items like Egyptian pyramids) need computers to collate, identify and classify their collections. If you make enough money to itemize when you file your income tax you will certainly need a computer, or should use one.

When is a computer useless? It's useless for most peo-

ple who don't fit into one of the above categories. One of the seemingly useful utilities is the tickler file. I don't keep my computer on all day nor do I necessarily boot up first thing in the morning. I tried using a tickler and went back to writing reminders on the loose leaf calendar just as I have done for years. I don't have to boot up the calendar, it uses no electricity and the screen doesn't wear out.

We have a family budget and our expenses are kept under the budget headings in a loose leaf notebook. For convenience I periodically write them to a computer program, TALLY, because it does the sums individually and globally. My wife checks these sums at the end of the month with a calculator. There are cries of glee when mistakes are encountered. How come no cries when no mistakes?

It is simply easier to keep the expenses in a notebook as they occur than to enter them in a computer program

WHITHER USERS' GROUPS (WITHER)?

Our group has dwindled from a mailing list of 200 to 45. In our case there were a number of peculiar circumstances (peculiar to us) that contributed to this decline. From all appearances the decline is national. We once corresponded, exchanged newsletters, with 8 other groups. We are down to one although we are about to add one in Australia. (See letter elsewhere in DYNAMIC MEMORIES.)

We were a machine specific (TRS-80 Model I) and then later a company specific (TANDY) group. Now less than 50% of the group are operating only TANDY machines. Of course the question that buck nakedly springs to mind is, WHY? A second question is, what is going on with the APPLE, MACINTOSH, ATARI, COMMODORE groups? Are they dwindling in membership also?

In the case of the TANDY groups in general, during the Model I epoch, they were fanatical TANDY patriots. There were some Model I haters around, some of whom I have talked to and one of whom I have read, Jerry Pournelle of BYTE. Overall the TANDY patriots had a good bit going for them. TANDY made some greivous mistakes that undoubtedly cost them the absolute lead in the microcomputer field. At the same time they built a good machine, gave good service (with some gaps) and priced their machines lower than most of their competitors.

I have met APPLE patriots too. Right now they have the last word. TANDY models 1 to 4 have almost disappeared while APPLE has just appeared with a new model which is selling so well that dealers have them in short supply.

Back to users' groups. The lack of continuity might have, almost certainly has effected groups like ours. We have lasted out a considerable loss of membership, we might be able

to see a light at the end of the tunnel if we could see the tunnel, but that doesn't answer the insurgent questions that arise. Now that we have gone (to a large extent) MSDOS, why are we not attracting the MSDOS people now coming on line?

Most of this goes to the question (always questions) of why users' groups in the first place? Friendship amongst people of a similar interest, the chance to exchange news and expertise, to get help with a problem---ah--h-h.

All of the above is true of philatelists, numismatists and golfers. You may add whatever clubs you wish to the list. No where in all of these groups is the need to exchange information so vital as it is in computers. In the Model I days there were some books, some bulletin boards, the store manager (ugh) but when you really needed help you got it from the users' group.

MSDOS users are less constrained, there is a vast amount of information available from a plethora of bulletin boards and publications. There is no one in computing who doesn't need help from time to time but certainly it is much, much more easily acquired at this moment by the MSDOS user.

That still doesn't tell us what goes on with the APPLE and etc. groups. I have no way of finding out, but I have a feeling that they have held together much better than the TANDY groups for 3 reasons.

The first reason is the continuity mentioned before. If you bought an APPLE in 1979 you could still be running that APPLE, greatly enhanced, or another, more powerful APPLE, but still an APPLE. The second reason is that APPLE has always encouraged and fomented users' groups. TANDY at one time actively discouraged them. Now they have turned about to a policy of encouragement, but it is more a stated policy than an on going activism.

The final and perhaps the most important reason is what I will call the small country syndrome. As a person who has traveled considerably and lived overseas I have noticed that two Americans who meet overseas don't make a big thing of it. As a friend of mine said, "Americans are like flyspecks, you find them everywhere." On the other hand, two Cubans, or two Greeks who meet in Rome or Paris or New York, embrace, shout with joy and repair to the nearest cafe to celebrate their meeting. It's simply human. When you belong to a small group it is cause for celebration to meet another of the group, the bonds are stronger.

In the Model I days there were not that many people into computers and the group was very small. Circle the wagons. Those of us who are using MSDOS are in the majority, the defensive twitch, the over the shoulder glance is no longer

necessary.

Someone said to me that our previous large membership had developed because they hoped to get free software. that they got it or didn't get it and disappeared into the shadows. I don't think that holds up. There are lots of new computerists. Are they more honest than those of four years ago? Why don't they come around for free software?

As your analytic mind has long since told you all of this is speculation and hypothesis. If you wish to write me and tell me how wrong I am, I will be happy to publish your views. In the meantime I believe there is a stirring, that if we put out a good newsletter, a good bulletin board and are helpful to the newcomers, we may once again have a strong club.

ODDITY OF THE DAY

In a letter to BYTE a subscriber requested a solution for a disk translation problem he had encountered. He specified "I don't want to have to go about this with any low level bit twiddler." I love that phrase.

Imagine an 18th century gentleman of full fashion with his floured hair and monocle, twirling his mustache, leaning indolently on his cane while he reaches for his rapier (they could do things like that in those days) saying to the villain, "You, sirrah, are a low level bit twiddler." Alas, the phrase arrived too late in history.

WE GO INTERNATIONAL

As mentioned elsewhere in this edition of DYNAMIC MEMORIES our correspondence with other clubs has declined to a total of one (1). Now through the aegis of NORTHERN BYTES' Jack Decker (who no longer corresponds with us) we have received a request for an exchange of newsletters from Australia. Of course we hastened to honor that request. I have sent a cover letter which is reproduced below. I trust that this letter represents the views of all of us.

SYDNEY TRS-80 USERS GROUP
P.O. BOX 297
PADSTOW 2211
AUSTRALIA

SBUG (SOUTH BAY USERS'S GROUP)
P.O. BOX 60116
SUNNYVALE
CA 94088
USA

Dear Companions in Computing

We received your letter suggesting an exchange of news-

letters with a great deal of pleasure. And perhaps surprise? We don't know a great deal about Australia here. The average American pictures the average Australian as a sturdy colonial busy defending his sheep in the outback from the onslaught of marauding kangaroos intent on destroying them (or perhaps mating with them, we don't know that much about either sheep or kangaroos.) Obviously this is a false impression, but then you shouldn't have sent Crocodile Dundee over here. I mean if we send you the head of the Genovese family to represent us what impression are you going to get?

We also publish a monthly newsletter (copy enclosed). We previously corresponded with eight other clubs, now we are down to one. We had to drop Northern Bytes as informative as it is, because Jack Decker had not replied to us for some months. In a word, computer clubs are withering on the vine here in the United States. We once had 200 members on our mailing list, we now have 45. I intend to do an analysis of the reasons for the disappearance of computer clubs in the February edition of our newsletter. Frankly, it will be more guess work than analysis, because the reasons are hard to come by.

Our group may perhaps be a microcosm. The majority have now acquired MSDOS machines. The last remaining Model I user has just converted. There are two Model III users and a half dozen Model 4 users. The plunging cost of clones and the attraction of the new (not necessarily better) technology has pulled us over. I am writing this letter with ELECTRIC PENCIL for MSDOS. My machine is a Taiwanese clone. 640K, two 360K floppies, a 20M hard disk, 2 parallel ports, 1 serial port and a color monitor. I bought it locally for \$1400. When I have had trouble with it I have taken it back to the company which usually returns it to me within 24 hours, once in 48 hours. The warranty is for one year.

I have the impression that Australian costs may be much higher. If that is so, then naturally the newer machines will take longer to penetrate the users' groups and the Models I, III, and 4 will linger. Many of us continue to use the older machines because, in part, of the delay in converting all the types of work and accumulated files to MSDOS. It is also true that the selling price of a used 4 or III is so low that they are hardly worth selling. They are best kept as backup machines.

Finally, a note of condolence. I am sorry to see you lose the America's cup. We are aware of how important it was to your national ego. Cheer up. Just think of France and Great Britain who cannot say as you can: We had it once.

Good Computing

Joel R. Lee Editor DYNAMIC MEMORIES

MAIL

R)eply K)ill E)nter N)ext P)revious
-)Read-Orig. +)Read-Reply Q)uit
[22] 1 - 24 R K E N P - + Q or ? for help: p
#21 32 05 Aug A2 00:05:35
From: Sid Gold
To: Synop
SEE ALSO #23
Subj: NEW USER

LEAVE INFORMATION ON BBS WOULD LIKE TO LEARN AND CALL
MORE.---WILL CALL
BACK--THANKYOU SID

Read Message:
R)eply K)ill E)nter N)ext P)revious
-)Read-Orig. +)Read-Reply Q)uit
[21] 1 - 24 R K E N P - + Q or ? for help:
#20 19 31 Dec C9 23:08:16
From: Julian Isaacs
To: Duane Stewart
Subj: RS232 Board

I have discovered that the serial board sold by Radio Shack is of a new design which won't fit inside my machine, so I am interested in buying the one you have. Since the new one is only \$77, I would be very appreciative if you would consider a reduction in the price of yours. If I don't manage to contact you by 'phone, please leave me a message here. Thanks,

Read Message:
R)eply K)ill E)nter N)ext P)revious
-)Read-Orig. +)Read-Reply Q)uit
[20] 1 - 24 R K E N P - + Q or ? for help: p
#19 22 02 Jul C8 22:33:28
From: Harry Spikes
To: All
Subj: INFO ON WORDPERFECT

I am using the Model 4 and the ALLWRITE word processor to type this and I am sure gonna miss it. Both the Model 4 & ALLWRITE, but the handwriting is on the wall and I am gonna have to go MS-DOS pretty soon. I use my computer primarily for programming in BASIC and as a Word Processor and there by hangs a tale. I have no difficulties with GW-BASIC et al BUT, and that's a very big BUT, I don't know of any MS-DOS Word Processor that can hold a candle to ALLWRITE --

with one exception -- limited file size.

The only W/P that appears to even come close is WORDPERFECT 4.2.

Does anyone have the WORDPERFECT

Word Processor and if so would you be willing to answer a few questions about it?

For example:

1. I am writing a concordance to a book. A concordance is, basically, a very detailed index. It will probably be over 300 K-Bytes in length. I understand

WORDPERFECT has an index function. Can I write a file of this length with

WORDPERFECT or will I have to break it up into multiple small files?

2. Can I edit WORDPERFECT INDEX files using WORDPERFECT? What I mean is, are WORDPERFECT INDEX files standard DOS files and can I go back and make changes to the INDEX file after it has been created and/or saved to disk?

3. Can, or are, WORDPERFECT INDEX (And other files for that matter) saved in pure ASCII format? If not CAN they be stored in pure ASCII format? and with or without control characters and/or control codes?

Any words of wisdom about WORDPERFECT would be appreciated.

Harry Spikes

Read Message:

R)reply K)ill E)nter N)ext P)revious

-)Read-Orig. +)Read-Reply Q)uit

[19] 1 - 24 R K E N P - + Q or ? for help: p

#18 26 31 Dec C9 09:54:13

From: Henry Schulze

To: All

Subj: New Year's Wish

Hi to everyone,

Just wanted to wish all of you a Very Happy and Healthy New Year.

I hope that all of you will continue to be active members in the SBUG club.

Heaven knows we will need your support and continued interest throughout the new year.

Read Message:

R)reply K)ill E)nter N)ext P)revious

-)Read-Orig. +)Read-Reply Q)uit

[18] 1 - 24 R K E N P - + Q or ? for help: p

#17 31 31 Dec C9 04:39:30

From: Anton Johnson

To: All

Subj: Aardwolf Express TBBS

```
#####
#   Aardwolf Express BBS   #
#   "the friendly system"  #
#   Online 24 hours a day  #
#   300/1200/2400 Baud     #
#   (415) 651-4147        #
#   Fremont California    #
# Some system offerings include: #
#   Discovery (Chrstianity)  #
#   Voters Booth (opinon polls) #
#   Friends (user profiles)  #
#   Electronic Magazine    #
# IBM Compatable file transfer #
# No registration required!  #
# Never any user fees to pay! #
# Online for over 5 years.   #
#####
```

Read Message:

R)reply K)ill E)nter N)ext P)revious

-)Read-Orig. +)Read-Reply Q)uit

[17] 1 - 24 R K E N P - + Q or ? for help: p

#16 26 06 Sep ;4 13:12:58

From: Ian Webb

To: All

Subj: Stuff for sale

I have the following which I might be tempted to part with for an appropriate offer:

Model 100 - 32K, with modem cable, power adapter, etc. like new.

SuperUtility Model 4/4P - registered, legal copy

APL*PLUS/80 - APL programming language for the Model III/IV with

the proper the ROM to plug into the III or IV to give
complete package APL video display. Large, extremely com-
patible with mainframe APL. Includes
mainframe communications capability with APL on a
mainframe.

Ian, (408) 867-9533

Read Message:

R)reply K)ill E)nter N)ext P)revious

-)Read-Orig. +)Read-Reply Q)uit

[16] 1 - 24 R K E N P - + Q or ? for help: p

#15 23 31 Dec C9 23:02:38

FEBRUARY

DYNAMIC MEMORIES

From: David Goodspeed
To: All
Subj: .

Well, I have uploaded the driver and /jcl file for tbbs. I attempted to upload (TBBs/cmd) itself, but I had a disk failure, so I am going to upload it tomorrow or sometime soon. Oh well, then I'll upload all my utilities oh well, bye

Read Message:

R)eply K)ill E)nter N)ext P)revious
-)Read-Orig. +)Read-Reply Q)uit
[15] I - 24 R K E N P - + Q or ? for help: p
#14 22 31 Dec C9 20:57:37
From: Joel Lee
To: All
Subj: ME I GUESS

As you can see I am back. After I sweated and typed and tried different programs trying to get my computer on line with the modem, Henry Schulze finally figured it out. It turns out my thrice blessed computer has 2 parallel ports AND a serial port. In my abysmal ignorance I had the printer plugged into LPT1 and the modem plugged into LPT2. Henry caught on when he took the cable to his home to check it, and had to put on a gender changer so it would work. Following that line of reasoning that has made him famous throughout San Jose, he said to himself; "If I need a gender changer (for my modem) then so does Joel. And if he doesn't, then it's because he's plugging into the wrong port." Of such brilliant flashes of ratiocination are matters of great import forwarded. I mean it puts me on the board. I believe the message about the meeting dates is wrong. The meeting for January is for the SECOND Tuesday in January, the meeting for February for the FIRST Tuesday in February. That would make January's meeting on the 13th.

Read Message:

R)eply K)ill E)nter N)ext P)revious
-)Read-Orig. +)Read-Reply Q)uit
[14] I - 24 R K E N P - + Q or ? for help: p
#13 25 26 Nov 88 16:34:33
From: Mike Beck
To: Everyone
Subj: TRS80111

I HAVE A SYSTEM FOR SALE. TRS80111 48K

FEBRUARY

DYNAMIC MEMORIES

2 DD, IV PRINTER & MODEM I. MUCH SOFTWARE INCLUDED. BEST OFFER. LEAVE MESSAGE OR CALL (415) 795-8581.
THANKS, MRB

Read Message:

R)reply K)ill E)nter N)ext P)revious
-)Read-Orig. +)Read-Reply Q)uit
[13] 1 - 24 R K E N P - + Q or ? for help: p
#12 35 18 Dec C7 03:34:52
From: Don Rhodes
To: Jim Gonsalves
Subj: PROCOMM DOCS

THE POM242.ARC ONLY CONTAINS A SMALL REVISION TEXT.. NOT THE FULL DOCUMENT WITH COMMANDS, UNLESS SOMEONE HAS REVISED THE FILE LATELY!

I CAN MAIL YOU DB3.

Read Message:

R)reply K)ill E)nter N)ext P)revious
-)Read-Orig. +)Read-Reply Q)uit
[12] 1 - 24 R K E N P - + Q or ? for help: p
#10 33 19 Dec 86 21:01:35
From: Sysop
To: Charles Brewster
REPLY TO #9
Subj: DUES

SORRY about check & BBS fee mystery. I would assume BBS dues were added properly to the equipment fund, and consumed. The check was no doubt misplaced by one of several treasurers who have served over the years.
We have a deal for you! Your fresh check to SBUG for \$20.00 will reinstate you to currency for one year, AND FULL BBS access for as long as you keep your dues paid-up! I think you have received several issues of the newsletter, for which there will be no additional charges. (The books are cleared).
Gerald Mc Kee

South Bay TRS-80 Users Group
P.O. Box 60116
Sunnyvale, Ca 94088

FIRST CLASS MAIL