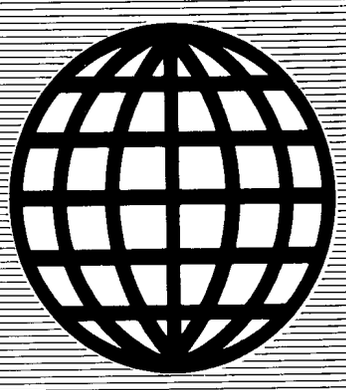

The COMPUTER JOURNAL

Programming - User Support
Applications

Issue Number 53 November / December 1991 US$3.95

The CPU280

Local Area Networks

An Arbitrary Waveform Generator

Real Computing

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The NZCOM IOP

Z-Best Software

The Computer Corner

ISSN # 0748-9331

The Computer Journal

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The Computer Journal is published six times a year by Socrates Press, P.O. Box 12, S. Plainfield, NJ 07080. (908) 755-6186

Subscription rates• Within US: $18 one year (6 issues), $32 two years (12 issues). Foreign (surface rate): $24 one year, $44 two years. Foreign (airmail): $38 one year, $72 two years. All funds must be in U.S. dollars drawn on a U.S. bank.

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TCJ The Computer Journal

Issue Number 53 November / December 1991

Editor's Desk

By Chris McEwen

Don't You Love Euphemisms?

These are lean times. You have heard that companies need to do more with less. This is a euphemism for giving more work to fewer people and aptly describes the office I occupy during my "other life." I spent the months of July through October out of town, with just a few weeks interspersed here and there..

This is both an explanation for my delay in getting this issue to you and its smaller size. I had grown fond of the sixty-four page format, enough so that I intend to return to it. But for now, we must suffice at forty-eight pages. We can hardly do more with fewer people; I am the entire production staff! I am back now, and things are returning to normal — or what passes for such in these parts..

No One Called the Client

I spent the last few months working on everything but computers — at least what the world thinks of as computers. I spent a week at the National Automatic Merchants' Association trade show in Chicago in early October. That's vending machines, nickel-robbers for the uninitiated. These days, the machines will gladly relieve you of your dollar bills. Five-spot robbers are just around the corner.

In looking at the new wonders of the vending machine world, I found myself speaking to the vice president of engineering of a leading manufacturer. Curiosity got the best of me and I had to ask, "What processor do you use to control these things?" The answer was no surprise: Motorola 68HC11's. And what do they program in? "C, of course."

Of course.

Here we have folks producing equipment that is made-to-order for Forth and they are using C. This is not unusual. You hear it everyday. But the reason Forth was not considered floored me. A Forth vendor had never approached them, and they had no idea what it could offer.

If manufacturers of classic embedded control applications as vending machines have never been approached, what other markets has the Forth world ignored?

There is an ongoing discussion over the Internet about Forth's saleability. Emotions run high over the value of ANSI standards, the lack of function libraries and incompatibilities between different Forth systems. Shucks, all this is meaningless drivel if no one calls the client!

Other Worlds

I have mentioned the Internet, Fidonet, GEnie and other forms of digital telecommuncations several times over the

See Editor, page 26

Reader-to-Reader

I have a suggestion. To help me locate the proper issue number when the *TCJ*'s are in a bookshelf, I've taken to marking the issue number on the spine in quite large numbers centered 3 1/2" from the top. The orientation is sideways (if the issue was lying flat on the table with the spine toward you, front cover up, the issue number would be right side up). The digits are about 3/8" high and, since they wrap around both sides of the spine, they visually reduce to an apparent and still readable 3/16" high or so. You might consider adding an issue number to your cover in a similar format for easier reference.

T.H. Los Gatos, CA

Most magazines employ "perfect binding" where the pages are glued to a backplane to accomplish what you want. I decided against this for two reasons: the pages will not lay flat with the book open, making it more difficult to copy listings and the binding cost is much higher. TCJ is a hold-out in publishing source code, and we run on a very tight budget, so perfect binding was ruled out.—Ed.

——

I am a long-distance member of Morrow Atlanta Users Group and receive their Mor-Atlanta News, where I read your introduction to *TCJ*. I am not sure if your "free issue" offer will extend to chaps like me sitting under palm trees in the South Pacific! I have enclosed my last remaining US $1.00 note to cover reply postage.

P.D., Rotorua New Zealand

I spent your dollar at the post office mailing off your first copy for a trial subscription. When you get the invoice, just deduct the dollar you already sent.

See Reader, page 30

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The CPU280

When 8 Bits Aren't Enough

By Tilmann Reh

The History

When Zilog first introduced the Z800 MPU in their 1983/84 data book, I was working with a homebrew Z80 system based on ECB-bus EuroCards (a well-established standard here in Europe these days). My system was running with the usual 4 MHz clock, but my CP/M-Plus BIOS already had some very nice advantages. For example, I had developed the AutoFormat system, a technique which supports a wide variety of disk formats automatically. The basic principle is the same as what MS-DOS uses: the disk contains a parameter block which holds all information necessary to process it. Another feature was the automatic installation of and adaptation to various peripherals. Since several some people around here had similar machines, none of them had to configure hardware parameters (as long as they didn't need very special things).

When I had a look at the 'preliminary' specifications of the Z800, I began thinking about some performance improvements for my system. So I waited for this chip to become available. I was still waiting in 1985 when Hitachi's HD 64180 suddenly appeared. This processor had much of what the Z800 was supposed to offer, but it was actually available! So I gave up waiting any longer and developed a 64180-based single board computer. It had the 64180 MPU (with both serial channels used), 32 KB EPROM and 512 KB DRAM, a 765-type floppy controller for up to four drives, and an ECB bus interface on a EuroCard. The clock frequency was 9.216 MHz, which made an effective Z80 speed of about 11 to 12 MHz. Since the ECB bus cannot handle these frequencies, the bus clock was only half the CPU clock (4.6 MHz), with timing signals stretched to meet standard Z80 peripheral requirements. My new 'CPU180' system did the work of three of the older boards: the CPU, the memory, and the floppy controller board.

The new single-board design brought the advantage of direct access to all basic I/O, so the BIOS could rely on these facilities and use them. The CP/M-Plus implementation I wrote for that system was more comfortable than the former Z80 multi-board version. For example, it introduced automatic disk exchange recognition. The high processor performance was amazing compared to the 4 MHz Z80.

Then came the IBM-PCs. At that time CP/M was systematically forced to death here in Europe. The special German computer syndrome became, "it has to be always the newest, biggest, and fastest machine," and the computer magazines followed that slogan. So, after a while I was the only one around here who was still active with CP/M. That was the reason why the CPU180 was built exactly once: I was working with the prototype board, and no one else seemed to be interested. (By the way, Wayne and Paul, if you had known that back in 1985/86, you wouldn't have had to design the YASBEC!)

At the end of 1988 Uwe Herczeg, another 'lone CP/M user' in Germany, placed an ad in a major computer magazine asking for other CP/M users to come forward. This brought the remaining activists together. But most of them were still using 4 or 6 MHz Z80 systems, often also based on ECB-bus EuroCards, and some were very interested in my CPU180 system. So we began thinking about a redesign of that board with state-of-the-art technology. One of those new friends suggested using the Z280 instead of the Z180. Z280? I ordered the data sheet and what did I find but the late incarnation of the old Z800 idea. Unbelievable but true, the Z280 was really available! So we decided to use the Z280, for this CPU has a far more powerful instruction set than the Z180.

The Hardware Design

Basics and Memory

As the hardware and software concepts of the CPU180 had proven themselves very well, all basic principles were carried over to the CPU280 design. As it was with the CPU180, the highest priority design rule was to get the absolute maximum performance out of the MPU with the absolute minimum circuit expense and parts cost. For the printed circuit board that meant using a standard double-sided PCB (no multi-layer) with normal wire thickness (0.25 mm) and no SMD parts at all. Just the good old sort of computer boards: reliable and easy to maintain.

In order to get the full power of the Z280, it must be run in the 16-bit Z-bus mode, with cache and burst-mode enabled, with no RAM wait states, and with the highest possible clock frequency (12.5 MHz). The on-board memory interface is 16 bits wide.

Main memory is built with dynamic RAM. There are eight sockets for 1 M-bit or 4 M-bit chips (with 4 bit data width). Chips must be used in groups of four to fit the 16-bit data bus. So the possible memory capacities are 512 KB

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and 1, 2, or 4 MB. This directly accessible memory should be enough for just about any circumstances. The standard configuration is with eight 1 M-bit chips (1 MB total). To save space and because of the availability of exactly pin-compatible 1 and 4 M-bit memory chips, ZIP-cased RAM is used.

Having had very good experience with synchronous DRAM timing (the CPU180 memory worked absolutely error-free for many years), I built a fully synchronous timing chain for the DRAMs again. This uses an HCT175 as a four-bit shift register and a GAL (gate array logic) containing the CAS decoding and selection logic. The DRAM interface also supports the processor's burst mode, using a GAL to sweep the lowest address bits during the burst (we can't use nibble-mode RAM's, as these are not available with 4-bit width!). The RAM timing is designed to meet all specifications of the Z280 at 12.5 MHz and RAMs with 100 ns access time. However, as the prices for 100 ns and 80 ns types are identical, we normally take the latter for safety.

Since the memory interface is far too fast for the ECB bus, external memory is not supported. Additional reasons for this decision were the data bus width (16 bit vs. 8) and the different timing and status signals (Z-bus vs. Z80). Support for external memory with burst-mode is absolutely impossible, as the ECB bus doesn't have strobing signals which could do that job. Interfacing the fast 16-bit internal data bus to the slow 8-bit ECB bus would require a large amount of circuitry, and that would violate our main design rule. So, if someone really needs more than 4 MB RAM, please connect an external I/O-accessed RAM-disk via ECB (DMA support is no problem).

The boot software is placed in two 27C256 or 27C512 EPROMs, so the boot capacity is 64 KB or 128 KB. For easy handling, ordinary 28-pin DIP sockets carry the EPROMs. As this memory usually is needed only during boot-up, burst-mode is not supported, and to accommodate slower memory chips up to three wait states may be added.

The Z280 is able to use different memory timings when accessing the lower or upper half of its 16 MB address space. The EPROM is decoded into the lower half (8 MB, what a waste!) and the RAM into the upper half. This way, it is possible to use the RAM with zero wait-states and burst mode while the EPROM uses up to three wait-states and doesn't support burst mode. Mapping any desired memory configuration to the CPU's logical 64k address space is done with the PMMU (Paged Memory Managing Unit) internal to the Z280.

I/O Basics and Bus Interface

In order to take advantage of widely available Z80 peripherals, the ECB bus clock and corresponding timing signals really should not exceed 6 MHz. As the CPU clock frequency is 12.288 MHz (for easy baud rate generation, it should be an integer multiple of 2.4576 MHz), it is convenient to use half the CPU clock frequency. This results in a bus clock of 6.144 MHz, which requires Z80B or Z80-6 components. With the internal wait-state generator of the Z280 programmed to insert four wait-states every I/O transaction (the maximum value), the duration of the I/O cycles exactly matches the divided clock. The clock divider is implemented by a single flip-flop (HCT74) and is reset at the beginning of each transfer to produce the correct phase relationship between bus clock and timing signals. Since the Z-bus control and timing signals cannot be used for the ECB bus, they are converted into the appropriate Z80-type signals with a GAL.

Since the external peripherals use Z80-type vectored interrupts, the bus interface must be able to generate the correct interrupt acknowledge and RETI timings. Interrupt-acknowledge is treated as an I/O transaction and stretched by the Z280, but the RETI instruction consists of two memory cycles, which are too fast for the peripherals (besides the fact that the memory control signals do not appear on the ECB bus). Last but not least, the Z280 has a new interrupt mode (mode 3) which uses another return instruction (RETIL). So a slow RETI timing can be simulated using special accesses to on-board I/O locations, with a GAL generating the correct signals for the ECB bus. This way, vectored external interrupts are supported, although the clock speeds are very different.

The Z280 supports 24-bit I/O addresses as opposed to the 8/16-bit addresses of the Z80. The upper eight I/O address bits are accessed via the 'I/O Page Register' within the MPU. For full access to the 256 I/O addresses which are specified for the ECB bus, the bus interface is decoded to have an I/O page of its own. Another page is used for the on-board I/O, and two pages are reserved for the internal I/O registers of the Z280. Decoding of the I/O pages and addresses is done within GALs.

Internal and On-Board I/O

The Z280 comes with a serial interface (UART), three 16-bit counter/timer circuits, and four DMA channels on-chip. To avoid an external baud rate generator for the UART, one of the timers is used. The 12.288 MHz clock allows standard baud rates up to 38400 to be generated. Higher, but non-standard, baud rates are also possible.

The internal UART is completed with two handshake signals which are not supplied by the MPU. A second serial interface is provided by a Twenty-Pin-UART (TPUART) COM81C17 by SMC (it includes its own on-chip baud rate generator). Both interfaces are buffered and shifted to RS-232C levels with a 5V-only line driver and receiver, the LT1134.

The CPU280 contains a real-time-clock (RTC) with 50 bytes of nonvolatile RAM, the Dallas DS 1287. Since this part already contains the lithium battery, no external circuitry is required. The RTC is able to generate interrupts at a specified date and/or time (alarm) or periodically. The NVRAM is ideal for storing configuration parameters.

Floppy disk I/O is handled by a WD/SMC 37C65 floppy disk controller (FDC). This neat chip, cased in a 44-pin PLCC, contains the complete controller. Just connect the CPU bus to some pins and the disk drives to some other (and don't forget the quartz crystal), and everything is running. Floppy-related data transfer may be handled by one of the Z280's DMA channels.

Simple TTL chips (HCT367, HCT259) are used to implement one 6-bit input port and one 8-bit output port. One bit of each port is used for the handshake signals for the first RS-232C interface. The other outputs drive some FDC control lines and three LED's for status display. Some of the inputs are connected to jumpers so that they can be used for configuration purposes.

There are four 16V8 type GALs on the CPU280 board. They contain memory address and CPU state decoding, I/O decoding, RAM timing and CAS decoding, and some 'glue' logic. Since nearly all signals are processed with only one

logic stage, the standard 'slow' 25 ns GALs are fast enough.

The entire CPU280 circuit is designed using CMOS technology. The internal logic is made with the 74HCT series, which is fast enough for nearly every signal. The bus interface and one timing-critical function in the DRAM interface use 74ACT chips. All LSI also are CMOS, and the GALs should be taken from the 'Q' series (quarter-power). As a result, the complete CPU280 board—fully operating at maximum clock speed—draws only about 350 mA from a single 5V power supply. No other voltages are required. The 32 chips nearly exactly fill the board space of the EuroCard, with just enough space left to avoid a multilayer PCB. (Hey, Wayne and Paul, why did you need SMD for just 23 chips?)

As with every good single-boarder, you just need to connect a power supply, at least one disk drive of any kind and size, and a terminal to complete the CP/M-Plus workstation. However, by connecting the CPU280 to a standard ECB backplane, you are free to use nearly any available ECB I/O board.

The Software

The best hardware doesn't produce anything without the right software. With this in mind, I adapted my CPU180 BIOS to the CPU280, now using the powerful Z280 instruction set, of course. As with the circuit design, the basic principles and structures of the BIOS were taken directly from the CPU180. However, I completely redefined and enhanced the AutoFormat system and added a menu-driven hardware configuration program to the boot loader (this was impossible with the CPU180, as it had no NVRAM). Of course, some further improvements were made based on the experience of four years of CPU180 operation.

Normally, the complete system (boot loader, CCP, BDOS, and BIOS) is booted directly out of the EPROM. As a result, you can boot up your machine in two seconds without any noise or mechanical action. (For testing new system versions, of course, booting from disk is also possible by pressing a button during RAM-test.)

With all functional enhancements fully compliant with CP/M-Plus definitions, all CP/M-Plus and most CP/M-2.2 software can be run on the CPU280 without any problems. By the way, the operating system runs in the Z280's system mode, while all user programs run in user mode. This is done mainly to achieve easy bank switching (which the MMU does automatically in this case), but it also increases system security. Unfortunately, CP/M-Plus must have the BIOS entry vector and some data structures in common memory, so you cannot absolutely prevent user programs from damaging the system software. But since we don't have any better (and still compatible!) operating system, we have to live with that fact.

The Power

What is the real performance of a Z280 running with every booster switched on? The answer, unfortunately, is not as clear as you would probably like it to be. First, the Z280 is a pipelined CPU. So you really can't say how many clock cycles any instruction will take; it depends on the last few previous instructions. In addition, some instructions (jumps and calls, for example) flush the pipeline and thus are relatively 'slow'. Second, effective CPU speed depends on the 'hit ratio' of the cache controller. Small loops will run much faster than 'spaghetti code'. Third, the 16-bit arithmetic unit of the Z280 (opposed to the 4-bit one of the Z80) processes indexing and math operations with greater speed gain than with other instruction types. So the more a program makes use of these instructions, the greater the effective speed.

Although it is impossible to specify exactly the power of the Z280, you can say that with normal 8080 or Z80 software it will have the power of a Z80 running at 16 to 20 MHz. Of course, using the new instructions (there are more than 600!) further increases the performance (while loosing Z80 compatibility, of course). As the Z280 is used more and more, I hope we will soon see the first real Z280 programs or the first real Z280 operating system (which could could get rid of the annoying 62 KB TPA limit of CP/M-Plus...).

The Development History

After the first version of the CPU280 ran stably in March, 1990, I made a redesign of the PCB layout with slight changes in parts of the circuit. In June, 1990, I ordered the first run of PCBs, and in November, 1990, I sent them along with all semiconductors and special parts to about 25 people here in Germany. A few other people around the world got a PCB without the part set. I had to wait until November because that was the time when the 12.5 MHz version of the Z280 became available, and we didn't want to take the slower version first and upgrade a few months later. As of early 1991, many of the machines were running very well, as far as I have been informed by the users. The CPU280 has proved itself to be very fast and very reliable. Our 'PD and ZCPR Man', Helmut Jungkunz, likes the machine for its flexible method of processing different disk formats; that's why he uses it for nearly all disk distribution he has to do. Of course, he likes the raw power, too.

But the CPU280 is not our only project here in Germany. In a future column I would like to introduce my next board, an IDE controller which connects standard (PC) AT-Bus harddisks to any ECB-bus based CP/M system. The board also contains an active termination of all bus signals, a Centronics printer interface, a four-LED power monitor, and two system control buttons for reset and NMI (which, with the CPU280, forces a warm system reboot). This board nicely matches the CPU280 and allows one to build a really high power CP/M workstation.

A friend of mine is developing an LCD terminal. Together with a low-power Z180 single-boarder (based on my CPU180) it makes a powerful CP/M-Plus laptop! My newest project, which is coming along very well, is a high-performance CRT terminal for text and graphics at an unbeatable price. Wait and see! Needless to say, all three of these boards are EuroCard size. My friends and I look forward to describing these projects in future issues of *TCJ*.

How to Get a CPU280

Some of you may be wondering how you can get a CPU280 of your own. Well, overseas shipment costs would be too high for sending complete kits as we did here in Germany. I think the easiest way to make the CPU280 available in the USA (and elsewhere outside Germany) is for a local dealer to provide my PCB together with locally obtained components. For the US market, who could do that job better than Sage Microsystems East? So, if you are interested in the board, the semiconductors, or both, please contact Jay Sage. Kits will include a disk with the complete system software, a hardware manual describing the circuit details, and a brief software description (I still haven't found the time to complete a real software manual).●

Local Area Networks

Broadband Cabling

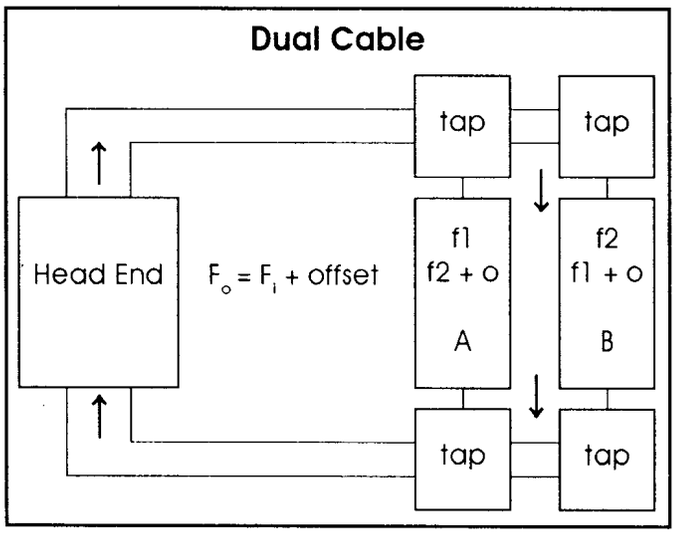
By Wayne Sung

Ethernet, along with other 'local' area networks (or as the British prefer, 'small' area networks), seldom stay small. When people start realizing the benefits available from being connected to a network, they will quickly want to join.

An Ethernet can cover quite a lot of area using only baseband coax, but there are several drawbacks in trying to extend coax beyond one building. The biggest problem is with ground differences among buildings. Another problem is that the coax does not withstand well the stresses required for long pulls in conduit.

An Alternative to Coax

There are a number of ways to solve these problems. One of these involves the use of broadband cable, that is to say



cable television technology. This type of system often already exists on campuses and works quite well for extending Ethernets.

One would normally think of a broadband cable as something that only delivers services one way, which is the case in cable television. Data services generally need two directions. How would we modify an existing cable system to carry data services?

The most straightforward way would be to add another cable. This way each cable would send signals in one direction only. There would be a place where some electronic equipment would receive the signals from one cable, process them, and send them down the other cable. This place is called a 'head end', and in the simplest case would be an amplifier.

Let's look at two modems made to constitute a point-to-point circuit. Although the two are shown adjacent in the figure, they could literally be miles apart. The only requirements are that modem A generate a signal on frequency f1 and modem B generate one at f2. Modem A would receive at f2, and modem B at f1. The offset is generally zero in this case. These frequencies can be chosen at random, but in practice will correspond to television channel frequencies. This allows the best fit if this cable is to carry multiple services.

A double cable system is simple enough, but the expense of installing the second cable is quite high. In fact, in most cases it will be less expensive to modify the first cable to make it bi-directional. This is where broadband seems like magic sometimes, and this is the process I want to explain more fully here.

Splitting the Bandwidth

Consider that a broadband cable can handle a rather large frequency range, typically in the hundreds of megahertz. We can divide this frequency range in half, so that one band is used for each direction. If we take a piece of coax (up to several thousand feet long) and put a number of signals into the coax they will stay distinct.

A piece of wire is basically passive, and so will not cause the signals to interfere with each other. Although every signal exists everywhere along the wire, this is of no concern. We need one more item to make this scheme work. This is called a translator.

A translator takes an input signal and changes its frequency by some amount. This is exactly the case where a television station broadcasts on a certain channel but on cable it is in a different channel. There are two common translation amounts for data work, 156.25 MHz (called mid-split) and 192.25 MHz (called high-split).

Using a mid-split case, and returning to the modem example, modem A will transmit at f1 into the coax. The translator will receive this, and change it to f1 + 156.25 MHz. Similarly modem B's signal will be changed to f2 + 156.25 MHz. Thus A will now have to receive f2 + 156.25 MHz and B will have to receive f1 + 156.25 MHz.

A complication arises when the cable must be extended over much larger distances. There is loss in the cable, so in a very long cable signals will start to weaken. It is simple

Wayne Sung has been working with microprocessor hardware and software for over ten years. His job involves pushing the limits of networking hardware in attempting to gain as much performance as possible. In the last three years he has developed the Gag-a-matic series of testers, which are meant to see if manufacturers meet their specs.

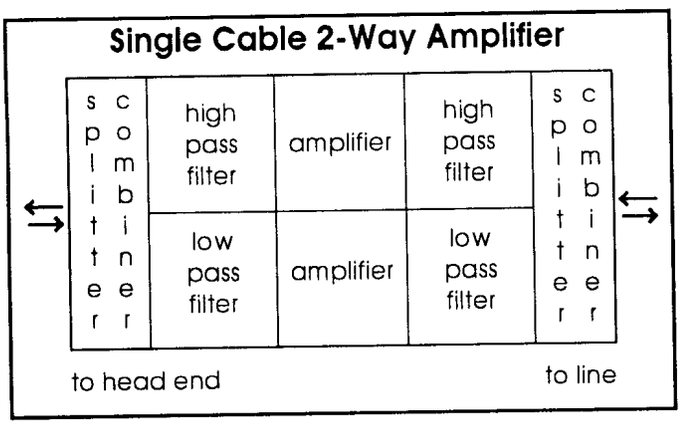
enough to install amplifiers to bring the signals back up, but amplifiers normally work in one direction only.

Fortunately, since we have already divided the frequency range, we can use low- and high-pass filters to split the signals and have two amplifiers, one for each direction. One reason it is cheaper to modify a cable system for bi-directional use is that most likely there is already space for the filters and additional amplifiers. The amplifier enclosures are designed for bi-directional use, and adding the second direction is fairly simple.

Typically the low frequency band flows toward the head end and the high frequency band away from it. This is not an absolute requirement, but in those cases where a cable already exists to provide one-way services these will be in the high range. For example, if there are television channels, they will start at channel 2 (54 MHz). Thus it becomes natural to design the two-way system so as not to have to disturb existing services.

In fact, there is a low-split system where all television channels are kept intact. However, this leaves very little space for one direction. Also, at lower frequencies it is more difficult to get good performance from wide-bandwidth devices (which we will need when we start extending LANs).

To add devices, we install taps along the main trunk. These taps isolate devices from each other. Remember that all



devices are to send toward the head end and receive from it. Individual devices do not need to hear each other, and in fact do not benefit from being able to do so.

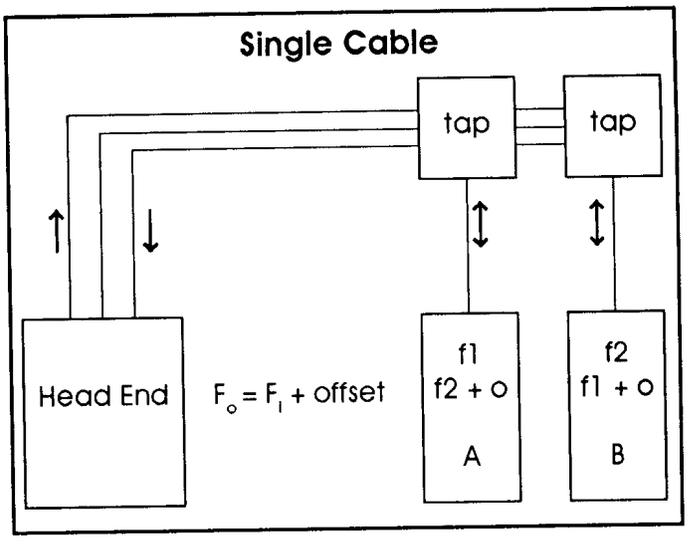
RF circuits are easily affected by other circuits operating at nearby frequencies, so it pays to keep them isolated. In practice, each modem output will be isolated from the trunk by 10 dB or more, providing 20 dB of isolation from one modem to another. Taps are available with multiple branches per unit.

Note that splitters and taps are not the same. A splitter is meant to divide the total incoming signal several ways equally. A tap provides minimal loss in the through direction and a higher loss in the branch. Thus a two way splitter has at least 3 dB loss from the input to each output whereas the through direction of a tap should have less than 1.5 dB loss.

If a splitter gets used instead of a tap, the trunk level will suffer needlessly. This extra loss then sometimes gets (incorrectly) compensated for by reducing the values of otherwise correctly installed taps. Or, the outputs of modems have to be run at maximum to get enough working signal. This means that normal gain changes over temperature might cause intermittent operation.

Since the two frequency bands are handled separately, we can set the receive levels on the trunk fairly high so that we can have some isolation on the receive side as well. It is also common to have 10 - 20 dB of receive isolation, but again this factor is often compromised due to low levels in the trunk.

With digital signals, there is a lot of leeway and many



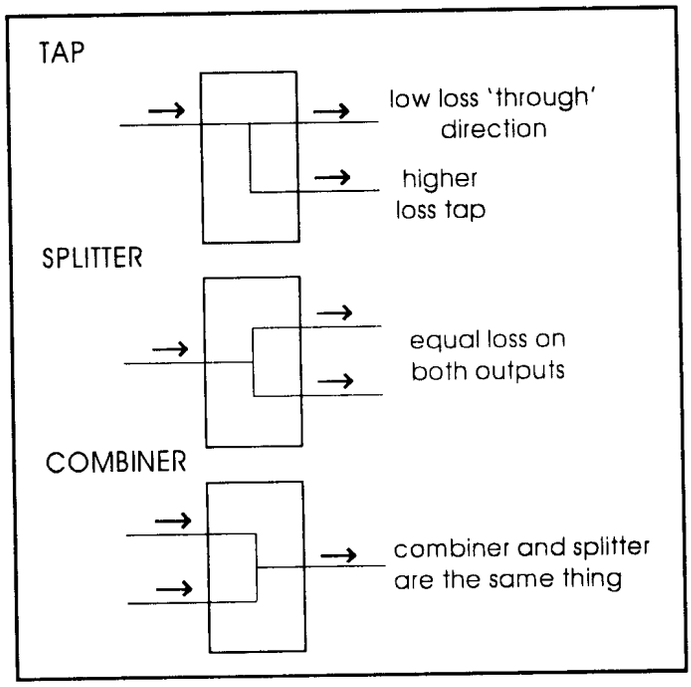
times the system works despite poor practices. If there is video being carried, though, the effects will be a lot more obvious.

With proper engineering, a broadband system can do a very good job of data distribution. For the most part, it does take some vigilance to keep one running well. Even temperature differences from winter to summer can cause problems. Still, one good technician can keep a fairly large broadband system running smoothly (until vacation time).

Why Not Fiber Optics?

Given that the cost of fiber optic systems is declining, why bother with broadband at all? If we are talking about a totally new installation, this is a compelling argument. However, although fiber solves the ground difference problem nicely (since it does not conduct), it is much more difficult to carry multiple services on fiber.

Individual services, particularly very high bit rate services,



are ideal for fiber. However, frequency multiplexing is much more difficult (what you would be multiplexing is the color of light). Telephone companies are already using fiber optic systems carrying gigabits per second, but these are point-to-point.

In a broadband system, any service can be tapped at any point using a device which costs only a few dollars. The same mechanism does not exist (yet?) for fiber. An ideal situation, perhaps, would be to use fiber between buildings and broadband inside the buildings. It is possible to take a whole broadband cable's content and modulate it onto a fiber.

Getting Practical

So much for the general theory of broadband systems. How do we use them to extend local area networks? There are several different methods available.

The most direct way would be to design a system where the transceiver becomes an rf device, being able to take the baseband Ethernet signal and convert to and from an rf signal. A computer connected to this kind of transceiver would not know it was not baseband in most cases.

One consideration needed is whether the signal transmitted by the computer goes to the head end and back before being received by this computer as a confirmation. If the signal does make the round trip, this is a delay that the computer is not expecting, because a normal transceiver has no time delay between transmit and receive.

If the round-trip delay, which is of course related to the size of the plant, exceeds a certain amount, the computer might think that it is not able to generate a signal on the cable, and not complete the transmission.

On the other hand, if the rf transceiver is made to echo the transmitted signal to the computer, then there is no confirmation that the signal actually went onto the cable. With a baseband system, inability to actually generate a carrier should cause an error.

In either case, the total size of the plant will not greatly exceed the size of a baseband plant, because the collision timing windows don't change. It is possible to build a slightly larger plant because collision detect is done at the head end, which allows some of the timing to be reallocated.

By the way, any method of transmitting Ethernet over two paths has these considerations. This is true, for example, of fiber optic and microwave systems.

One other disadvantage of the rf transceiver is the wide bandwidth required in the rf spectrum. Since the signaling rate is not changed, the rf side must still handle a 10 Mb/s signal. This usually ends up requiring two to three TV channels (12 - 18 MHz) in each direction and that is a lot to ask for.

One would normally want to be able to use the full size of a broadband plant. To be able to do this, the Ethernet timing window must be bypassed. This is often done by having the rf transceiver receive the entire packet before sending it onto the cable. Once the packet is in the transceiver, the timing window is satisfied, and a different method can be used in the cable.

This method is called a buffered repeater, although strictly speaking a repeater operates in a bit-by-bit fashion rather than by packets. Having the extra circuitry increases the cost, but fortunately it is not necessary to have one of these for each machine. A number of machines can be attached normally and then use one buffered repeater to leave the building.

It is then possible to change the signaling rate on the rf side to lower spectrum requirements. Note that simply decreasing the signaling rate also extends the distance, although this is not usually a good enough tradeoff.

To get a factor of 10 distance increase requires the same factor decrease in speed, and a 1 Mb/s system would feel significantly different from a 10 Mb/s system. Thus the rf distance gain is usually obtained with a proprietary signaling method, or at least one that is not based on CSMA/CD.

One possibility would be to use a token bus on the rf side. The transceiver would convert between the two formats. A token bus normally is able to span large distances, because access is not mediated using collisions. It happens that some token bus systems actually have collision detect requirements, but only for the purpose of adding new stations.

Most of the time, the conversion from baseband to another transmission medium is accompanied by some method to separate traffic between machines on the same side of the converter (local traffic) from traffic that occurs between machines in different locations (remote traffic). Two of these methods are bridging and routing, to be more fully described next time.●

Real/52, from page 19

The major improvements are supposed to be support for larger disk partitions and Posix-compliant utilities.

As I mentioned once before, UC Berkeley is working to remove AT&T code from their operating system. Later this year, a BSD release—but not a complete operating system—should be available from them for about $500.

Desqview/X

In August, Desqview/X should be released. This package will be more than an X terminal on a PC; it will allow programs to be written to run on the PC using Xt and Motif. I predict that this will be an earth-shaking product—the essential bridge between the workstation and the PC worlds. X window has already overturned the mini and workstation worlds. To have complete transparency of execution across a network of heterogeneous machines, and software portability, is an extremely compelling concept. And you don't lose any of your old programs either.

OS/2 2.0 should be available from IBM sometime in the fall. This should be an amazing product as well. Supposedly it will run Windows code, PM code, X window code, and DOS code, all at the same time.

Next time

Wow, look at all the X's. And I didn't even mention X.400 or X.25. Next time I'm going to get away from all this grandiose complexity and discuss Kotekan, a "small is beautiful" operating system for the NS32 by Don Rowe. Meanwhile, don't trust anything with capital letters in the middle!●

Where to write or call:

Home Control Concepts
9353-C Activity Road
San Diego, CA 92126
1-619-693-8887 or 1-800-CONTROL

An Arbitrary Waveform Generator

Using the Harris RTX2001A

By Jan Hofland

[This article is second of a series on the building and programming of a waveform generator for mechanical structural testing. The hardware, with schematics, was given in our last issue, where we also began discussion of the software. In this installment, we continue with the software and Forth extensions. The series concludes in our next issue with the source code.—Ed.]

Commands

The following 16 specific commands have been implemented:

command	description
0 NOP	no operation
1 fastSine	set up to operate in fast sine mode. The next value input is the frequency.
2 accuSine	set up to operate in the accurate sine mode. The next value input is the frequency.
3 setAmpl	set output amplitude, in millivolts, for accurate sine output mode. The value following this command is used as the output amplitude. This value will be truncated to a multiple of 50 mV.
4 bufLoop0	set up to output from buffer 0 in circular buffer mode
5 bufLoop1	set up to output from buffer 1 in circular buffer mode
6 pingPong0	set up to output in ping pong mode starting with buffer 0
7 pingPong1	set up to output in ping pong mode starting with buffer 1
8 bufOut0	set up to output from buffer 0 until it is empty
9 bufOut1	set up to output from buffer 1 until it is empty
10 ldBuf	used to select a buffer and load it with data values. The next parameter must be the number of values to be loaded, up to 2048, and the msb set if it is for buffer 1. Then the data values are input in sequence.
11 setOffset	set the offset to be subtracted from the sinewave value in accurate sinewave mode, in 100's of microvolts The next value following this command is the offset.
12 setFilt	used to set the filter cutoff point. The next value input is used for the filter cutoff, range 1 to 40000 Hz.
13 getPeriod	used to input the desired sample rate. The next value input is used for the timer 0 period. If in either sinewave operating mode, a check is performed to readjust the phase increment to be consistent with this period and the output frequency.
14 stop	disable timer 0 interrupt to stop outputting points
15 start	enable the timer 0 interrupts to start outputting data and then go into a loop to repeatedly check the stale data flag in register RX and update the value in scratchpad RH if the stale data flag is set. Continue this loop until the timer 0 interrupt is masked.

The execution vectors for each of the 16 commands are contained in a table called *parse* that is used for command execution.

Main Operating Loop

Here is the overall operating loop:

```
: main  ( – )
      initialize
      BEGIN          begin an infinite loop
      readFifo       read a command from the input stream
      doCmd          perform the command
      AGAIN ;        go do it again
```

and here is the command execution word:

```
: doCmd ( n – )      perform the command represented by n
      DUP cmdMsk AND make sure the upper 12 bits are zeroes
      IF             if the result of the logical AND is non-
        DROP         zero then it is an unrecognized command
        ." Unrecognized Command "  and discarded an error
                     message to the user
      ELSE parse EXECUTE  otherwise get an execution vector
      THEN ;         from command parse table and execute it.
```

Demonstration Software

Part of the software is for demonstrating some of the capabilities of the Waveform Generator. As designed, the Waveform Generator expects its commands and arbitrary data to be input from the input FIFO. Rather than design and debug some hardware for controlling it in this manner I chose to simulate the input FIFO in software. This has some impact on the performance realized in the breadboard, but it does demonstrate that the operating modes do, in fact, work as designed. The basic scheme is to construct a queue of commands and data exactly as if they were being input from the input FIFO. I then use a revectored input routine to accept input from the software queue rather than the input FIFO.

Input Stream Queue

A 512 word input queue is constructed using the word *buildCQ*. This queue is called *cmdQ*. It is used for setting up the various demonstrations. The way it gets used is to load it with

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the sequence of command codes each followed by the required parameter, if any. The last command entered is the start command. Then the queue end pointer and tail pointer are adjusted to conform with the actual size of the command queue.

Demonstration Sequences

There are 6 sequences implemented:

demoCircSq	Implements a 1 Khz square wave using circular buffer mode and a 40 Khz filter cutoff. The square wave amplitude is a nominal -1V to +1V.
demoFsine20	Implements a 20 Khz sinewave using fast sine mode and a filter cutoff of 20 Khz.
demoFsine1	Implements a 1 Khz sinewave using fast sine mode and a filter cutoff of 1 Khz.
demoAsine1	Implements a 1 Khz sinewave using the accurate sine mode with a 1 volt RMS amplitude, filter cutoff of 1 Khz and an offset of 90 millivolts.
demoPp	Uses the ping pong output mode to output a half sine of 1 Khz, pause for 500 microseconds, output another half sine at half amplitude, pause for another 500 microseconds, and then output a full cycle of 2 Khz sine. Then stop. There isn't anything particularly useful about this waveform choice. It just shows some of the versatility in output modes.
demoOnce	Uses the once out mode to output one cycle of a 100 Hz sine that is linearly attenuated to zero.

The Demonstration Loop

The word *choose* invokes a menu structure for the user to choose which demo to be run and then it runs it. The main operating loop for the demonstration is patterned after the main high level word of the normal operating environment with one difference. Rather than being an infinite loop, it is repeated until the command queue is empty.

The word *demo* kicks it all off. Here is its definition:

```
: demo  ( – )          start up a demo
     BEGIN
       choose dVect EXECUTE  choose a demo and fetch its
           execution vector from the
           table dVect and execute it.
           This sets up the queue of
           commands and parameters.
       demoMain      perform the commands in the
           command queue
     AGAIN ;         and repeat it.
```

Note that four of the six *demos* do not have a terminating condition. Stop them with the red pushbutton and reinvoke *demo* to perform another one.

Conclusions

This model has clearly demonstrated the capability to contruct a waveform generator based on the RTX2001A. Much of the hardware added can be incorporated into an ASIC, if so desired. It should be a simple matter to include all of the control logic described here into the ASIC. I would envision keeping the input FIFO off-chip, as well as the DAC and the reconstruction lowpass filter. Keeping the added data RAM off-chip as well as increasing its size also makes sense. I would make the DAC sample clock a dedicated hardware timer, as well as the filter clock toggle ocntrol. Of course, both of these timers would remain programmable.

If I were to take the next step in the design, I would probably incorporate the following capabilities:

- Provide a second DAC for range control. This would have to be a multiplying type DAC and would provide dynamic amplitude scaling of all outputs. I expect that a 12 bit DAC would be adequate for this purpose.
- Provice a means of measuring the analog output DC offset and correcting for that offset. It turns out that as good as the switched capacitor filter is for waveform reconstruction, it has rather poor DC offset characteristics. Provision of an 8 bit DAC, possibly on-chip, for correcting for offsets makes sense. Another, though less versatile, alternative would be an analog servo circuit to servo the output toward an average zero level.
- Provide a means to bypass the filter to allow random noise, wideband outputs. This kind of stimulus is useful for some kinds of testing.
- Provide a user input for shutting down the output and for gracefully ramping the output to zero when the shutdown occurs.

Finally I must comment on the use of Forth for the prototyping environment. In retrospect, I find it amazing that I was able to write and debug all the software necessary to control this hardware in the matter of about 7 weeks of spare time effort. This is the first programming I have done in anything other than an academic environment. The language lends itself to rapidly start doing something related to the application rather than spending all of your time learning syntax or trying to relate some obscure command behavior to what the hardware is supposed to do.●

Listing 1. GAL 26CV12 ABEL Source Code

```
MODULE mem_addr_decode
   flag '-r4'

TITLE 'memory address RAM select and filter clock toggle
     control for RTX2001 waveform generator
     Jan Hofland
     900404
     900406
     900415
     '

"               +---u---+
"          tclk |1    28| tcLo
"           GA0 |2    27| cntrNabLo
"           GA1 |3    26| cntLatch
"           GA2 |4    25| cLoadLo
"       grd_wrLo |5    24| filtClk
"          gioLo |6    23| reset (input)
"           Vcc |7    22| resetLo
"          MA19 |8    21| gnd
"          MA18 |9    20| no_out20
"          MA17 |10   19| URAMSEL
"          MA16 |11   18| LRAMSEL
"          MA15 |12   17| uds (input)
"          MA14 |13   16| lds (input)
"          MA13 |14   15| MA12 (input)
"               +-------+

" The purpose of this device is twofold. It decodes a memory
" address to enable the external 8K x 16 RAM. This memory is
```

```
" addressable as either bytes or words. The other purpose of
" the device is to control the programmable counter used to
" provide a clock source for the switched capacitor filter IC.
" The filter requires a clock source 100 times its cutoff
" frequency. For its highest bandwidths (up to 40 KHz), using
" a timer interrupt would require interrupt servicing at a 4
" MHz rate. Instead, what is done is to use a programmable
" down counter to toggle filtClk. The down counter is used for
" divide down of up to 256. For higher divisions, an internal
" timer in the RTX2001 is used to generate an interrupt, and
" the filtClk is toggled by writing to an ASIC bus address.

" modified to change from a 22V10 to a 26V12 device to allow
" full memory decoding of RAM contiguous with the evaluation
" board MAP chip RAM.

" device declaration
" U05 DEVICE 'P22V10';
U3 DEVICE 'P26CV12';

" pin declarations
" inputs
 tclk       pin 1;   "8 MHz clock input
 GA0,GA1,GA2   pin 2,3,4;  " ASIC bus addresses
 grd_wrLo   pin 5;   "ASIC bus read/write
 gioLo      pin 6;   "ASIC bus external address  active low
   tcLo     pin 28;  "counter terminal count  active low
 MA19,MA18,MA17,MA16 pin 8,9,10,11; "memory bank address
 MA15,MA14,MA13,MA12 pin 12,13,14,15; "upper 4 memory bits
 uds,lds    pin 17,16; "memory bus upper and lower data strobe
 reset      pin 23;  "system reset
" outputs
 cntrNabLo  pin 27;  "enable filter clock counter active low
 cntLatch   pin 26;  "ASIC bus write data to counter data
                "in latch
 cLoadLo    pin 25;  "counter load control  active low
 filtClk    pin 24;  "filter clock
 URAMSEL,LRAMSEL pin 19,18; "upper and lower byte RAM select
 resetLo    pin 22;  "active low reset output
 no_out20   pin 20;  "unused output

"constant declarations
 x,z  = .X.,.Z.;
 k    = .K.;   "high-low-high clock pulse

 mAddr = [MA19,MA18,MA17,MA16,MA15,MA14,MA13,MA12];
        "upper memory address
 gAddr = [GA2,GA1,GA0]; "ASIC bus address

"pin attributes
 cntLatch,cLoadLo    ISTYPE 'com,neg';
 cntrNabLo,filtClk   ISTYPE 'reg,pos';
 URAMSEL,LRAMSEL     ISTYPE 'com,pos';
 resetLo             ISTYPE 'com,neg';

EQUATIONS

" disable outputs of I/O pins used as inputs

 reset.EN   = 0;
 MA12.EN    = 0;
 uds.EN     = 0;
 lds.EN     = 0;

 filtClk.RE = reset; "filter clock asynchronous reset

 !resetLo = reset;

"counter data latch control
 !cntLatch  = (gAddr == 6) & !grd_wrLo & !gioLo & !tclk
        & !reset;
"counter load control  asynchronous set-reset flip-flop
 !cLoadLo = reset "force low if reset active
        # !tcLo & !tclk "set (low) during low half of
           "clock if counter terminal count asserted
        # !cLoadLo & !tclk; "hold asserted during low half
           "of clock reset during high half of clock
           "if reset isn't asserted

"external RAM selects
 URAMSEL = ((mAddr == 5) # (mAddr == 6) # (mAddr == 7)
        # (mAddr == 8)) & uds;
 LRAMSEL = ((mAddr == 5) # (mAddr == 6) # (mAddr == 7)
        # (mAddr == 8)) & lds;

" cntrNabLo is a registered signal used to enable the external
" filter clock down counter. It is set by writing to ASIC bus
" address 5 and cleared by writing to external address 4. The
" counter is enabled when cntrNabLo is cleared. The data
" written to these address is 'don't care'.

STATE_DIAGRAM cntrNabLo
 state 0: if ((gAddr == 5) & !grd_wrLo & !gioLo)
   then 1
   else 0;
 state 1: if (((gAddr == 4) & !grd_wrLo & !gioLo) # reset)
   then 0
   else 1;

" filtClk is implemented as a toggle flip-flop. If cntrNabLo
" is low, then the hardware counter is used to toggle filtClk.
" Since cLoadLo gets asserted whenever the counter reaches
" terminal count, and the fact that cLoadLo changes the
" counter control from count down to load, thereby deasserting
" terminal count out, cLoadLo is used for toggle control. If
" cntrNabLo is high, then filtClk is toggled by writing to an
" ASIC bus address. The data is a 'don't care'.

EQUATIONS
  filtClk.EN = !reset;

STATE_DIAGRAM filtClk
 state 0: if (!cntrNabLo & !cLoadLo
      #cntrNabLo & (gAddr == 7) & !grd_wrLo & !gioLo)
   then 1
   else 0;
 state 1: if (!cntrNabLo & !cLoadLo
      #cntrNabLo & (gAddr == 7) & !grd_wrLo & !gioLo)
   then 0
   else 1;


TEST_VECTORS 'memory select'
   ([mAddr,uds,lds] -> [URAMSEL,LRAMSEL])
    [  0,  0,  0  ] -> [ 0,  0 ];
    [  1,  1,  1  ] -> [ 0,  0 ];
    [  2,  1,  1  ] -> [ 0,  0 ];
    [  3,  1,  1  ] -> [ 0,  0 ];
    [  4,  1,  1  ] -> [ 0,  0 ];   "MAP chip RAM active
    [  5,  0,  1  ] -> [ 0,  1 ];
    [  5,  1,  1  ] -> [ 1,  1 ];
    [  5,  1,  0  ] -> [ 1,  0 ];
    [  5,  0,  0  ] -> [ 0,  0 ];
    [  6,  0,  1  ] -> [ 0,  1 ];
    [  6,  1,  1  ] -> [ 1,  1 ];
    [  6,  1,  0  ] -> [ 1,  0 ];
    [  6,  0,  0  ] -> [ 0,  0 ];
    [  7,  0,  1  ] -> [ 0,  1 ];
    [  7,  1,  1  ] -> [ 1,  1 ];
    [  7,  1,  0  ] -> [ 1,  0 ];
    [  7,  0,  0  ] -> [ 0,  0 ];
    [  8,  0,  1  ] -> [ 0,  1 ];
    [  8,  1,  1  ] -> [ 1,  1 ];
    [  8,  1,  0  ] -> [ 1,  0 ];
    [  8,  0,  0  ] -> [ 0,  0 ];
    [ 16,  1,  1  ] -> [ 0,  0 ];
    [ 32,  1,  1  ] -> [ 0,  0 ];
    [ 64,  1,  1  ] -> [ 0,  0 ];
    [128,  1,  1  ] -> [ 0,  0 ];
    [255,  1,  1  ] -> [ 0,  0 ];

TEST_VECTORS 'filter clock control'
   ([tclk,gAddr,grd_wrLo,gioLo,tcLo,reset] ->
    [cntLatch,cLoadLo,cntrNabLo,filtClk,resetLo])
    [ 1, 6, 0, 0, x, 1 ] -> [ 1, 0, 0, z, 0 ]; "reset
    [ 1, 6, 0, 0, 1, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, 0, 0, 1 ];
    [ 0, 6, 0, 0, 1, 0 ] -> [ 0, 1, 0, 0, 1 ]; "counter
                                          " latch enable
    [ 1, 6, 0, 0, 1, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, 0, 0, 1 ];

    [ 1, 5, 0, 0, 1, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, 0, 0, 1 ];
 "32"[ k, 5, 0, 0, 1, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, 1, 0, 1 ]; "set
```

```
                                        " cntrNabLo high
    [ k, 4, 0, 0, 1, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, 0, 0, 1 ]; "set
                                        " cntrNabLo low again
    [ 1, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, 0, 0, 1 ]; "counter at
                                        "terminal count
    [ 0, 0, x, x, 0, 0 ] -> [ 1, 0, 0, 0, 1 ]; "counter
                                        "load
    [ 0, 0, x, x, 1, 0 ] -> [ 1, 0, 0, 0, 1 ];
"37"[ 1, 0, x, x, 1, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, 0, 1, 1 ]; "toggle
                                        "filtClk
    [ 1, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, 0, 1, 1 ]; "counter at
                                        "terminal count
    [ 0, 0, x, x, 0, 0 ] -> [ 1, 0, 0, 1, 1 ]; " counter load
"40"[ 0, 0, x, x, 1, 0 ] -> [ 1, 0, 0, 1, 1 ];
    [ 1, 0, x, x, 1, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, 0, 0, 1 ]; "toggle
                                                    "filtClk

    [ k, 5, 0, 0, 1, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, 1, 0, 1 ]; "set
                                        "cntrNabLo high
    [ 1, 0, x, x, 1, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, 1, 0, 1 ];
"44"[ 1, 7, 0, 0, x, 0 ] -> [ 1, x, 1, 0, 1 ];

    "program control toggles:
    [ k, 7, 0, 0, x, 0 ] -> [ 1, x, 1, 1, 1 ];
"46"[ k, 7, 0, 0, x, 0 ] -> [ 1, x, 1, 0, 1 ];
    [ k, 7, 0, 0, x, 0 ] -> [ 1, x, 1, 1, 1 ];
"48"[ k, 7, 0, 0, x, 0 ] -> [ 1, x, 1, 0, 1 ];

END mem_addr_decode
```

Listing 2. GAL 22CV10 Abel Source Code

```
MODULE asic_bus_control
    " flag '-r4'

TITLE 'ASIC bus address decode and ADC strobe control
      for RTX2001 waveform generator
      Jan Hofland
      900404
      '

"              +---u---+
"         tclk |1    24| Vcc
"          GA0 |2    23| GD0  tri-state
"          GA1 |3    22| GD1  tri-state
"          GA2 |4    21| serDatLd
"     grd_wrLo |5    20| DACltch
"        gioLo |6    19| Qd  local state variable
"       noUse7 |7    18| Qc  local state variable
"       noUse8 |8    17| Qb  local state variable
"      strobLo |9    16| Qa  local state variable
"     fifoMtLo |10   15| fifoRdLo
"    fifoFulLo |11   14| fifoWrLo
"          gnd |12   13| reset
"              +-------+

"  The purpose of this programmable device is to load a 16
" bit shift register from the external ASIC bus and shift its
" output into the serial DAC, and strobe the DAC LE (Latch
" Enable) input after 18 data bits are shifted into the DAC.
" Data is shifted in most significant bit first at an 8 MHz
" rate. The last two bits are always zero. This device also
" controls writing to the FIFO and reading from it. If the
" FIFO is full, then writing is inhibited, and if it is
" empty, then reading is inhibited. The two FIFO status bits
" can be read on the lower two bits of the ASIC bus.

"device declaration
 U8 DEVICE 'P22V10';

"pin declarations
" inputs
 tclk          pin 1;   "8 MHz clock out of RTX2001
 GA0,GA1,GA2   pin 2,3,4;  "ASIC bus register address
 grd_wrLo      pin 5;   "ASIC bus read/write
 gioLo         pin 6;   "ASIC bus external access enable
 noUse7,noUse8 pin 7,8; "unused inputs  pulled up
 strobLo       pin 9;   "external FIFO data write strobe
                        " pulled low to request a write. Set
                        " High after fifoWrLo goes low.
                        " fifoWrLo then goes high again to
                        " write data into FIFO. User must
                        " leave data valid at least 250 ns
                        " after setting strobLo high.
 fifoMtLo,fifoFulLo  pin 10,11;  "FIFO status signals
 reset         pin 13;  "system reset inhibits FIFO read/write

"outputs
 GD1,GD0       pin 22,23;  "ASIC bus data lines for reading
                           "status
 serDatLd      pin 21;  "shift register load control
 DACltch       pin 20;  "DAC latch enable signal
 Qd,Qc,Qb,Qa   pin 19,18,17,16;  "counter state variables
                           "used for generation of DACltch
 fifoRdLo      pin 15;  "ASIC bus controlled FIFO read
                           "active low
 fifoWrLo      pin 14;  "FIFO write signal  active low

"constant declarations
 x,z,c,k = .X.,.Z.,.C.,.K.;
 gAddr   = [GA2,GA1,GA0];  "ASIC bus register address
 sCnt    = [Qd,Qc,Qb,Qa];  "shift register control variables

"pin attributes
 GD1,GD0          ISTYPE 'com,pos';
 Qd,Qc,Qb,Qa      ISTYPE 'reg,pos';
 serDatLd         ISTYPE 'com,pos';
 DACltch          ISTYPE 'com,pos';
 fifoRdLo         ISTYPE 'com,neg';
 fifoWrLo         ISTYPE 'reg,neg';

STATE_DIAGRAM sCnt

" a 16 state gray code counter is implemented. The idle state
" is state 0. If the DAC shift register is loaded, the
" counter will progress through 16 state to state 1000, set
" the DAClteh signal, and then reverse direction. When it
" gets back to state 1010 it will then go to the idle state
" 0000. DAClteh will get cleared 1/2 clock cycle later to
" strobe the serial data into the DAC.
state ^b0000:
   if (!reset & (gAddr == 0) & !grd_wrLo & !gioLo)
   then ^b0001
   else ^b0000;
state ^b0001:
   if (!reset)
   then ^b0011
   else ^b0000;
state ^b0011:
   if (!reset)
   then ^b0010
   else ^b0000;
state ^b0010:
   if (!reset)
   then ^b0110
   else ^b0000;
state ^b0110:
   if (!reset)
   then ^b0111
   else ^b0000;
state ^b0111:
   if (!reset)
   then ^b0101
   else ^b0000;
state ^b0101:
   if (!reset)
   then ^b0100
   else ^b0000;
state ^b0100:
   if (!reset)
   then ^b1100
   else ^b0000;
state ^b1100:
   if (!reset)
   then ^b1101
   else ^b0000;
```

```
state ^b1101:
   if (!reset)
   then ^b1111
   else ^b0000;
state ^b1111:
   if (!reset)
   then ^b1110
   else ^b0000;
state ^b1110:
   if (!reset)
   then ^b1010
   else ^b0000;
state ^b1010:
   if (!reset & !DACltch)
   then ^b1011
   else ^b0000;
state ^b1011:
   if (!reset & !DACltch)
   then ^b1001
   else  if (!reset & DACltch)
         then ^b1010
         else ^b0000;
state ^b1001:
   if (!reset & !DACltch)
   then ^b1000
   else  if (!reset & DACltch)
         then ^b1011
         else ^b0000;
state ^b1000:  "turn-around state
   if (!reset)
   then ^b1001
   else ^b0000;

EQUATIONS

 fifoWrLo.RE   = reset; "asynchronous reset of all flip-flops

 serDatLd   = (gAddr == 0) & !grd_wrLo & !gioLo;

 DACltch.EN = !reset;       "tri-state connection to DAC if
                            "reset active
 DACltch    = (sCnt == 8)  "set at turn-around state
      # DACltch & (tclk # (Qd & !Qc));"not reset condition

 !fifoRdLo  = (gAddr == 1) & grd_wrLo & !gioLo & !tclk &
                   fifoMtLo & !reset
              # !fifoRdLo & !tclk; "hold low if last read of
                            "fifo asserts fifoMtLo
 !fifoWrLo := !reset & !strobLo & fifoFulLo
              # !reset & !strobLo & !fifoWrLo;" hold low if
                            " writing last word in FIFO sets
                            " fifoFulLo

 GD1.EN = (gAddr == 3) & grd_wrLo & !gioLo; "status read
                            " tri-state enable

 GD1 = !fifoFulLo;

 GD0.EN = (gAddr == 3) & grd_wrLo & !gioLo; "status read
                            " tri-state enable

 GD0 = !fifoMtLo;

TEST_VECTORS 'serial data control'
   ([tclk,gAddr,grd_wrLo,gioLo,reset] ->
                                  [sCnt,serDatLd,DACltch])
    [ 0, x, x, x, 1 ] -> [ 0, x, z ];
    [ 1, x, x, 1, 0 ] -> [ 0, 0, 0 ];
    [ 1, 0, 0, 0, 0 ] -> [ 0, 1, 0 ];
    [ 0, 0, 0, 0, 0 ] -> [ 0, 1, 0 ]; "load shift register
                                       " when tclk 0 to 1

    [ 1, 0, 0, 0, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, 0 ];
    [ 1, x, x, 1, 0 ] -> [ 1, 0, 0 ];
    [ k, x, x, 1, 0 ] -> [ 3, 0, 0 ];
    [ k, x, x, 1, 0 ] -> [ 2, 0, 0 ];
    [ k, x, x, 1, 0 ] -> [ 6, 0, 0 ];
    [ k, x, x, 1, 0 ] -> [ 7, 0, 0 ];
    [ k, x, x, 1, 0 ] -> [ 5, 0, 0 ];
    [ k, x, x, 1, 0 ] -> [ 4, 0, 0 ];
    [ k, x, x, 1, 0 ] -> [12, 0, 0 ];
    [ k, x, x, 1, 0 ] -> [13, 0, 0 ];
    [ k, x, x, 1, 0 ] -> [15, 0, 0 ];
    [ k, x, x, 1, 0 ] -> [14, 0, 0 ];
    [ k, x, x, 1, 0 ] -> [10, 0, 0 ];
    [ k, x, x, 1, 0 ] -> [11, 0, 0 ];
    [ k, x, x, 1, 0 ] -> [ 9, 0, 0 ];
    [ k, x, x, 1, 0 ] -> [ 8, 0, 1 ];
    [ k, x, x, 1, 0 ] -> [ 9, 0, 1 ]; "turn around
    [ k, x, x, 1, 0 ] -> [11, 0, 1 ];
    [ k, x, x, 1, 0 ] -> [10, 0, 1 ];
    [ k, x, x, 1, 0 ] -> [ 0, 0, 1 ];
    [ 0, x, x, 1, 0 ] -> [ 0, 0, 0 ]; "DACltch cleared

TEST_VECTORS 'FIFO control & status'
   ([tclk,gAddr,grd_wrLo,gioLo,strobLo,fifoMtLo,
     fifoFulLo,reset] -> [fifoRdLo,fifoWrLo,GD1,GD0])
    [ 0, x, x, 1, 1, x, 1, 1 ] -> [ 1, 1, z, z ]; "reset
    [ 0, x, x, 1, 1, 0, 1, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, z, z ];
    [ 1, x, x, 1, 1, 0, 1, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, z, z ];
    [ k, x, x, 1, 1, 0, 1, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, z, z ];
    [ k, x, x, 1, 0, 0, 1, 0 ] -> [ 1, 0, z, z ]; "FIFO write
    [ k, x, x, 1, 1, 0, 1, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, z, z ];
    [ 1, x, x, 1, 1, 1, 1, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, z, z ];
    [ k, x, x, 1, 0, 1, 1, 0 ] -> [ 1, 0, z, z ];
    [ k, x, x, 1, 1, 1, 1, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, z, z ];
    [ k, x, x, 1, 0, 1, 1, 0 ] -> [ 1, 0, z, z ];
    [ 1, x, x, 1, 0, 1, 0, 0 ] -> [ 1, 0, z, z ]; "FIFO full
    [ k, x, x, 1, 0, 1, 0, 0 ] -> [ 1, 0, z, z ];
    [ k, x, x, 1, 1, 1, 0, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, z, z ];

    [ 1, 1, 1, 0, 1, 1, 0, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, z, z ]; "FIFO read
    [ 0, 1, 1, 0, 1, 1, 0, 0 ] -> [ 0, 1, z, z ];
    [ 1, 1, 1, 0, 1, 1, 1, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, z, z ];
    [ 1, 1, 1, 0, 1, 1, 1, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, z, z ];
    [ 0, 1, 1, 0, 1, 1, 1, 0 ] -> [ 0, 1, z, z ];
    [ 0, 1, 1, 0, 1, 0, 1, 0 ] -> [ 0, 1, z, z ]; "empty
                                                   "again
    [ 1, 1, 1, 0, 1, 0, 1, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, z, z ];
    [ 1, 1, 1, 0, 1, 0, 1, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, z, z ];
    [ 0, 1, 1, 0, 1, 0, 1, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, z, z ]; "no read
    [ 1, 1, 1, 0, 1, 0, 1, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, z, z ];

    [ 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 0, 1, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, z, z ];
    [ 1, 3, 1, 0, 1, 0, 1, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, 0, 1 ]; "status
                                                   "read
    [ 0, 3, 1, 0, 1, 0, 1, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, 0, 1 ]; "FIFO empty
    [ 1, 3, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, z, z ];
    [ 1, 3, 1, 0, 1, 1, 1, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, 0, 0 ];
    [ 0, 3, 1, 0, 1, 1, 1, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, 0, 0 ];
    [ 1, 3, 1, 1, 1, 1, 0, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, z, z ];
    [ 1, 3, 1, 0, 1, 1, 0, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, 1, 0 ]; "FIFO full
    [ 0, 3, 1, 0, 1, 1, 0, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, 1, 0 ];
    [ 1, 3, 1, 1, 1, 1, 0, 0 ] -> [ 1, 1, z, z ];

END asic_bus_control
```

"The best executive is the one who has sense enough to pick good people to do what he needs done, and self-restraint enough to keep from meddling with them while they do it."

"Most of us are broad-minded enough to admit there are two sides to every question — our own and the side no intelligent, informed, sane and self-respecting person could possibly hold."

Glossary for Words Added to EBForth

Boot Code Glossary

#Que	(addr – n)	Return the number of values in the queue whose name is addr. reading a value from the data input source. Normally, this variable points to the hardware FIFO read routine. For demonstration purposes, it points to fetching values from the software command queue.
>Cbuf	(n addr –)	Insert n into the queue whose name is addr.
>Que	(n addr – fflg)	Store n into the queue whose name is addr and return a FALSE flag if the queue isn't full.
	(n addr – n addr tflg)	If the queue is full, return the value, the address, and a TRUE flag, indicating that there isn't any room in the queue.
>RH	(n –)	Write n to the RH register and clear the stale data flag kept in the RX register. This flag gets set whenever data is transferred from RH to the output DAC.
accuPt	(– n)	Return the sine of the current value of phase and delPhase scaled to a 50 mV increment and then the current offset is subtracted from it. Used to get the output value in accurate sine mode.
accuSine	(–)	Accurate sinewave mode command. Sets up the correct mode, the next point execution vector, and the sinewave frequency.
bufLoop0	(–)	Circular buffer mode. Sets up to output data from data buffer 0 in circular buffer mode.
bufLoop1	(–)	Circular buffer mode. Sets up to output data from data buffer 1 in circular buffer mode.
bufMax	(– 2048)	A constant. Corresponds to the size of the maximum data queue, in words.
bufOut0	(–)	Output from buffer 0 until it is empty.
bufOut1	(–)	Output from buffer 1 until it is empty.
buildCQ	(n –)	Create a queue structure in code space of n words. A defining word. The name of the structure should follow buildCQ. Sets up and initializes the #values variable, the head pointer for extracting values from the queue, the tail pointer for inserting values, and the end pointer for determining when to loop back to the beginning, and it allocates the necessary space to contain n vlues.
buildDQ	(n –)	Create a queue structure in data space of n words. A defining word. The name of the queue should follow buildDQ; e.g., 50 buildDQ fudd will build a queue named fudd that will hold 50 values. Sets up the #values variable, the head, tail, and end pointers, and allocates space for n values.
calcFreq	(–)	Calculate the actual sinewave frequency from the known values of timebase period and phase increment. Because of the quantized nature of these parameters, the actual output frequency may differ somewhat from the set frequency.
calcInt	(n1 n2 –)	Calculate the required timebase period from the phase increment and sinewave frequency. Also checks the period to make sure that it is at least the mode dependent minimum.
calcPhaseInc	(freq –)	Calculate the required phase increment from the set frequency for sinewave output.
Cbuf>	(addr – n)	Fetch the next value from the queue whose name is addr. No checking is done to see if the queue is empty. Most useful for outputting from a circular buffer where the data output sequence is repetitive.
circBuf	(–)	Circular buffer output mode. Fetch the next value from the current data buffer and load it into the RH register to be output to the DAC.
clearQ	(addr –)	Initialize the #values, the head pointer and the tail pointer for the queue specified by addr.
cntMsk	(– 0FFF)	A constant. A mask used for setting the number of data values input with the ldBuf command.
cntrDisabl	(–)	Disable the filter clock (hardware) counter. This word writes to ASIC address 1C (hex) as a write only pseudo register. For low values of filter cutoff, the filter clock is controlled with timer 1 interrupts.
cntrEnabl	(–)	Enable the filter clock (hardware) counter.
cosAdj	(– n)	Return the cosine adjust value for the current values of phase and delPhase. Used in the accurate sine output mode.
cutoff	(– addr)	A variable for the lowpass filter setpoint.
DAC!	(n –)	Write the 16 bit value to the DAC shift register on the ASIC bus. Writes to ASIC address 18 (hex).
delPhase	(– addr)	A variable for incremental phase interpolation. Used in accurate sine mode to keep track of the incremental sinewave phase between adjacent values of phase.
delPhaseInc	(– addr)	A variable for adding to the incremental phase accumulator. This value is added to delPhase for each new output calculation in accurate sine mode.
div512	(n1 – n2)	Divide n1 by 512 truncated toward 0 (not floored). Used in calculation of the cosine adjust value in accurate sine mode.
doCmd	(n –)	Execute command n, where n is an index into the table of command execution vectors, parse. This word makes sure that the command input from the input stream (the input FIFO) is a valid command and then executes it.
DOES>	(–)	An immediate word to define the runtime behavior of a word created in code space. Typically used for addressing or fetching values from a table. Uses _DOES.
DQ0	(– addr)	Start of data queue 0.
DQ1	(– addr)	Start of data queue 1.
fastSine	(–)	Fast sinewave mode command. Sets up the mode, the next output routine execution vector, and the sinewave frequency for the fast sinewave output mode. Expects the next word in the input stream to be the desired sinewave frequency.
fifo@	(– n)	Read a value from the input FIFO on the ASIC bus. Reads from ASIC address 18 (hex).
fifoFul?	(– flg)	Return a TRUE flag if the input FIFO is full. Reads the input FIFO status bits from ASIC address 1B (hex) and masks bit 1.
fifoMT?	(– flg)	Return a TRUE flag if the input FIFO is empty. Reads the input FIFO status bits from ASIC address 1B (hex) and masks bit 0.
filtCnt!	(n –)	Write an 8 bit value to the filter

clock hardware counter load register at ASIC address 1E (hex). Only the lower byte of n is used. The upper byte is a don't care.

GOES> (–) An immediate word to define the runtime behavior of an array stored in data space. Uses _DOES.

getPeriod (–) Get the sample rate from the input stream and set the required timebase period into the timer 0 load register.

goAdr (– addr) A variable. Contains the execution vector for the mode dependent output update routine.

initTimers (–) Initialize the timer clock sources to the internal TCLK source and mask off all three timer interrupts.

initialize (–) Initialization routine. Sets up the default to fast sinewave output mode, 40 KHz lowpass filter cutoff, and data buffer 0 as the current read buffer and write buffer.

intSetup (–) Load the interrupt vectors for the timer 0 and timer 1 interrupt service routines.

ldBuf (–) Buffer load command. Specifies which buffer to put the data into, and how many data points, followed by those data points. Expects the next word in the input stream to be the number of data values to follow with the most significant bit set if using buffer 1 or clear if using buffer 0. This is followed by the data values to be put into the data buffer.

main (–) The main high level loop when inputting commands from the input FIFO. This command is an infinite loop of reading a command from the input stream and then execute that command.

maxBW (– 40000) A constant corresponding to the upper limit for setting the lowpass filter (in Hz).

maxFreq (mode – n) A table of upper limits on sinewave frequency dependent on output sinewave mode.

minBW (– 1) A constant corresponding to the lower limit of lowpass filter cutoff (in Hz).

minIval (mode – n2) A table of sample rate minimum values. Indexed by the operating mode. These values are based on the amount of time necessary to calculate or fetch the next output value to be put into the DAC and then respond to the timer 0 interrupt to output it. There isn't much time to do anything else.

mode (– addr) A varible corresponding to one of five defined output operating modes.

newAccuPt (–) Load the sine of the current phase into RH and clears the stale data flag in RX when operating in accurate sine mode. Also updates the phase variables for the next point to be output.

newPhase (–) Calculate the next phase and delPhase for accurate sine mode output.

newPt (–) The timer 0 interrupt service routine. Transfer the value in the RH register to the DAC shift register and set the stale data flag in RX.

nextPt (–) Put the next sinewave point to be output into the RH register and update the phase variables for the next output point when operating in fast sinewave output mode.

offset (– addr) A variable that is subtracted from the scaled output value when operating in accurate sinewave mode.

onceOut (–) Single buffer output mode. Output the data in the current read buffer until the buffer is empty and then stop.

parse (n – addr) A table of execution vectors for the recognized commands input from the input stream.

pbStop (–) The NMI Interrupt Service Routine. Performs an abort and outputs a "Stopped" message when the pushbutton input is sensed active. Used to 'recover' from an output mode that doesn't have an explicit stopping condition, or to recover from a software bug running away with the machine. Wish I had this one early in the development...

peeQue (addr – n) Return the top value from the queue whose name is addr without changing the read (head) pointer.

phase (– addr) A variable used for the phase accumulator in fast sinewave and accurate sinewave output modes.

phaseAdj (n1 – n2) Adjust phase point n1 to be within one cycle. Keeps the phase variable from exceeding two pi radians (equivalent).

phaseInc (– addr) A variable for the phase increment to add to phase in fast sinewave and accurate sinewave output modes to determine the next sinewave point to be output.

pi/2 (– 200) A constant corresponding to the number of points in one quadrant of the sinewave table.

pingPong (–) Ping pong output mode. First output data from the current data buffer until it's empty and switch to the other buffer and output data from it until it is empty. Then stop outputting.

pingPong0 (–) Ping pong output mode starting from buffer 0.

pingPong1 (–) Ping pong output mode starting from buffer 1.

Que> (addr – n tflg) Fetch the next value from the queue at addr and return a TRUE flag if the queue wasn't empty
(addr – fflg) or return a FALSE flag if the queue is empty.

readPtr (– addr) A variable. Contains the address of the current data buffer to be read from.

scale (– addr) A variable used to scale the output sinewave in increments of 50 mV when operating in accurate sinewave output mode .

scaleTop (– 40) A constant. The maximum value for scale.

setAmpl (–) Set output amplitude command. Used if operating in accurate sinewave output mode. Expects the next value in the input stream to be an output amplitude expressed in millivolts RMS. Quantizes the input to be a multiple of 50 mV and stores it in the scale variable.

setBufSiz (addr n –) Set the buffer at addr to a size of n words. This routine is typically used when using a data or command buffer size different than the default maximum size.

setCutoff (n –) Set up the lowpass filter for a cutoff of n Hz. Also determines if the hardware counter or timer 1 will be used for controlling the filter clock.

setFilt (–) Set lowpass filter cutoff command. Expects the next value in the input stream to be the filter cutoff in Hz., range 1 to 40000.

setFreq (freq –) Set the sinewave frequency and set the sample rate corresponding to that frequency and the output mode.

setOffset (–) Set output offset command. Used if in accurate sinewave output mode. Expects the next value in the input stream to

		be the offset in 100's of microvolts. No scaling or bounds checking is performed on this value. The value input is subtracted from the scaled value of sinewave output.
setPeriod	(period –)	Set the timebase sample rate (timer 0 load register value). Makes sure that it is at least the mode dependent minimum value. If in a sinewave output mode then it also readjusts the phase increments to be consistent with the desired output frequency and the desired sample rate.
sine	(– n)	An 800 point table of sine values scaled to 2 VRMS. Used in both fast sinewave and accurate sinewave output modes. In fast sinewave mode the output values are taken directly from this table. In the accurate sinewave mode interpolation is performed for values in between the table values. This table is in code space.
sineFreq	(– addr)	A variable corresponding to the sinewave output frequency.
start	(–)	Start output command. Unmasks timer 0 interrupts.
stop	(–)	Stop output by disabling the timer 0 interrupt.
stop?	(– flg)	Return non-zero if the timer 0 interrupt is masked off.
table	(n –)	A defining word to create a data table of n values in code space. Returns the nth value when invoked at run time.
tbPeriod	(– addr)	A variable corresponding to the programmed value of timer 0 counter. The actual interrupt period from timer 0 will be one more than this value (in increments corresponding to the 8 MHz TCLK).
toglFC	(–)	Toggle the filter clock output if not using the hardware timer to control it. Writes to ASIC address 1F (hex) to cause the filter clock output to toggle.
twoPi	(– 800)	A constant corresponding to the number of points used to represent one cycle of a sinewave in the sine table.
U>	(u1 u2 – flg)	Return TRUE if unsigned u1 is greater than unsigned u2.
UMAX	(u1 u2 – u)	Unsigned version of MAX. Return the larger of u1 and u2.
UMIN	(u1 u2 – u)	Unsigned version of MIN. Return the smaller of u1 and u2.
writePtr	(– addr)	A variable. Contains the address of the current data queue to load data into.
_DOES	(–)	A low level word in building GOES> and DOES>.
_readFifo	(– n)	Read a value from the input FIFO. Waits until there is a value in the FIFO.

Demonstration Software Glossary

>cq	(n –)	load n into the command queue. Used for simulating the hardware input FIFO.
_rdCQ	(– n)	Return the next value from the command queue. The normal command fetch is revectored to this word for the demonstration.
atst	(–)	A simple performance test to find the minimum and maximum number of clock cycles to execute tst. This loops 10000 times.
btst	(–)	A simple performance test to find the minimum and maximum number of clock cycles to execute tst for the ping pong and once out demonstrations. Repeats tst 40 times.
choose	(– n)	Select one of the 6 demos or quit.
cmdQ	(–)	The start of a circular buffer structure in code space for simulating the hardware command FIFO. This command queue is preloaded with the command codes and associated parameters and data. Then the command execution software is revectored to fetch words from the command queue instead of the input FIFO.
cmdQMT?	(– flg)	Return a TRUE flag if the command queue is empty.
cqMax	(– 512)	A constant. Maximum size of the command queue, in words.
dMenu	(–)	Display the menu for selecting a demonstration.
dVect	(n1 – n2)	Return the n1st demonstration execution vector. The value n1 comes from the word choose.
demo	(–)	The high level word for initiating the demonstration.
demoAsine1	(–)	Demonstrate the accurate sinewave mode with a 1 KHz sinewave output, 1 VRMS out, 900 mV offset, lowpass filter set to 1 KHz.
demoCircSq	(–)	demonstrate the circular buffer operating mode by outputting a 1 KHz square wave between +1V and -1V. Filter cutoff set to 40 KHz.
demoFsine1	(–)	Demonstrate the fast sinewave mode with a 1 KHz sinewave output, 2 VRMS out, lowpass filter set to 1 KHz.
demoFsine20	(–)	Demonstrate the fast sinewave mode with a 20 KHz sinewave output, 2 VRMS out, lowpass filter set to 20 KHz.
demoInit	(–)	Initialize the software for running the demonstration. Performs the same initialization as the normal software with the exception of the read FIFO command vector.
demoMain	(–)	The demo version of the high level operating loop. This loop is the same as the normal main loop, except that it terminates when the command queue is empty.
demoOnce	(–)	Demonstrate the single buffer operating mode. Generates one cycle of a 100 Hz sine that is linearly lattenuated to zero.
fixCQ	(–)	Adjust the tail pointer and end pointer of the command queue after loading the queue to account for its actual size.
high	(– addr)	A variable used for some simple performance testing. Used to keep track of the maximum number of clock cycles to execute tst.
low	(– addr)	A variable used for some simple performance testing. Used to keep track of the minimum number of clock cycles to execute tst.
shoParms	(–)	Show some of the parameters for the current operating mode if the operating mode is a sinewave mode. Displays the current values of phase, phase increment, delta phase, delta phase increment, frequency, offset, and scale value.
shoSparms	(–)	Displays some of the variable values relevant to the current operating mode. Shows the values pertinent to a sinewave if in one of those mode and displays the lowpass filter cutoff and the output sample period.
tst	(–)	A test loop similar to the normal operating loop. Used for some simple timing tests. This word puts a new value into the DAC and then generates the next output value and puts it into the holding register.

Real Computing

RBOCs, C Sickness, HST Modems, Metal and More on Minix

By Rick Rodman

A Dark Day in the Computer World

July 25, 1991 was a dark day in the history of computers. On that day, Judge Greene reluctantly permitted the RBOCs into the information-providing business. He was not pleased with this himself, but felt that the Justice Department had left him no choice. He foresaw that this will lead to "the elimination of competition from that market and the concentration of the sources of information of the American people in just a few dominant, collaborative conglomerates, with the captive local telephone monopolies as their base."

Why is it so bad that the RBOCs are allowed into this business? After all, won't it result in more and better choices for the customer? Let's look at this question.

The RBOCs are not like any other company. Remember, they have millions of customers who have no choice but to pay what they charge. Wherever you live in the U.S., you have exactly one choice as to your local phone service, and that is whether to pay what the local monopoly charges you. They can't lose money—they're guaranteed a profit by the FCC and the PUCs. A company that can't lose money is not a fair competitor to a company that can.

The other reason they can't compete fairly is that they set the rates charged to their competitors, but don't pay them themselves. How would you like it if your competitors set your costs but didn't have to pay them?

As Judge Greene says, it is inevitable that GEnie, Prodigy, CompuServe, Delphi, and whatever other information providers there are, will either be acquired or go out of business. Look at what's happened to the cellular telephone industry: All of the major cellular carriers are now owned by RBOCs. Has this resulted in lower prices, better quality or any other benefit to the consumer? In the words of the immortal Doug MacKenzie, "No way, eh!"

The RBOCs have a history of providing poor service to their captive customers while at the same time tugging and poking at every restriction on them. Deregulating them is anticompetitive, anticonsumer, antidemocratic. If things continue to progress in this fashion, the RBOCs will soon control cable television, too. When they tell you you'll get better service and more choices, think about how much better and cheaper your local telephone service has gotten, and how many more companies you had to choose from. Don't blame it on the MFJ—the MFJ only split the greedy, monopolistic Bell System into seven greedy, monopolistic RBOCs.

setjmp and longjmp

Ask any C programmer about *setjmp* and *longjmp*, and he's likely to mumble something along the line of "those are the functions you're not supposed to use or know about." But these are handy functions to have around.

See Real/53, page 18

Rick Rodman works and plays with computers because he sees that they are the world's greatest machine, appliance, canvas and plaything. He has programmed micros, minis and mainframes and loved them all. In his basement full of aluminum boxes, wire-wrap boards, cables running here and there, and a few recognizable computers, he is somewhere between Leonardo da Vinci and Dr. Frankenstein. Rick can be reached via Usenet at uunet!virtech!rickr or via 1200 bps modem at 703-330-9049.

Real Computing

X-10 Revisited, Mach, Minix and Desqview/X

By Rick Rodman

[There are certain disadvantages to publishing a magazine after hours. An obvious one is where you rush into town between business trips to get ready for press, hurry through paste up, run off to the printer and finally to the post office and then find out you dropped the second half of an article! Of course, no one will notice such a gaff, right? Right. My apologies to Rick, and to those who took the time to point out my error. Following is the Real Computing installment from last issue—in its entirety!—Ed.]

X-10 Revisited

In issue 48 I wrote glowingly of the X-10 Powerhouse computer interface, known as the CP-290, that "any X-10 commands which come across the line are converted to status messages that the computer can see". Mike Morris writes: "I have a CP-290, and mine does not produce these messages when I push a button on a manual controller."

After some experimentation and consulting with the X-10 gurus at Home Control Concepts, I have to admit Mike is right. The CP-290 does report to the computer when buttons are pressed on it itself, but it doesn't report codes that come over the wire. It is a send-only, unidirectional device.

Actually, the plot's even thicker than that. Manual controllers, like the wall switch modules, don't send codes at all, they only receive them. There is no way for a central controller to know

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One use of these functions is to implement coroutines, a language feature that C doesn't have but is usually available in Modula-2. As an example, consider the typical Mac/Windows/PM program. It has to be written as a "message loop", bottom-up style, using messy state variables to keep track of what's happening at any given time. But by using coroutines, you can separate the message loop from the main program logic, which can then be written in conventional, more readable, "top-down" style. (The implementation is left as an exercise for the reader.)

The *setjmp* function is supposed to keep enough state information for a C program to be able to be restored to that state later. This means it must save the stack pointer, frame pointer, and all register variables. In most NS32 implementations, registers R2 to R7 are used for register variables. The function is passed a *jmp_buf* variable, which must be of array type so that it is passed by reference (address). It cannot push things on the stack, because it must return with everything as it was. It returns an integer which is zero when the environment has been saved, or nonzero if it returned via *longjmp*.

The *longjmp* function is passed a *jmp_buf* variable and an integer value, which should be nonzero. When you call it, it doesn't return. Instead, the state information in the *jmp_buf* variable (whether it's valid or not) is loaded and execution continues by returning from the *setjmp* function again.

The reason I became interested in these functions is the overwhelming complexity of even the simplest multitasking routines. Without an emulator, it could be simply impossible to debug them. However, with non-preemptive or "cooperative" multitasking, it is not necessary to be so concerned about the machine state, nor deal with the hardware on such an intimate level. So, by using the *setjmp* and *longjmp* calls, plus one additional call which imitates setjmp, the basics of Metal's kernel are being constructed from simple C calls. This kernel will be message-based internally, using int values as messages.

Presently, Metal 0.7 is available in an installation kit including all source files. To obtain a copy, simply send me sufficient formatted floppies for 1.4 megabytes in a reusable mailer with return postage, and I'll put it on them and send it back to you.

C Sickness

After upgrading my C compiler to 6.0, I spent literal hours tracking down long math problems. It seems that Microsoft, in version 6, is even more aggressive in truncating values to ints. Consider the following statement:

```
long_variable = 0x40000L; long_variable = long_variable >> 1;
```

In older versions, and in most C compilers, the value resulting would be 0x20000L. But not Microsoft C 6.0! You see, the shift count 1 is an int, giving them *carte blanche* to truncate the other side of the expression to an int too, causing the result to be zero. So, even though a shift count of more than 16 bits is ridiculous, the shift count has to be changed to a long. Who asked for this?

Minix on the PC-532

Loading the Minix system onto the PC-532 is a tedious process. You have to download each of several big files into RAM in the debugger, write it to an unused hard disk partition, boot Minix, "ncat" the partition into a file, decompress the file, then "tar x" the file. Just transferring the data takes a long time; even compressed, there's about two megabytes of data to transfer.

So what's it like once the transferring is complete? How's the "feel" of the system? Well, Minix on the PC-532 is probably best characterized as fast, but sparse. Only the barest minimum of necessary files are included with the archives. The remainder of sources can be transferred from another Minix system, or obtained from Internet archives if you have access, or from various mail servers. (A "mail server" is a file archive which works through E-mail. You send it a message like "index" or "send foobar.txt" and it sends you its index or the requested file as a mail message.)

I've just discovered that I can't use the C compiler, because my system doesn't have an FPU. The compiler provided is Gnu C. A small Emacs clone called "xemacs" is provided; it's similar to, but not the same, as "elle", provided with Minix 1.5. Presently I'm running the 1.3 kernel. Probably by the time you read this, I'll have upgraded to the so-called "1.5 hybrid" kernel, which is a mixture of 1.3 and 1.5, and hopefully I'll have a patched C compiler running as well.

In other Minix news, many people have complained that the elvis vi clone included with Minix 1.5 dies with an "alarm clock" message. (Should we capitalize "elvis"? It's named after a "pop singer", I think.) At any rate, the mystery of this message has been solved. It's related to the "keytime" function for slow arrow keys on serial terminals. To disable the "keytime" and prevent the crash, use the command ":se kt=0", or create a file ".exrc" in your home directory and put a line "se kt=0" in it.

The source for elle is not included with Minix 1.5, but the source to elvis and mined are.

The US Robotics HST Dual-Standard Modem

My BBS is now equipped with a US Robotics HST Dual-Standard modem, acquired through US Robotics' sysop program. This modem is capable of operating in V.32bis or in HST mode, both of which are capable of throughput up to 14.4 kb/s. Further, it is equipped with V.42 data compression as well. Now we're talking fast! Feel free to call up and try it out, and make comments.

Next time

More on multitasking and the NS32. Also, I've been playing some more with my X-10 devices; and, I hope to have more to report on Metal and on Don Rowe's Kotekan operating system. In the meantime, may your sizeof int's and your sizeof long's ever be equal.●

Where to write or call

BBS: 1 703 330 9049
(evenings; 1200, 2400, 9600, or even higher!)

Metal OS, c/o Richard Rodman
8329 Ivy Glen Court
Manassas, VA 22110

Home Control Concepts
9353-C Activity Road
San Diego, CA 92126
1-619-693-8887

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whether a user has manually turned a light on or not.

There is another computer interface available, which is called the TW-523. This device has an optoisolated TTL-level interface which can be operated through parallel input and output bits. It's "dumber" than the CP-290—it has no battery backup or timers—but it's bi-directional: the computer can send or receive any X-10 code over the power lines. Remember, the manual buttons on the wall switch units don't send any code. However, you can receive codes sent by other controllers or by motion detectors.

If you're planning a system controlled by a dedicated computer, the TW-523 sounds like the way to go. ItÆs available from Home Control Concepts for $30. It's also available as part of a Powerline Interface Kit for $69, which includes a C library and sample code as well as a cable for connection to a PC parallel or serial port.

HCC also has available some wireless motion detectors. These detectors send an on-code when motion is detected, and an off-code when motion stops, through the same base unit used by the wireless hand control. Because they're wireless, you can put them anywhere—out in the yard, garage, parapet, moat, wherever. Because they send a code, you can not only turn on a light or sprinkler system, you can also detect the code in your TW-523 and activate a voice synthesizer or camcorder, or switch speakers connected to the stereo, or anything else.

Mike Morris suggests some neat applications for X-10: "I want to be able to turn on the sprinklers when the ground gets dry or if the burglar is leaving, but not the day after a rainstorm. I want to run the dishwasher after everybody goes to bed, then turn the water heater off but back on an hour before I get up. And divert the clothes dryer exhaust into the furnace air intake when appropriate so the furnace grabs the preheated humidified air."

Mike also provided some "from the trenches" information on X-10: "The X-10 signal can have problems 'jumping' across the two halves of a 220 volt household circuit. I ended up acquiring a capacitor of the proper value, installing it in a 220v plug and plugging it in. 'One of these days' I'll install the Leviton capacitor module in the main electrical panel, but for now, it works."

He also points out that some X-10 lamp modules "forget" their brightness setting and will "creep" up or down over several hours, and suggests "refreshing" their settings periodically. (That'll also solve the problem of people using the manual buttons—and staying too long in the bathroom, too!) He points out that the CP-290 doesn't keep accurate time, losing about an hour per month. Mine has forgotten its house code a couple of times. "The battery compartment in the CP-290 does not have a barrier between the battery and the circuit board. Mine leaked and ate away a few traces, which I repaired with a small soldering iron and 30 gauge wire."

Not only X-10, but the whole field of home automation is booming in popularity these days. The CE Bus, a fully-bi-directional superset of X-10, is coming. I'll venture a guess that the reasons for this sudden interest are (a) the increase in crime, especially senseless violence and vandalism, (b) higher energy costs, and (c) it's inexpensive and loads of fun!

Mach on the PC-532

Carnegie-Mellon has released a "Micro-Kernel" for Mach which contains no AT&T code. If you have ftp access (which I don't), you can get it and play with it. It's called a "micro-kernel" because it includes no I/O or utilities. A "UX server" task, made apparently of pieces of Unix, is run to provide the missing capabilities. Some folks at the Helsinki University of Technology in Finland have been working on bringing it up on the PC-532. Recently, they reported that they have the kernel itself running. The Mach kernel is "small"—about a quarter of a megabyte. They are cross-compiling using the Gnu C compiler and tools.

At the same time, reportedly, CMU has a number of people working on a "free" (non-AT&T) Unix emulator, and the Free Software Foundation (Gnu folks) are supposedly trying to work Mach into Gnu in some fashion.

Later in the year, the PC-532 Mach will become a part of CMU's standard distribution. The Encore 32532 system is one of three "reference ports" provided with OSF-1, also. Hopefully someone at National will notice that these are not fax machines.

Minix

In the meantime, patches have been developed for a 386 version of Minix, under which the Gnu tools are used for software development. With all the "smallness" of Minix out of the way, it becomes reasonable to implement subsystems like TCP/IP and X Window under Minix. However, Andy Tanenbaum, the author of Minix, originally intended it as a tutorial operating system for classes, and he doesn't want tremendous increases in the complexity of the package. For this reason, it is unlikely that the 386 version will be available from Prentice-Hall. Instead, if you want to run 386 Minix, you will have to either obtain ftp access to Internet and spend hours transferring files so you can have the fun of trying to cobble the system together from a bunch of patches, after which you can have the joy of trying to debug it. Some call the result "Advanced Minix".

The files you would need are supposedly as follows:

12259 Dec 12 1991 pub/Minix/oz/mx386.tute.Z
John NallÆs tutorial.
3623 Jul 11 1990 pub/Minix/oz/mx386_1.1.01.Z
patch to mx386.
45155 Jun 15 1990 pub/Minix/oz/mx386_1.1.t.Z
tar file with 386 patches.
12063 Jun 14 1990 pub/Minix/oz/bcc.tar.Z
tar file with 386 C compiler front-end.
121962 Jun 15 1990 pub/Minix/oz/bccbin16.tar.Z
C compiler 16-bit binary.
118254 Jun 15 1990 pub/Minix/oz/bccbin32.tar.Z
C compiler 32-bit binary. 43492 Jun 15 1990 pub/Minix/oz/bcclib.tar.Z
386 library sources.
96151 Aug 14 1991 pub/Minix/oz/cpp.tar.Z
C preprocessor (optional?).
30659 Nov 15 1991 pub/Minix/oz/cppmake.tar.Z
Earl Chew's cppmake program.

The Mars Hotel BBS in Maryland (1-301-277-9408) is supposed to have all these files. It also has a great deal of the comp.os.minix postings. For the moment, I've decided against bringing up 386 Minix, because I already have Minix with GCC on my PC-532.

Minix 1.6 is being beta-tested by some people out there.

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Zed Fest '91

Where Beer and BIOS Meet

By Lee Bradley

[Talk abounded at the '91 Trenton Computer Festival that 8-bitters should not wait a year to get together. It was decided to hold an affair in October. Lee Bradley, publisher of Eight Bits & Change, *took a leadership role. I asked Lee to fill us in on what transpired. In perfect North American style, we claim all "Zed-Fest's," the festivals held in Germany as reported by Jay Sage not withstanding!—Ed.]*

On October 18th, Ian Cottrell, his wife Nadine, daughter Jenny and son David headed south. John Anderson had sent his smoked YASBEC north a few days before to Paul Chidley; Paul put the smoke back in, for this is what is needed to repair anything smoked, according to Ian. Ian carried John's YASBEC with him.

By the 19th, the Cottrells, John, the working YASBEC, Lee and Linda Bradley, Steve Dresser, Howard Goldstein and Sigurd Kimpel had converged on Walt and Linda Wheeler's home in Nassau, NY. The keys CMAZE were pressed by John on his YASBEC. Lee hit <return>.

Zed Fest '91 had begun.

Others arrived. Jay Sage preceded Stephen Griswold by about an hour; Stephen entered the door muttering something about the map. What really happened with Stephen and the Sandwich Crew (both Lindas, Nadine and kids) remains fuzzy but the Crew, the sandwiches and Stephen united at about 3 PM, much to the relief of all. We later learned the delay was due to T-shirts reading *"Our Next Husbands Will Be Normal."* An unusual sandwich-making algorithm predating the Distributive Law added to the confusion: For Turkey = 1 to Turkeys_Ordered; Get_Roll; Dollup_of_Mayo; Turkey_Slice; Lettuce_Leaf; Assemble; Wrap; Cleanup; Next Turkey. [Ed: Notice Cleanup is inside the loop?]

Ian got Trenton '92 on the agenda. Jay took notes: April 11 and 12 this year (early!). We'll set up a booth at the Flea Market and have people assigned time slots to man/woman/computer it. Demos and talks will be intermixed in the lecture hall as well, but the emphasis will be outside. Call us if you want to help. We need Banners, Books, Brochures, BDOS', BIOS' and Bodies.

We talked of having our own awards at our own banquet Saturday night. Why should everyone eat gray roast beef and be put to sleep by an acceptance speech when we can pick our own meal and our own winners?

John Anderson's wife Judy joined us for dinner at the Four Brothers restaurant with the memorable quote: "John wants to build a CP/M LAN in our living room." The double anchovy pie eating contest was temporarily put on hold when anchovies were not found on the menu. Menus weren't a big thing for those present; we asked the waitress and found anchovies to be an undocumented topping. We ordered. Ian entertained those near him with some great new jokes and repeated the best on for those out of earshot when we returned to the Wheelers'.

Many of us descending into Walt's basement to call GEnie and join the 10 PM Saturday night CP/M conference. Chris McEwen, Brian Moore and John Anderson (who had gone home to Albany) were on. Chris asked for a write-up on Zed Fest.

Sunday morning, after a run with Linda Wheeler, Stephen and Jay, we talked briefly of BYE5 and ZREMOTE. Ian mentioned ZMD 2.0 possibilities and then we all watched a video of Walt flying a parachute-equipped ultra-light. Apple pies and Mexican dip materialized after a three hour session during which Jay, Howard, Stephen, Walt and I tried to bring Walt up to Z33 (almost made it but a Trantor/Osborned system got us in the end—where were you, Daryl, when we need you?).

Jay left around 3 PM. My wife and I took Howard and Steve home to New Haven and West Hartford, rolling in at 9 PM.

The photos will have to wait for next issue as black-and-white processing takes longer than color. All in all, it was a lot of fun! Sure hope we will see you at the next gathering!●

Computers: A Kid's Perspective

By David Cottrell, Ottawa ONT

I have had many opportunities to attend computer events all the country. I was at Zed Fest (I am Canadian), the fair at Trenton, and Walt Wheeler's get-together in Albany because my father, Ian Cottrell, always promises me fun-filled vacations.

Right.

No offense, but my idea of a good time is not listening to people talk about PBBS, RAM, ROM, Megs and hard drives. I'm into Ultima, Pac-Man and Super Mario. On the bright side, I have made many good friends and have seen some nice cities.

Maybe if I put my mind to it, I might learn what PBBS stands for and if $300 is a good price for a hard drive. Oh, well. I still enjoy computer shows and if you hear Ian Cottrell will be at a show, then you can almost count on my being there. Now, if only someone would tell me what Eight Bits and Change is supposed to mean....●

Z-System Corner

Implementing a Keyboard Buffer Using the NZCOM Virtual BIOS

By Jay Sage

First Some Personal Comments

Until I was 27 years old and met my wife, I had essentially never been out of the United States, and the same is true of my parents to this day. My whole family had the common American myopia that pictures the whole world as thinking and acting pretty much the same way we do.

My wife, on the other hand, came from a very different background. She was born in one country and spent several years living in a second before she came to the United States. Her father's history was similar. When my wife was born, he was living in his fourth country, and today he lives in his sixth!

It was not until our honeymoon that I made the dramatic step of leaving North America and setting foot on another continent. My life and outlook were irrevocably altered. A few years later when my employer offered me the opportunity to go to Japan and spend a year working at the Toshiba Central Research Laboratory, I jumped at the opportunity. It was a splendid year, and I loved Japan. The very different culture, however, helped me see my own culture in a way that was probably not possible without that experience. I came back with an enormously greater appreciation for what my own country offers, an appreciation that continues unabated.

My wife, keenly aware of the importance of a world perspective, wanted to get our children started early. She had the idea that, rather than simply visiting with her parents in Switzerland, we should take the opportunity to expose our children deeply to European culture by enrolling them in the public school there. (The school calendar in Europe is different, and our children can get in about six weeks of school after their school here ends.)

Since we preferred that the children learn a language more widely spoken than a Swiss dialect of German, we decided to rent a vacation house in the mountains of the nearby Black Forest in Germany. This is a wonderful place to spend a vacation, and the children learn the language that my wife's family has used since coming to the United States. Last summer was the sixth year, and I am always thrilled to hear the children talking comfortably with their German friends. Last summer, rather than sleep late and have us drive her to school, my 11-year-old daughter preferred to get up early enough to catch the school bus at 6:30 am (!) so that she could spend the time with her friends on the bus.

Computer User Groups in Germany

Now we come to the first of the connections between this story and my *TCJ* column for this issue. In the first few years I was in Europe, I tried very hard to promote Z-System there, but it was a very frustrating experience. I knew that MS-DOS computers had not yet made the same inroads that they had here and that even businesses were still using CP/M computers. However, in Germany and Switzerland, the culture apparently did not lend itself to the formation of user groups as in the United States (and England and Holland). I was able to find a few individuals interested in 8-bit computing, but no user groups. Those individuals confirmed my impression; they, too, felt all alone.

One year I traveled to Munich to visit a fellow owner of a BigBoard I computer. I learned of him when he wrote a letter to *MicroCornucopia* magazine. While in Munich, I wandered into computer stores, each time asking if they knew of any CP/M clubs in Germany. The answer was always no. I did find one salesman, Zvonimir Racic, who was interested enough to start one, but it did not last even to the next summer. I have had no further contact with him.

Since I was having no luck searching for 8-bit enthusiasts in person, I decided to try another approach. With great effort (and help from my wife and a German colleague at work here), I composed a letter-to-the-editor in German to one of the major German hobbyist magazines. They never even acknowledged it. At that point I gave up trying.

ZedFest Germany!

Given those earlier experiences, you can imagine how excited I was this last summer to be at the first European Z-

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Jay Sage has been an avid ZCPR proponent since the very first version appeared. He is best known as the author of the latest versions 3.3 and 3.4 of the ZCPR command processor, his ARUNZ alias processor and ZFILER, a "point-and-shoot" shell.

When Echelon announced its plan to set up a network of remote access computer systems to support ZCPR3, Jay volunteered immediately. He has been running Z-Node #3 for more than five years and can be reached there electronically at 617-965-7259 (MABOS on PC Pursuit, 8796 on Starlink, pw=DDT). He can also be reached by voice at 617-965-3552 (between 11 p.m. and midnight is a good time to find him at home) or by mail at 1435 Centre Street, Newton Centre, MA 02159. Jay is now the Z-System sysop for the GEnie CP/M Roundtable and can be contacted as JAY.SAGE via GEnie mail, or chatted with live at the Wednesday real-time conferences (10 p.m. Eastern time).

In real life, Jay is a physicist at MIT, where is tries to invent devices and circuits that use analog computation to solve problems in signal, image and information processing. His recent interests include artificial neural networks and superconducting electronics. He can be reached at work via Internet as SAGE@LL.MIT.EDU.

System Festival. In the small town of Brackenheim, Germany, near Stuttgart, a small but growing group of 8-bit activists got together to make plans, to share viewpoints, and, most importantly, to meet each other face to face.

It all started when Uwe Herczeg, at whose computer store in Brackenheim the meeting was held, decided to put a small ad in *Computer Flohmarkt* (Computer Fleamarket), a newsprint magazine filled almost entirely with classified ads. His ad sought contact with any other CP/M computerists who might still be left in Germany. Amazingly, he received more than one hundred responses! Among them were the people at the ZedFest, who form the core of the CP/M activist community in Germany today.

The man I was most eager to meet was Helmut Jungkunz. I no longer remember exactly how we first came into contact (maybe he will tell some stories some day here in *TCJ*), but we had been in very active communication for over a year. Helmut is the 'nuclear reactor' that powers the 8-bit community in Germany. He introduced Z-System to Germany, is sysop of Z-Node #51 in Munich, is the only Z-System dealer in Europe, and heads the Schneider/Amstrad CPC User Group. If only I had run into Helmut years before when I was in Munich!

Also at ZedFest Germany was Tilmann Reh, whose articles on the Z280-based CPU280 computer you have seen in this and the previous issue of *TCJ*. I had communicated with him several times over the Internet, and I was eager to meet him. He traveled to the meeting by motorcycle and was quite a sight in his sleek, black leather riding outfit and space-age helmet.

Tilmann brought along a CPU280 card to show me. It was hard to believe that such a powerful computer could fit on such a tiny card! Of greater interest to others at the meeting (they were almost all using the CPU280 already!) was the prototype he brought of the IDE disk controller for use with the CPU280. Uwe Herczeg was working on the software to integrate it into the system.

Others present were as follows: Fritz Chwolka, head of Club 80 in Aachen, on the western border of Germany near Belgium and Holland; Herbert Oppmann, member of the MTX User Group, which now supports ZCPR33 for the MTX computers; Andreas Kisslinger, also from Munich, well at home with several operating systems, and an expert Z80 programmer; and Guenther Schock, a hardware expert whose projects, such as an LCD terminal and a CP/M-Plus laptop computer, we may soon read about in *TCJ*.

Finally, I was especially flattered by two hobbyists who came from very far away to meet me. Juergen Peters, a mainframe hardware engineer by profession, drove down from Hamburg in the far north of Germany. Franz Moessl's trip seemed the most impressive, even though the actual distance was considerably less than from Hamburg. He came all the way from Italy, where he lives in 8-bit isolation in the Tirol, a part of northern Italy adjacent to Austria.

For two days, we all had a wonderful time talking computers and socializing (and, of course, drinking beer!). Dur-

Listing 1. The code needed to implement the keyboard buffer in the NZCOM virtual BIOS.

```
; Everything is standard in the KEYBIOS, even the opening
; jump table

START:  JP      BOOT            ; Cold boot
WBOOTE: JP      WBOOT
        JP      CONST
        JP      CONIN
        JP      CONOUT
        JP      LIST
        JP      PUNCH
        JP      READER

; ... standard VBIOS code omitted here

; We make a small change in the auxillary IOP jumps. The
; console status (CONST) and console input (CONIN) entries
; jump to our new code.

AUXJMP:
CONST:  JP      KCONST          ; Jump to extended routine
CONIN:  JP      KCONIN          ; Jump to extended routine
CONOUT: JP      ICONOT
LIST:   JP      ILIST
PUNCH:  JP      IPUNCH
READER: JP      IREADR
LISTST: JP      ILSTST

; End of Header.... The following code is free-form and
; may be moved around if necessary.

; ------------------------------

; The new code for the keyboard buffer is inserted right
; after the auxilliary jump table. It starts with an
; identifying signature. Then comes the actual keyin
; buffer followed by the new code. The buffer starts with a
; word that points to the next character to fetch, if any.
; The pointer is initialized to the start of the buffer,
; which is initialized to a null to indicate the end of the
; buffer's contents.

; The following equate defines the number of actual
; characters that the keyboard input buffer can hold,
; exclusive of the terminating null and the header
; information.

kbufsize        equ     60

        db      'KEYIN'         ; Signature
        db      kbufsize        ; Length of buffer
keyptr: dw      keybuf          ; Pointer to next char
keybuf: ds      kbufsize,0      ; Fill with nulls
        db      0               ; Terminating null

; Subroutine to fetch the next key from the keyboard buffer
; and set zero flag if no character.  HL is left pointing
; to the pointer to the next character.

ktest:  ld      hl,(keyptr)     ; Get ptr to next char
        ld      a,(hl)          ; Get the character
        or      a               ; Test for null
        ret

; Extended console status code.  It checks the keyboard
; buffer and returns true if there is a character in the
; buffer.  Otherwise it passes the call on to the CBIOS.

kconst: call    ktest           ; Test for key in buffer
        jp      z,iconst        ; If none, call BIOS
        ld      a,0ffh          ; Otherwise return FF
        ret

; Extended console input code.  If there is a character in
; the keyboard buffer, then it is returned and the pointer
; is advanced.  Otherwise the CBIOS is called.

kconin: call    ktest           ; Test for key in buffer
        jp      z,iconin        ; If none, call BIOS
        inc     hl              ; Increment pointer
        ld      (keyptr),hl     ; Save it
        ret                     ; Return with key in A

; ... the rest of the stardard VBIOS code follows
```

ing one of the discussions I was told about an important issue that constitutes the second connection between computers and my personal comments earlier.

Programming for Compatibility—Again!

In my previous column I talked about making Z-System programs compatible—or at least tolerant—of vanilla CP/M. Ideally, Z-System programs would work to the extent possible in whatever environment they found themselves; at the least they would terminate in a graceful manner. It is too early to tell how responsive the community will be to my message, but the initial indications are very positive. Howard Goldstein, after proofreading the draft of my column, immediately fixed up LPUT and LBREXT. As soon as Rob Friefeld received and read my column, he started to look at his programs.

There is a second issue in programming for compatibility, and that is programming for compatibility in culture and language. For years, we in the United States have been writing our programs with only our own keyboards, our own screens, and our own language in mind. We did not do this out of disrespect or deliberate disregard; we did it because nothing made us think of a more cosmopolitan picture. In our experience, only Americans were using Z-System. That has now changed, and we need to change.

I won't be able to cover all the implications of this here. For one thing, I do not yet know myself what all the implications are. We will need to communicate with and learn from others in the world who are using and developing 8-bit computers.

There are two issues that I will mention here. The most important one is the use of special characters. In the United States, we are quite accustomed to using various special characters, often for pseudo-graphics. For example, we may use the verticule (vertical bar) character (ASCII 7C) as a separator. Most European languages (and probably non-European languages, too) have characters with accents, and these are represented by the ASCII codes for special characters. In Germany, for example, the following associations are apparently used:

[	upper case A with umlaut
\	upper case O with umlaut
]	upper case U with umlaut
{	lower case a with umlaut
|	lower case o with umlaut
}	lower case u with umlaut

When we include those characters in our programs, the screen displays in Europe (and Canada, for that matter) are often not pleasant.

The second issue concerns language. For example, programmers in the United States generally assume that yes/no questions will be answered with 'Y' or 'N'. In Germany, however, it would be nicer if 'J' (for 'ja') and 'N' (for 'nein') could be used. In France it would be 'O' (for 'oui') and 'N'

Listing 2. Rudimentary version of the KEYIN utility for filling the keyboard buffer in KEYBIOS.

```
; Program:              KEYIN
; Author:               Jay Sage
; Date:                 October 1, 1991

; This program manages the keyboard inbut buffer in the
; special version of the NZCOM virtual BIOS called KEYBIOS.
; It interprets the command tail and adds the indicated
; input to the keyboard buffer (if it fits).

sigoff  equ     97H             ; Offset to signature

cr      equ     0dh
lf      equ     0ah
bell    equ     07h
tab     equ     09h

; Library routines

        extrn   z3init, eprint

keyin:
        jp      start
        db      'Z3ENV'
        db      1
env:    dw      0               ; Filled in by ZCPR33+
        dw      keyin           ; For type-4 version

; Target signature that identifies KEYBIOS.

sign:   db      'KEYIN'         ; KEYBIOS signature string
nsign   equ     $ - sign        ; Length of signature

; Signon message

signon:
        call    eprint
        db      'KEYIN, version 1.1 (10/01/91)'
        db      cr,lf
        db      0
        ret

; Show help message.

help:
        call    eprint
        db      '  Syntax: KEYIN string',cr,lf
        db      0
        ret

; We get here if the signature is not right.  Report problem
; to user and terminate.

badbios:
        call    eprint
        db      '  KEYBIOS not present!',cr,lf
        db      0
        ret

start:

; Initialize environment

        ld      hl,(env)
        call    Z3init

; Display signon message

        call    signon

; See if there is a command tail.

        ld      hl,80h          ; Point to tail buffer
        ld      a,(hl)          ; Get count
        or      a               ; Test for zero
        jr      z,help          ; If zero, show help screen

; Make sure that the KEYBIOS is running by checking for the
; signature.

        ld      hl,(1)          ; Get warmboot address
        ld      de,sigoff-3     ; Offset to signature from
                                ; ..warmboot entry
        add     hl,de
```

(for 'non'). We also, of course, display all screen information, including prompts, in English.

Is there anything we can do to be more accommodating in these matters? I'm not sure about the whole solution, but I have some ideas. For yes/no questions, we could allow for all common language possibilities: 'Y', 'J', 'O', and 'S' for the affirmative, for example (do we need anything other than 'N' for the negative?). Another possibility is that we include a language configuration screen with the ZCNFG CFG file provided with programs. Simple language changes, such as the letters used for yes and no and the characters used for special functions, could be changed using this screen. ZCNFG might be able to handle more significant text items for programs with little text output.

When a program provides a lot of text output to the screen, there may be too many changes to handle with ZCNFG, and we might have to go back to the old overlay method of configuration. Our programs could come with source code for language overlays. Authors with skills in other languages might even take a stab at providing some of these overlays themselves. Otherwise, native speakers in various countries could provide the overlays.

To make it easier to use such overlays, one would want to collect all the messages that a program uses in one area rather than scattering them throughout the program as we generally do today. Rather than using SYSLIB routines like PRINT that display characters provided in-line in the code, we should use routines like PSTR that display characters pointed to by a register pair. Such source code is not as convenient to read, but it would make patching much easier (and it makes debugging easier, too). Another small detail would be to provide some extra spacing between message strings in case a message in another language is longer. Except in very rare instances, the slightly longer code that results from this approach will not be an undue burden.

New Z-Nodes

Before turning to the main technical subject, I would like to announce four new Z-Nodes that joined in the past two months. Dave Chapman in Victoria, British Columbia (604-380-0007), and Terry Bendell in Collingwood, Ontario (705-444-9234) are our two new nodes in Canada. Ewen McNeill

```
        ld      de,sign         ; Point to signature
        ld      b,nsign         ; Length of signature
sigtest:
        ld      a,(de)
        cp      (hl)
        jr      nz,badbios      ; Jump if no match
        inc     hl              ; Bump pointers
        inc     de
        djnz    sigtest         ; Test whole signature

; Now we are ready for the real task

        ld      a,(hl)          ; Save the size of
        ld      (kbufsize),a    ; .. the keyboard buffer
        inc     hl              ; Point to pointer
        ld      (kptradr),hl    ; Save its address
        ld      e,(hl)          ; Get its value into DE
        inc     hl
        ld      d,(hl)
        inc     hl              ; Point to start of buffer
        ld      (keybuf),hl     ; Save the address

        ld      hl,buffer       ; Point to working buffer
        ld      bc,0            ; Initialize count

; Copy any remaining contents of keyboard buffer to working
; buffer

copy1:
        ld      a,(de)          ; Get next character from
                                ; ..key buffer
        ld      (hl),a          ; Write to working buffer
        or      a               ; Set flag
        jr      z,copy2         ; If null, break out of loop
        inc     de              ; Otherwise bump pointers
        inc     hl
        inc     c               ; Increment count
        jr      copy1           ; Loop back for next char

; Now we have to add the new characters from the command
; line.  HL still points to working buffer. This code needs
; to be extended with the full functionality of ECHO.COM so
; that control characters and other special characters (such
; as semicolons) can be entered.

copy2:
        ld      de,82h          ; Point to second char (if
                                ; ..any) in command tail
copy2a:
        ld      a,(de)          ; Get the character
        ld      (hl),a          ; Store it in working buffer
        or      a               ; Set flag
        jr      z,fillkey       ; If null, we're done
        inc     de              ; Otherwise, bump pointers
        inc     hl
        inc     c               ; Increment the count
        jr      z,overflow      ; If we reach zero,
                                ; ..definitely too many
        jr      copy2a          ; Else loop back for more

; Now we have to copy the contents of the work buffer back
; into the keyboard input buffer.

fillkey:
        ld      a,(kbufsize)    ; Make sure there is room
        cp      c
        jr      c,overflow      ; Too many characters

        ld      de,(keybuf)     ; Get start of buffer
        ld      hl,(kptradr)    ; Address of pointer
        ld      (hl),e          ; Set pointer to beginning
        inc     hl
        ld      (hl),d
        ld      hl,buffer       ; Point to working buffer
        inc     bc              ; Adjust counter to include
                                ; ..trailing null
        ldir                    ; Copy it all
        ret                     ; We're done

; We get here if the keyboard buffer is too small to hold
; all the characters. For the moment we just give a message,
; but the code should call the error handler if possible. If
; there is no error handler, then the MCL should probably be
; cleared.

overflow:
        call    eprint
        db      'Too many characters for
        db      'keyboard input buffer.'
        db      cr,lf
        db      0
        ret

; Data items

        dseg

kbufsize:       ds      1       ; Size of keyboard buffer
kptradr:        ds      2       ; Address of next-char ptr
keybuf:         ds      2       ; Address of beg of buffer
buffer:         ds      257     ; Working buffer

        end
```

has established the first Z-Node in New Zealand. His node is running, I believe, on a mainframe computer. Those who call in at 64-4-389-5478 in Wellington will learn about other ways to connect to the system. Finally, we also have a new node in the United States. The Kaypro Club of St. Louis has turned its system, run by sysop Bob Rosenfeld, into a Z-Node. It can be reached at 314-821-0638 on the MOSLO/24 outdial of PC-Pursuit. Give these new nodes a call and welcome them to our ranks.

An NZCOM Virtual BIOS Keyboard Buffer

Z-System's extended batch processor, ZEX, is a very powerful tool with many fascinating and effective uses. Like SUBMIT or the MS-DOS batch facility, it can carry out a sequence of commands. However, if this is all one needs, then alias scripts should almost always be used instead, since they impose no additional system overhead.

ZEX, because of all the powerful features it provides, takes up quite a lot of memory. I just ran the utility TPA.COM on my system. Invoked from the command line, it reported a TPA of 51.5K; running it under ZEX gave a figure of 47.5K. Thus ZEX cost 4K of memory: 2K for its own code and 2K because its RSX (resident system extension) locked in the 2K command processor.

The situation where ZEX has been indispensable is when one wants a script not only to invoke commands but also to provide 'interactive' input to a program. If programs can accept input on the command line, then an alias script can handle the situation, but many programs take their input only interactively.

Once ZEX is loaded, it remains in memory until all commands in its script have been totally completed. There have been numerous occasions when I have wanted to feed just a short string of characters to a program before I proceed manually. In such a case, I really hated to suffer the memory penalty of ZEX to accomplish this. In some cases, such as with my database manager, the program would not be able to run with ZEX in place.

The solution I present here provides yet another example of the power of the NZCOM virtual BIOS. I simply added a little code to my normal virtual BIOS to implement a keyboard buffer, and then I wrote a utility to fill that buffer. The BIOS I called KEYBIOS; the utility I called KEYIN. A typical command line (probably in an alias) would look like:

```
KEYIN string for program;PROGRAM
```

KEYIN fills the keyboard buffer. Then, when PROGRAM runs and requests user input, the KEYBIOS sees characters in the buffer and returns them to the program. How this works will be clearer after you see the code for KEYBIOS.

KEYBIOS

The new code contained in the virtual BIOS to support the keyboard buffer is shown in *Listing 1*. Here is what the code has to accomplish. When a program calls the BIOS to get a character, the virtual BIOS must first look in the keyboard buffer. If it finds a character there, then it returns that character and sets its pointer to the next character. If the keyboard buffer is empty, then the code simply passes the job on to the real BIOS, which will return a character actually typed at the keyboard.

One complication is that the BIOS also supports a function (called console status) that asks if there is a character ready without actually fetching it. We have to fake out that call, too. We follow a similar strategy. We first look in the keyboard buffer. If there is a character there, then we report back that a character is ready. If there is no character in the buffer, then we pass the job on to the console status routine in the real BIOS. It is amazingly simple!

How do we do all this? Well, I think the code in *Listing 1*, with all its comments, is fairly clear. There are just a couple of things I would like to elaborate on.

The code includes two items that are not actually needed by KEYBIOS for its functioning. First, the code includes a signature string, 'KEYIN', at an established location. This allows a utility, such as the KEYIN.COM program that we will discuss in more detail shortly, to determine that the appropriate VBIOS is present. Following the signature string is a byte containing the length of the buffer. KEYIN.COM needs this to know how much space is available in the buffer. Without this information, it might overfill the buffer and clobber code.

The implementation of the buffer itself is much like the multiple command line in ZCPR3. At the beginning of the buffer there is a word that contains the address of the next character available from the buffer. A null character (ASCII value zero) is used to indicate the end of the buffer.

The KEYIN Utility

Listing 2 shows a very rudimentary version of the KEYIN utility that is used to add characters to the keyboard buffer in KEYBIOS. Again, the listing with its comments is largely self-explanatory, and I will elaborate on only a few issues.

First, in view of my earlier discussion, I am embarrassed that this code does not have the facilities for language invariance that I recommended. I was tempted to put them in for the listing, but I decided that there would be too much risk of introducing an error. Before releasing the full version of the utility, I certainly will follow my own advice.

The code does try to be quite rigorous. Once the program has displayed it signon message, it checks to see if any data has been passed on the command line. If there is none, a syntax message is displayed and the program terminates. In the final version, the code should check for the standard Z-System help request "//" in the command tail.

Next, the code looks for the signature string at the proper offset in the BIOS. If it does not find it, then an appropriate message is displayed and execution terminates. Otherwise, various information from the buffer header is fetched and stored for later use.

There may be characters already in the buffer, and KEYIN is designed to retain them and to append any new input. In the final version, one might want an option switch to flush any characters that remain in the buffer. To make the work easier, a temporary buffer in KEYIN is used to form the new contents for the keyboard buffer. Therefore, we start out by copying anything in the key buffer to the working buffer.

Next we append characters from the command tail. In the final version of KEYIN, the code should include all the special string interpretation techniques used in ECHO.COM so that control characters and other special characters that cannot be entered directly in the command tail (such as semicolons) can be included.

Since the structure of KEYBIOS is such that the buffer can never be longer than 255 characters, we monitor the number

of characters in the working buffer and abort if the count exceeds that value. Once the working buffer is completely filled, then we check the actual character account against the actual size of the keyboard buffer. If all the characters will fit, we move them into the buffer and set the pointer to the beginning of the buffer. KEYIN can then return control to the command processor.

If the characters will not all fit in the buffer, then we have to do something else. In the simple version in Listing 2, the program simply gives an error message and aborts. This leaves the key buffer unchanged. In a fully developed version of KEYIN, the error handler should be called so that the user can decide how to deal with the problem. If no error handler is available, then we have a more difficult problem. One course of action would be to clear the key buffer and flush the entire command line buffer (and terminate ZEX if it is running). Another possibility might be to clear the key buffer but allow the subsequent commands in the command line buffer (or ZEX) to run. The user would then have to do manually what KEYIN was trying to care of for the user.

Very Important Caveats

As it turns out, dealing with characters at the BIOS level, as we do with KEYBIOS, involves some troublesome issues. When I first got KEYBIOS running, I was surprised that I always lost the first character that I put into the buffer. That missing character then appeared the next time the command processor prompt appeared. Many of you have probably seen a mysterious character like this, and you may have recognized it as something you typed earlier that was ignored.

It is beyond the scope of this article to deal with this issue fully. Basically, it derives from a fundamental flaw in the design of CP/M. As we have seen, CP/M has a function to get a character from the BIOS and to ask the BIOS if a character is ready. But there is no way to ask what the character is without actually fetching it.

Why is that a problem? Well, the disk operating system (BDOS or equivalent) often provides special processing when the characters control-C, control-S, or control-P are pressed. Unfortunately, as we just noted, it has no way of finding out if one of those characters has been pressed without reading the next character. If the character turns out to be one of the three special ones, all is well; it processes the character.

But what if it is some other character. The BDOS would really like to say, "so sorry, not for me" and put the character back for the application program to read it. But it can't do that. So it does the next best thing. It puts it into a special buffer in the BDOS, and the BDOS plays the same kind of trick that we do in KEYBIOS. When a program asks for a character, BDOS first checks its special one-character buffer.

When programs perform all their character I/O using the BDOS or all of their I/O using the BIOS, then things will work reasonably well. However, if calls to the BDOS and BIOS are mixed, then characters can get lost in the BDOS buffer only to appear later when not wanted.

Every time I tried using KEYIN, I found that the command processor swallowed a character when it took control after KEYIN was finished. The pragmatic solution was to include a backspace character as the first one in the keyboard buffer, since the command processor would ignore it.

There are some other issues that KEYBIOS does not address. For example, some programs begin by flushing characters from the BIOS. Here is how they do it. They call CONST, and if there is a character they read it. This is repeated until CONST reports that no characters remain. Such a program will completely defeat KEYIN/KEYBIOS. Joe Wright has addressed these issues very carefully and cleverly in his IOPs (such as NuKey). KEYBIOS, however, is meant to be a very simple, minimal-memory solution, and it seems to do the job in my applications.●

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months. After all these years of reaching around the world with my computer, I guess I assumed everyone was doing it. This turns out to be a false assumption.

CP/M users seem particularly confounded by the Internet. There were no good tools in CP/M to use the net until last year. I have been hoping for an article on using David Goodenough's UUCP tools. Nothing has come up so far. We've drawn another blank with Fido compatible CP/M bulletin board systems, though there are at least three out there. Consider this a Call for Papers on telecommunications.

On Today's Menu:

We had a short article in the last issue on a Z280 based system from Germany. The information was so new then that I did not even have a return address to the author! Tilmann Reh returns with more for us. This doesn't take away from the YASBEC, but it does prove an adage. When it rains, it pours. These two systems come after a drought of several years in CP/M hardware development.

Wayne Sung presents an interesting way to wire a large LAN with very low cabling costs — piggyback on your in-house cable television system. Of course, this presumes you have found a need to install a cable television system. Don't be too quick to scoff the idea, though. University campuses are wired and the technology is transferable. Could this idea be expanded to community-wide networking over commercial CATV? Think about it while you read Wayne's article.

Jan Hofland returns with his *Arbitrary Waveform Generator,* discussing the software at greater length. You will recall that we had the schematics for this project last issue. We will finish the series next time with the last of his source code. Jan built this system to provide a test bed for structural testing, and used the Harris RTX2001 and EBForth. This is the kind of article I enjoy. Not your common everyday project!

Terry Hazen completes his topic on IOPs while Al Hawley continues with *Getting Started in Assembly Language,* discussing functions with structured programming. Both have proven to be very popular topics.

I would like to welcome Lee Bradley to our pages. He reports on the Zed-Fest held in Nassau, NY. Lee publishes *Eight Bits & Change,* which we have mentioned several times in the past. You will enjoy his humor. I always like to take a break when Lee's articles come in.

It seems that *Reader-to-Reader* struck a popular chord. We have received a number of good letters. The direction this publication takes is given by you, and I always look forward to your feedback as do the authors. I will try to include as

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Getting Started in Assembly Language

Implementing Functions with Structured Programming

By A.E. Hawley

In *Assembly Language Programming*, part 3, we discussed program structure, using ZCNFG as an example. While writing that article, I realized that there was considerable room for improvement in ZCNFG itself. Version 18 was released soon thereafter, followed by version 19. ZCNFG19 contains a major enhancement: the ability to extract its CFG files from a LBR type library. I hope that you were able to use the latest version in conjunction with that article. We will continue to use ZCNFG19 to illustrate this month's subject. Along the way, we'll encounter a solution to a coding problem that may surprise you. The problem: to write a block of assembly code that sets a flag (Z, for example) if A contains a byte which is either 0 or contains exactly 1 set bit. Try your hand at this before before finishing this article. You may be surprised at the solution.

Functions in ZCNFG

When ZCNFG is running, the user selects a configuration item from a menu by typing its identifier. If data is required, he is asked for it on a prompt line. The screen is then updated to show the new configuration. This process is repeated indefinitely until the user selects an item that causes the program to terminate. This flow of data is illustrated in *Figure 1*. Data input from KEYBD (the user) to the SETOPT routine is used to select a record from the current case table. SETOPT uses that record to select the function FN (=IN_FNn & LD_FNn) to execute. FN uses data contained in the case table record to modify the configuration block. SETOPT is an infinite loop! *Figure 1* only shows data flow for configuration items. A second case table, internal to ZCNFG, is always effectively appended to the one from the CFG file. That table, a fixed part of ZCNFG, contains the pointers and data required to change menus, display help screens, and exit from the program. The SETOPT and MCASE routines together are an implementation of a Finite State Machine.

ZCNFG performs 9 distinct configuration functions, FN0...FN8. Each FN is implemented as a subroutine with two entry points, IN_FNx and LD_FNx, where x is 0...8. As shown in *Figure 1*, IN_FNx transfers data into the CFG block with any translation required. LD_FNx transfers data from the CFG block to the Menu Screen Image in memory, again with any translation required to convert back to printable text. For example, FN8 toggles a byte between the values of 0 and 0FFH in the CFG block and between a pair of strings (like YES and NO) on the screen. The entry points for the Functions are listed in a table (FNTBLE:) in the order of their number. New Functions can be added to ZCNFG by writing the code and adding the new entry points to the table.

To summarize, each Configuration Function has two basic tasks:

1. IN_FNx updates configuration block data, requesting additional input from the user if required.
2. LD_FNx updates the screen image from data in the configuration page.

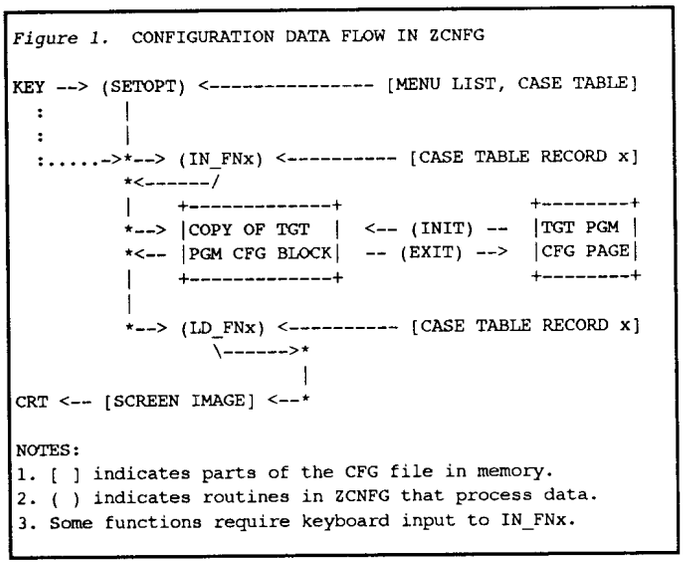

Figure 1. CONFIGURATION DATA FLOW IN ZCNFG

In both cases, error handling code may be needed to detect inappropriate values and take suitable action.

In ZCNFG19, FN7 has been rewritten. FN7 in earlier versions rotated a bit in the 3 lsb positions of a byte, leaving bits 3-7 unchanged. The new FN7 is superset of the old, rotating a bit in an arbitrary field of bits in a byte. In the following paragraphs we will examine this new code in detail to illustrate this structured approach to programming.

Function Environment

In order to write a Function, all of the data sources and destinations

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required by the function must be defined. In addition, there must be provision for error handling if error conditions can occur.

A function is invoked under two circumstances. The first occurs when the user selects a menu item to change; the MCASE routine transfers control to the appropriate IN_FNx entry. After performing its task IN_FNx transfers control to LD_FNx. The second occurs when ZCNFG is first invoked; the initialization routine MAPPER invokes LD_FNx for every configurable item in the CFG file to make screen image fields reflect the current configuration of the target file.

MCASE and MAPPER both perform a housekeeping task whose main purpose is to make functions easy to write in a standardized manner. They transfer the parameters from the selected Case Table Record to a standard 7 byte data structure at OFFSET: whenever a new configuration item is selected. The data structure is shown in *Listing 1*. The meaning and use of the byte at CFGD depends on the function being performed. For FN7, this byte is a mask which defines the sequence of bits (a field) in a target byte that is to be processed. Usage of CFGD and S_LIST are fully described for each FN in the documentation distributed with ZCNFG.

There are two kinds of errors possible in most programs: recoverable errors and fatal errors. In ZCNFG recoverable errors are such things as user input which specifies an unimplemented menu choice or an input value which exceeds an allowed range. When a routine encounters a non-fatal error it simply returns without changing anything.

A typical fatal error occurs when the data in a newly loaded CFG file is not consistent with data in the target programs configuration block. This could happen if the wrong CFG file had been specified on the command line or during development of a new CFG file. For fatal errors, ZCNFG contains a list of error message exits, each of which prints an error message and terminates ZCNFG by jumping to a common entry in the main EXIT routine which leaves the target program unaltered. These fatal error exits are grouped together near the end of the ZCNFG source module.

The data structure at OFFSET, the fatal error exits, and the standardized convention for the Carry Flag comprise the Environment within which a function executes. Note that the definition of environment is in terms of DATA passed to and from the function. Service subroutines like MADC from SYSLIB which sends a byte to the screen in DECIMAL radix, are logically part of the function, not of the environment.

A Typical Function

Listing 2 shows the code for the new FN7. This function rotates a bit from right to left in the configured byte. The movement is restricted to a series of bits defined by the mask. Thus, if the mask is 01111000, successive invocations of FN7

Listing 1. Data Structure Used by ZCNFG Functions

```
OFFSET: DS      2       ;address of configuration data
CFGD:   DS      1       ;data byte for current function
S_ADDR: DS      2       ;address of current screen field
S_LIST: DS      2       ;address of string list or
                        ;min/max data for current function.
```

might yield x0001xxx, x0010xxx, x0100xxx, x1000xxx, x0001xxx, etc. The x positions in the byte are not affected; they could contain other configuration data bits. The four bits that are affected might be tested in the target program to, for example, select one of four routines that display a date in 4 different ways. In this example ZCNFG requires (in the CFG file) a list of four strings to display on the screen because the field contains four bit positions. Each string would describe one of the four date formats.

An algorithm is a set of instructions for performing a computational task. It is usually stated in a high level language so that it is independent of the exact coding techniques of the implementation language. For fairly simple tasks, a set of instructions in English is adequate. For more complex computations, a pseudo-HLL language is more appropriate. Such algorithms may look like an inexact version of C or Pascal. I generally start a no trivial coding project with an algorithm like those shown below, making comments out of the steps and filling in source code after each step.

The following algorithm was used for writing IN_FN7.

1. Use the Mask to isolate the bit field.

Listing 2. A typical ZCNFG function

```
;               FUNCTION 7
;       ROTATE A BIT WITHIN A FIELD IN A BYTE
;entry points:  IN_FN7 for user update
;               LD_FN7 for initial screen load
;The following data structure has been filled in from
;the current record in a Case Table from the CFG file
;       (OFFSET:) = address of cfg data byte
;       (CFGD:)   = mask defining the field
;       (S_ADDR:) = address of screen image field
;       (S_LIST:) = address of list of strings

IN_FN7:
;Rotate the bit field in the configuration block.
;exit-  byte at (OFFSET:) contains rotated field.
;       Screen image is updated with a string
;       corresponding to the new bit position.
;       all registers used.

        LD      HL,(OFFSET)     ;->configurable data
        LD      E,(HL)          ;data byte in reg E
        LD      A,(CFGD)        ;bit field mask
        LD      B,A             ;..in B
        CPL                     ;invert it (logical NOT)
        LD      C,A             ;.not. mask in C
        CPL                     ;recover mask
        AND     E               ;isolate the bit field
        RLCA                    ;left circular rotate
        LD      D,A             ;save rotated field
        INC     C
        DEC     C               ;8 bit field?
        JR      Z,INFN7X        ;..done if so
        AND     C               ;test for overflow
                                ;beyond field
        JR      Z,INFN7X        ;z=no overflow
;a bit has shifted out of the high position
;of the field. The field is now all 0s and
;the shifted bit belongs in the lsb of the field.
        LD      A,C             ;synthesize a new field
        RLCA                    ; with lsb set
        AND     B               ;remove all other bits
        LD      D,A             ;save the initialized field

INFN7X: LD      A,(HL)          ;data byte
        AND     C               ;remove bit field and
        OR      D               ;replace with rotated field
        LD      (HL),A          ;new data byte
        LD      A,D             ;new field in A
        JR      LDFN7A          ;..for screen update
```

2. Rotate the resulting byte left one bit position.
3. Use the inverted Mask to test for overflow outside the bit field boundaries.
4. If overflow has occurred, create a new bit field with lsb set.
5. Replace the bit field in the configuration byte with the field from 2 or 4.
6. Update the field in the configuration block data
7. Use LD_FN7 to update the screen image, skipping over the test for an illogical mask.

As the code was written, the algorithmic steps were paraphrased and expanded in the comment field. Note the coding strategy: the byte to be configured is stored in E. The mask is stored in B and its inversion is placed in register C. The rotated bit field is stored in D, where it can be easily replaced in case of overflow (step 5).

Note the sequence 'INC C, DEC C' to test for an 8 bit field. C contains the inverse of the mask and will be all zero bits if the field is 8 bits wide (the entire byte). This sequence is a simple way to set the Z flag from any 8 bit register without changing its value. If the value is zero then the RLCA instruction has properly rotated the byte and there is no overflow to be concerned about. Otherwise, a bit may have been shifted out of the msb of the field, leaving the field itself all zeros.

The first 8 lines of code in LD_FN7 establish HL as a pointer to the data being configured, load the isolated (masked) bit field into A, and perform an error check on the mask byte. IN_FN7 has been designed so that, at the end of step 6, HL and A contain the same two values. The entry into LD_FN7 skips over these first 8 lines because the mask check is not needed; it was done during program initialization by a call to LD_FN7. Those 8 lines are executed just once. We'll have more to say about them later.

The algorithm for LD_FN7A...LD_FN7X is:

1. Shift the bit field right until the lsb of the mask is at bit position 0.
2. Get the pointer to the list of strings (S_LIST)
3. While <bit field lsb> is zero
   Shift bit field right
   Advance pointer to next string
   End While
4. Copy the string to the screen image (at S_ADDR)

Advancing a pointer to the next null terminated string and copying a null terminated string from one place to another are tasks performed in many places in ZCNFG, so these tasks were written as subroutines in a separately linked module, CFGSUBS.Z80. It is typical practice to use subroutine calls for common tasks; ZCNFG depends on subroutines from rel libraries as well. To make use of such subroutines, the programmer must become familiar with what is available in each library (or linked module) and how to use each subroutine. CFGLIB, written for ZCNFG, is accompanied by a HLP file which explains how each subroutine is used and what it does. VLIB, Z3LIB, SYSLIB, and others are similarly documented. Studying such documentation carefully and then using library routines saves a lot of coding and debugging.

Did you try solving the problem stated at the beginning of this article? It sounded a little theoretical, didn't it? The obvious approach is to rotate the byte 8 times, counting 1 bits, followed by a test of the count to see if it is less than 2. That approach will work. It requires a loop (typically implemented with DJNZ), a conditional jump around the code which increments the counter, a compare statement, and code to initialized the bit counter and the loop counter. Such a routine can be written as a subroutine which takes about 17 bytes of code, including the RET statement. The cost in execution time is about 86 T-states. If you got it done in only three in-line bytes, congratulations!

This problem was originally published in *Dr. Dobbs Journal* about 10 years ago, but with an extra qualification that made a real challenge of it. The code was to be *three bytes* long! I didn't solve it. I had to wait for the next issue for the answer. And ZCNFG is the first time I actually had use for it! Here's the explanation and a little rationale for being aware of such things. They are called 'coding tricks', but really are methods of making best use of your CPU architecture and instruction set. Lee Hart gives an excellent discussion of performance oriented programming in *TCJ* issues 39 and 40

```
LD_FN7:
;Copy the string in the overlay corresponding
;to the bit set in the field to the screen image.
;This is the entry for MAPPER, during initialization
;The data structure at OFFSET: contains current data.
;exit-  (normal) AF = 0,NZ,NC
;       (error) program abort with message
;               on bad CFGD byte.

       LD      A,(CFGD)
;test for illogical mask with less than 2 bits set
       LD      B,A             ;save the mask byte
       DEC     A               ;invert low order 0s and
                               ;the first 1 encountered
       AND     B               ;restore 0's from original
                               ;byte and set Zflag
                               ;(NZ if 1's remain)
       JP      Z,BADOVL        ;error if<2 bits in the mask
       LD      A,B             ;restore original byte in A

       LD      HL,(OFFSET)
       AND     (HL)            ;bit field at (HL) in A

LDFN7A:
;This is the entry from IN_FN7.
;shift bit field right to lsb position for indexing
;entry- A = field from cfg data, masked
;       B = mask for field data
;       HL -> cfg data byte
       BIT     0,B             ;mask & data
                               ;right justified yet?
       JR      NZ,LDFN7B       ;yes, if nz
       RRCA                    ;move bit field right
       RRC     B               ;and also the mask
       JR      LDFN7A          ;and repeat

LDFN7B:
;index to the proper string in S_LIST
       LD      HL,(S_LIST)     ;->field data list for screen
       LD      C,A             ;cfg field in C
..INDX: BIT    0,C             ;lsb set?
       JR      NZ,LDFN7X       ;use current list item if so
       CALL    SKIP2Z          ;else skip to next list item
       RRC     C               ;and put next field bit in lsb
       JR      ..INDX          ;..and repeat

LDFN7X:
;copy S-LIST string to screen image
       LD      DE,(S_ADDR)
       CALL    MOVE2Z          ;copy null terminated string
       XOR     A               ;no error
       RET
```

(July & Sept, 1989). This is highly recommended reading! But Mr. Hart does not discuss this 'trick'.

By now, if you've been reading the listing of LD_FN7, you will have found the three bytes. They follow the ';test for .....' comment line. Consider what happens when a byte is decremented (subtracting 1 is equivalent but takes an extra byte). Assume that the byte in A is 01111000, our first example. When this byte is decremented, it becomes 01110111. Note what has changed: all the 0's at the right have become 1's, and the rightmost 1 has become a 0. Bits to the left of the rightmost 1 are unchanged. If this result is ANDed with the original byte, all the changed bits become 0, and the value of the byte is determined only by the unchanged bits. If these bits were originally 0, then the result will be 0. *Figure* 2 shows three examples, one for a reasonable mask byte, and two for illogical mask bytes. These latter two are illogical because the mask byte specifies the size of the bit field to process; it makes no sense to rotate a bit in a zero length field or in a field of length one. Since the final AND adjusts the Z flag, a result of NZ implies an acceptable mask and Z an invalid mask. An invalid mask can arise from an error in writing the CFG file or from a damaged file.

Error Checking

The current example illustrates a type of error that would normally occur only when developing or changing a CFG file: an erroneous value in a case table record. Such an error could arise by forgetting to include an item in the record, making it too short. Because such mistakes are hard to find, the BADOVL error routine takes advantage of the table driven nature of the SETOPT routine. BADOVL uses the information in MENLST and OFFSET to report the Menu and Case table record number in which the error was detected. Except for the remote possibility of a damaged file, the normal user of ZCNFG will never see this class of errors, but the CFG file programmer will be thankful when they don't occur and grateful when they do!

Exit

Some of the concepts important to structured programing have been illustrated with the implementation of a major function in ZCNFG. We saw that the environment of a program structure comprises Data Structures, register usage, subroutines both local and from other modules, and error handlers. The environment is more commonly referred to as the Interface of the routine with the rest of the program. Data flow analysis was introduced and is a basis for the

Figure 2. Typical Mask Byte Testing.

	Good Mask	Bad Mask1	Bad Mask0
A	01111000	00001000	00000000
A-1	01110111	00000111	11111111
A & A-1	01110000	00000000	00000000

Algorithm(s) that describe the final goal of the AL code. Much of this is familiar to HLL programmers; such structuring is a major goal of High Level Languages. What is to be learned from the simple coding problem? Probably that there is usually more than one way to implement the solution to a problem, and that other solutions might be more efficient (or even more elegant!). Here we also saw a subtle emphasis shift in our view of one of the CPU instructions: what was viewed as an arithmetic operation is really a specialized logic function which can be used to advantage. INC and DAA may also be viewed as logical operators and might have some clever uses. Can you think of others?

I hope you have become convinced that you, too, could program a function for ZCNFG. Want to try? Take a look at Function 6 (parse/deparse all or part of a filespec). It cries out for a re-write! Or make a new function whose purpose is to configure a printer control string. At the very least, use the techniques of structured programming to make your programing efforts more elegant and rewarding. There's nothing like clean source code when it comes to the inevitable debugging or enhancement of your program.●

Reader, from page 2

Frankly, I'd feel pretty silly not extending the trial subscription offer to "chaps like you." I was a chap like you—spent twenty-six years in the tropics. Ever hear of Truk? Ponape? Palau?—Ed.

I became aware of *TCJ* through the Usenet newsgroup *comp.lang.forth.* The articles that show up there periodically mention your magazine. It seems to be of a similar flavour to the late lamented *Micro Cornucopia* and also of early *Byte.*

I like this "older style" of magazine. It tells you how to get stuff done with what you've got instead of forking out big bucks for someone else's solution.

D.C., Ottawa ONT

You have the basic idea. Not much money in putting out a rag this way, which explains why others aren't doing it. Most of the industry has outgrown its roots.—Ed.

I appeal to Z-programmers to enforce CP/M compatible programming. An example: implementing a fixed environment array near the beginning of a file and to set the address at 109H, so that in a non-Z environment this fake environment would be used.

Second, I thought to bring the use of semigraphics to owners of poor terminals as well. The way to go would be to use a dummy graphics on/off sequence (or omit it totally) and to use "+" and "-" for Graphic Character replacements. This would certainly open truly portable graphical programs to everybody. It would mean reworking the Z3TCAP.TCP to this standard for all terminals, and then leaving it up to individual users to soup them up to the real stuff, except for those extended TCAPs already known.

Also I'd like to see a remake of TCMAKE, (which used to work nicely in the old days of simple terminals), that would create the new standard: TCAPs compatible to VLIB 4D menu-driven, so a typical Auto-Install-Z-system-user can do this himself!

H. J., Ismaning Germany

You will appreciate Jay Sage's topic this issue.—Ed.

I have been a journal reader now for about two years or more. I enjoyed it very much before, but I must say that I enjoy it even more, now. Your new ideas, perspectives and format are very good and I look forward to each edition. The

See Reader, page 44

The NZCOM IOP

A General-purpose IOP Loader Module

By Terry Hazen

When an IOP REL module is loaded into the NZCOM IOP buffer by NZCOM or JetLDR, you have no way to configure the IOP module. The only way its configuration can be changed is to modify the source code and reassemble and relink it.

This time, we'll look at IOPLDR, a small general-purpose IOP loader REL module that does most of the standard work that it takes to load, control and remove an IOP module. It is combined with an IOP REL module and some IOP module-specific routines to create a stand-alone COM file that will load, control and remove the IOP module and allow the IOP module to be configured by ZCNFG before loading.

We'll demonstrate IOPLDR by using it to create the stand-alone IOP clock display utility IOPCLK.COM. IOPCLK provides the IOP clock-specific routines and messages needed by IOPLDR as well as the configuration area for use by ZCNFG. It also takes care of automatically finding the ZSDOS clock driver address at run time. Keep in mind that while IOPCLK is the specific example in this article, IOPLDR is a general-purpose module. You may use it to create a utility to load an IOP module you already have or a special one you've always wanted to write.

IOPLDR is based on RSXLDR, a similar generalized RSX loader I wrote for HP14 and is similar to, but less specialized than, the IOPLDR.REL module included in HP14. IOPLDR also incorporates parts of several other utilities, including Hal Bower's SPEEDLDR.Z80. Portions of the code were derived from Bridger Mitchell's *Advanced CP/M* column on the Plu*Perfect CP/M 2.2 RSX standards in *TCJ* 34 and the word-wide relocator was derived from his column on relocation in *TCJ* 33.

IOPLDR is a generalized IOP loader module. It performs preload checks, environment validation and relocates the IOP module to the IOP buffer. It is called by a module-specific IOP loader utility that contains all module-specific installation routines and messages. The actual IOP module is assembled and linked to a PRL file and appended to the end of the module-specific IOP loader COM file.

The IOPLDR module *(Listing 1)* and the loader utility, IOPCLK *(Listing 2)*, are closely related, like interlinked fingers. Their relationship is also somewhat backward from the way utilities normally work with the REL modules they call. Here, IOPLDR contains all of the main routines and does all of the standard work. It's IOPCLK's job to provide all of the special routines and information that allow IOPLDR to deal with the specific requirements of the IOP clock module. In fact, even though the name of the utility is IOPCLK, IOPLDR is calling routines in IOPCLK rather than the other way around.

IOPLDR

If you look at the IOPCLK code, you'll notice that the first thing it does when it is run, is jump to IOPLDR, which then takes control. IOPLDR starts out by doing all the mundane and necessary things a utility usually does. It saves the system stack pointer, sets a local stack, displays the sign-on banner and does some system checking to make sure it's operating under ZCPR3 with an extended environment.

If the system passes muster, IOPLDR locates the start of the PRL header for the IOP clock module that has been appended to IOPCLK.COM. $MEMRY is a word that the linker fills in with the address of the next available byte of memory after the last module used by IOPCLK has been loaded and resolved. Since IOPCLK will be assembled and linked without the IOP clock module PRL file, which will be appended later, the $MEMRY pointer will help us locate the beginning of the appended CLKIOP.PRL file. We'll file the information away for future use and then locate and save the IOP module information we'll need for relocation later on.

Now that we know where to find the IOP module, we can get and save a pointer to its name so that we can use it in the help message. Only then do we check to see if help has been requested. When a help message is requested, you'll notice that the help routine, MHELP, displays several module-specific strings that are located in the calling utility, IOPCLK. IOPCLK contains MDESC, the description of the IOP module. The description for

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Listing 1

```
; Module:       IOPLDR
; Author:       Terry Hazen
; Date:         06/07/91
; Version:      1.1
;
; Note:  IOPLDR conforms to Joe Wright's Standard Z-System
; I/O Package structure, version 4.0, May 4, 1989.  IOPLDR is
; based on RSXLDR, which incorporates parts of several
; utilities, including Hal Bower's SPEEDLDR.Z80 and parts of
; the loader portion of my own HPRSX.Z80. Portions of the code
; were derived from Bridger Mitchell's Advanced CP/M column in
; TCJ#34, p30 on the Plu*Perfect CP/M 2.2 RSX standards and
; the word-wide relocator was derived from his column in
; TCJ#33, p14 on relocation.
;----------
;
; ASCII equates
;
bell    equ     07
lf      equ     10
cr      equ     13
;
; CP/M equates
;
fcb     equ     005ch           ; Default File Control Block
cmdbuf  equ     0080h           ; Command buffer
;
; IOP offsets
;
oiopid  equ     35h             ; Offset to IOP name
;
; We need to use these SYSLIB routines:
;
        .request        syslib
        ext     cout,eprint,epstr,phl4hc,compb,$memry

;
; Let the target IOP loader utility use our routines:
;
        public  iopldr          ; Main IOP loader entry point
        public  uname           ; Displays leading spaces,
                                ;  the name of the IOP loader
                                ;  utility and any trailing
                                ;  message
        public  mname           ; Displays the name of the
IOP
                                ;  module and any trailing
                                ;  message
                                ; Address pointers:
        public  iop             ; local IOP module
        public  nziop           ; NZIOP buffer
;
; Module-specific msgs located in target IOP loader utility:
;
        ext     name            ; Loader utility name
        ext     mdesc           ; Module description for
                                ;  help screen.
;
; Module-specific routines located in target IOP loader
;  utility:
;
        ext     mcml            ; Displays any special
                                ;  command line help
        ext     mldmsg          ; Displays any special load
                                ;  message after load address
                                ;  is displayed
;
; MPARS - Parse command line.  Any IOP special command line
;  parsing, system checks and command routines can be done
;  with this routine.
; Entry: HL=FCB+1
; Exit:  CARRY set if error - quit without doing installation
;        Z set if system checks OK, but no parsed commands
;          found, check for bad command before installing IOP
;        NZ set if system checks OK and parsed command found,
;          IOP can be installed without further checks
        ext     mpars

;
; MCFG - Module-specific IOP configuration routine in local
; memory. Run after the IOP has been relocated and before the
; internal IOP install routine is run. Does all module-
; specific IOP configuration.
;
; Entry: HL=IX=address of loaded IOP
; Exit:  Z set if error
; Uses:  IX,IY must be preserved
        ext     mcfg

;
; MINST - Module-specific IOP install routine in local memory.
; Run after the IOP is relocated and the internal IOP install
; routine has been run. Does all module-specific installation.
; Entry: HL=IX=address of loaded IOP
; Exit:  Z set if error
        ext     minst
;==========
;
; Command line help screen
;
mhelp:  call    eprint
        db      'Installs and removes the IOP module for the'
        db      cr,lf,'   ',0
        call    mname           ; Display module name
                                ;  and description
        db      0               ; No trailing message
;
        ld      hl,mdesc
        call    epstr           ; Display module description
;
        call    eprint
        db      '.',cr,lf
        db      'Syntax:'
        db      cr,lf,0
;
        call    uname
        db      '      Install ',0
        call    mname
        db      ' IOP module'
        db      cr,lf,0
;
        call    uname
        db      ' R    Remove IOP module'
        db      cr,lf,0
;
        call    mcml            ; Display any special commands,
        jp      mldmsg          ; loaded IOP commands and
quit
;
; Main module entry
;
iopldr: ld      (stack),sp
        ld      sp,stack
        ld      hl,exit         ; Put exit address on stack
        push    hl
;
; Display program name, then move down one line and in 4
; spaces, ready for the display of common messages.
;
banner: ld      hl,name         ; Point to name string
        call    epstr           ; Display it
        call    eprint
        db      cr,lf,'   ',0
;
        ld      ix,(109h)       ; Get environment address
        ld      a,(ix+3)        ; First character of ID string
        cp      'Z'
        jp      nz,notez        ; Not Z-system, so quit
;
        ld      a,(ix+8)        ; Get Z3ENV Type in A
        rla                     ; Rotate bit 7 to carry
        jp      nc,notez        ; Quit if not extended ENV
;
        ld      l,(ix+24h)      ; Get EFCB address in HL
        ld      h,(ix+25h)
        ld      a,h
        or      l               ; Check for existence
        jr      z,getprl        ; No
;
```

IOPCLK is 'Video Clock IOP'. MHELP can also display any special loader utility commands and loaded IOP commands located at MCML and MLDMSG respectively.

At MCML (in IOPCLK), we find a description of the 'D' option, which controls the IOP clock's display format. In this case, IOPCLK doesn't need a message at MLDMSG, so it simply returns. In more complex IOPs, the message at MLDMSG can display commands that can be executed by the loaded IOP. The Alpha Systems RECORDer IOP, for example, has commands that allow you to turn the recording functions on or off and allow you to specify the names of the files to which the console and list output are being written.

If no help has been requested, we can now get the address and size of the NZCOM IOP buffer from the environment and make sure it exists and that it is big enough for our IOP module.

Removing the IOP Module

Now we can parse the command line and see if we are being asked to load or remove our IOP clock module. If we're removing it, we only have to make sure that the current IOP module has the same name as ours. If it does, we deselect it by calling the SELECT routine in the IOP with B=0FFh. We can then tell the user that the module has been removed and quit. Even though it's probably not absolutely necessary, we do the name test to make sure that each IOP module is removed by its own utility just in case there's something special about it or about its removal process.

Loading the IOP Module

If we're not being asked to remove the IOP module, we call MPARS in IOPCLK to parse the command line for any special commands and do any special system checks we might need. In our case, we want to check to make sure we have a working ZSDOS/ZDDOS system clock. We first use the extended DOS ID call 48 to make sure we are operating under ZSDOS or ZDDOS. If we are, we make sure we have a clock by using the DOS 98 call to do a trial clock read.

If the user has requested that we install the IOP, we copy the IOP module to the IOP buffer and using the PRL bitmap, relocate it in place by adjusting the module addresses to reflect the move (see Bridger Mitchell's *Advanced CP/M* column in *TCJ* 33 for more information on relocation).

Now that the module is in place, we call MCFG in IOPCLK to do any module-specific configuration that may be required. In our case, we need to find and save the location of the ZSDOS clock driver and we need to move the configuration buffer from the start of IOPCLK.COM to the loaded IOP clock module.

Like all good IOP loaders must, we then call the initialization routine in the IOP module. Before we can quit, we call MINST in IOPCLK to do any module-specific initialization. In our case, none is required. We then display the address of the IOP buffer and finally, call MLDMSG in IOPCLK to display any special load message our module might require. IOPCLK doesn't require anything special, so we're done. Our IOP is loaded, configured and running until we remove or replace it.

Configuring the IOP Module

If you chose to load CLKIOP.REL with NZCOM or JETLDR, you had to add all the configuration information to the CLKIOP source code before you assembled it to a REL file. This means, of course, that you'll have to change and reassemble and relink the source code each time you want to change the configuration. To make configuration easier and more flexible, there is a configuration buffer at the beginning of IOPCLK.COM. This buffer can be configured with ZCNFG and is copied to the IOP module configuration buffer after the module is loaded into the IOP buffer.

You can configure the IOP clock module to sound an alarm every hour, to display the time as hh:mm and update the display every minute or to display the time as hh:mm;ss and update the display every second, and to display the time in 12 or 24 hour format. This is also where you must specify the special terminal control sequence that is required to place the clock display in the terminal's host computer message field.

Producing IOPCLK.COM

We can now assemble and link IOPCLK.Z80 with IOPLDR.REL and SYSLIB to make IOPCLK.COM. Note that IOPLDR.REL requests the required SYSLIB routines, which are public:

```
ZMAC IOPCLK;ZML IOPCLK
```

We need to have the CLKIOP module available as a PRL file, which contains the bitmap that we need in order to relocate it (see Al Hawley's *Getting Started in Assembly Language* column, *TCJ* 50). First we assemble CLKIOP.Z80 to a REL file and then link it to a PRL file:

```
ZMAC CLKIOP;ZML CLKIOP /P
```

We can then use CONCAT with the binary-append options to append CLKIOP.PRL to the end of IOPCLK.COM to produce our final stand-alone IOP clock utility:

```
CONCAT IOPCLK.COM=CLKIOP.PRL /OA
```

You can now run IOPCLK to load the IOP clock module. You can also use it to remove the IOP module and to change the display from 12 to 24 hour time.

You can find the full source and documentation for IOPLDR in IOPLDR11.LBR on your favorite Z-Node. I hope IOPCLK and IOPLDR will give someone an idea that will soon lead to a new and innovative IOP module showing up in these pages!●

```
        inc     hl              ; Point to first name byte
        ld      de,name         ; Move name to our buffer
        ld      bc,8
        ldir
;
getprl: ld      hl,($memry)     ; Get end of code
        ld      a,l             ; Find start of PRL header
        or      a
        jr      z,start2
        cp      80h
        jr      z,start2
        add     80h
        jr      nc,start1
        inc     h
;
start1: and     80h
        ld      l,a
;
start2: push    hl              ; HL=PRL header
        inc     hl              ; Point to PRL size
        ld      e,(hl)
        inc     hl
        ld      d,(hl)
        ld      (size),de       ; Save PRL size
;
        pop     hl              ; HL=PRL header
        inc     h               ; HL=IOP
        push    hl
        pop     iy              ; HL=IY=local IOP module
        ld      (iop),hl
        ld      de,oiopid
        add     hl,de           ; HL=address of IOP name
        ld      (iopid),hl      ; Save it
;
        ld      hl,fcb+2        ; Check for help request
        ld      a,(hl)
        cp      '/'             ; Help request?
        jp      z,mhelp         ; Display help screen
;
; Get the IOP buffer address
;
getiop: ld      l,(ix+15)       ; IOP buffer address in the
                                ;  environment
        ld      h,(ix+16)
        ld      (nziop),hl      ; Save IOP buffer address
;
        ld      a,(ix+17)       ; Get IOPS size in records
        or      a               ; Check for zero
        jp      z,noiop         ; Quit, no IOP
;
        rra                     ; *80h
        ld      h,a             ; HL=size
        ld      l,0
        ld      (iops),hl       ; Save it
        or      a               ; Clear CARRY
        ld      de,(size)       ; Size of IOP
        sbc     hl,de
        jp      c,smiop         ; IOP too small for this
module
;
        ld      hl,fcb+1        ; Parse command line
        ld      bc,8            ; Scan name field
        ld      a,'R'           ; Check for 'R'emove
        cpir
        jr      z,remove        ; Yes, remove IOP
;
        ld      hl,fcb+1        ; Parse command line
        call    mpars           ; Do any special parsing and
                                ;  routines
        ret     c               ; Error, so quit
        jp      nz,install      ; Ok to install IOP
;
        ld      hl,fcb+1        ; Point to command tail
        ld      a,(hl)
        cp      ' '             ; Any command tail?
        jp      z,install       ; No, OK to install IOP
        jp      mhelp           ; Yes, must be bad command
;----------
;
; Remove IOP module
;
remove: ld      hl,(nziop)      ; Get IOP buffer address
        ld      de,oiopid       ; Offset to IOP name
        add     hl,de           ; HL=IOP name
        ld      de,(iopid)      ; DE=our name
        ld      b,8
        call    compb           ; Same?
        jr      nz,notsam       ; No, don't remove
;
        ld      b,0ffh          ; Deselect IOP
        call    select
        jr      z,nosel
;
        call    mname
        db      ' IOP module removed',cr,lf,0
        ret
;
nosel:  call    eprint
        db      'IOP select function not supported',cr,lf,0
        ret
;
notsam: call    eprint
        db      'Remove current IOP module ',0
;
        ld      de,rmsg
        push    de
        call    pn$0            ; Display name
;
rmsg:   db      ' with its own utility.'
        db      cr,lf,0
        ret
;----------
;
; Call IOP module SELECT routine
;
select: ld      hl,(nziop)      ; Get IOP buffer address
        ld      de,3            ; Offset to IOP SELECT
        add     hl,de
        jp      (hl)            ; Call IOP SELECT
;----------
;
; Copy the IOP module to the IOP buffer
;
install:ld      hl,(iop)        ; HL=local IOP module
        ld      de,(nziop)      ; DE=loaded IOP buffer
        push    de              ; Save 4 copies
        push    de
        push    de
        push    de
        ld      bc,(size)       ; Length of IOP-bitmap
        ldir                    ; Move the module
        call    reloc           ; Relocate the code
;
        pop     hl              ; Restore loaded IOP pointer
        pop     ix              ; HL=IX
        call    mcfg            ; Do module-specific
                                ;  configuration
        ret     z               ; Configuration error
;
        pop     hl              ; HL=loaded IOP buffer
        ld      de,9            ; Offset to IOPINIT
        add     hl,de
        call    jphl            ; Call the IOP install
routine
;
        pop     hl              ; Restore loaded IOP pointer
        call    minst           ; Do module-specific install
                                ;  routine
        ret     z               ; Installation error
;
        call    mname
        db      ' IOP module installed at ',0
        ld      hl,(nziop)      ; Get IOP load address
        call    at              ; Display load address
        jp      mldmsg          ; Display module-specific
                                ;  load message
;
; Main exit point
;
exit:   ld      sp,(stack)
```

```
        ret
;-----------
;
; Error returns:
;
;   No extended Z-system present
;
notez:  call    eprint
        db      'Requires ZCPR3 system with '
        db      'extended environment!'
        db      cr,lf,bell,0
        ret                     ; And quit
;
;   No IOP present
;
noiop:  call    eprint
        db      'No IOP buffer!',cr,lf,bell,0
        ret                     ; And quit
;
;   IOP buffer too small
;
smiop:  call    eprint
        db      'IOP buffer is too small!',cr,lf,bell,0
        ret                     ; And quit
;----------
;
; Bridger Mitchell's word-wide PRL relocator (TCJ#33 p14).
; Patches IOP addresses after IOP has been loaded to high
; memory. Bitmap remains in local memory.
;
reloc:  ld      a,i             ; Save interrupt vector in
AF'
        ex      af,af'
        di                      ; Disable interrupts while we
                                ; use stack
;
        ld      ix,0            ; IX=zero
        add     ix,sp           ; Save stack pointer in IX
;
        ld      hl,(nziop)      ; Relocation address
        push    hl
        exx
        pop     de              ; Set DE'=base address of
code
        dec     d               ; Compensate for 100h org in
                                ; PRL file
        exx
;
        ld      sp,hl           ; SP=start of code - 1 byte,
        dec     sp              ; since we need to mark high
                                ; byte
;
        ld      hl,(iop)        ; Start of local IOP module
        ld      bc,(size)       ; Length of relocated code
        add     hl,bc           ; HL=bitmap
        ld      e,1             ; Init the rotation byte,
                                ; which will set CARRY every
                                ; 8 bytes
;
rloop:  ld      a,b             ; Check byte count
        or      c
        jr      z,rdone         ; Done
;
        dec     bc              ; Reduce byte count
        rrc     e               ; Set CARRY every 8 bits
        jr      nc,rsame        ; Not set
;
        ld      d,(hl)          ; D=next byte from bitmap
        inc     hl              ; Advance bitmap pointer
;
rsame:  rlc     d               ; Shift bitmap byte into CARRY
        jr      nc,noof         ; No relocation needed
;
        exx
        pop     hl              ; Get word to relocate from
                                ; stack
        add     hl,de           ; Relocate by DE'=load
address
        push    hl              ; Put it back
        exx
;
noof:   inc     sp              ; Point to next byte of code
        jr      rloop           ; And deal with it
;
rdone:  ld      sp,ix           ; Restore the stack
        ex      af,af'          ; Restore interrupt vector
        ret     po              ; Interrupt was DI, so skip
                                ;  enable
        ei                      ; Otherwise enable interrupts
        ret
;----------
;
; Display the IOP module name and the trailing inline message.
;
mname:  push    hl              ; Save message pointer
        ld      hl,(iopid)      ; Point to name
        jr      pn$0            ; Display it
;
; Display 3 leading spaces, the filename and the trailing
; inline message.
;
uname:  push    hl              ; Save message pointer
        ld      b,3             ; 3 leading spaces
        ld      a,' '
;
splp:   call    cout            ; Display the spaces
        djnz    splp
;
        ld      hl,name         ; Point to our name buffer
pn$0:   ld      b,8
;
pn$loop:ld      a,(hl)          ; Get byte
        or      a
        jr      z,pn$dun        ; Quit at 0
;
        inc     hl              ; Point to next character
        and     07fh            ; Filter high bit
        cp      ' '
        jr      z,pn$dun        ; Quit at first space
        call    cout
        djnz    pn$loop
;
pn$dun: pop     hl              ; Restore message pointer
        jp      eprint          ; Display trailing message
;----------
;
; Display hex load address, start new line.
;
at:     call    phl4hc
        call    eprint
        db      'H',cr,lf,0
        ret
;----------
;
; Call (HL)
;
jphl:   jp      (hl)
;==========
;
; Initialized data area
;
iop:    ds      2       ; Start of local IOP module
size:   ds      2       ; Size of PRL
nziop:  ds      2       ; Start of NZIOP buffer
iops:   ds      2       ; Size of IOP buffer
iopid:  ds      2       ; Address of local IOP name
;
        ds      48      ; Local stack
stack:  ds      2       ; System stack pointer
        end
;
; End of IOPLDR.Z80
```

"There are a lot of lies going around.... and half of them are true." —Winston Churchill

Listing 2

```
; Module:       IOPCLK
; Author:       Terry Hazen
; Date:         06/07/91
; Version:      1.0
;----------
;
; Equates
;
off     equ     0
on      equ     0ffh
bdos    equ     5
bell    equ     7
lf      equ     10
cr      equ     13
esc     equ     27
;
; Program version for use in banner and CFG filename
;
mvers   equ     10
;
; Entry points for module-specific addresses and routines
; required by the IOPLDR module:
;
        public  name,mdesc,mcml,mldmsg,mpars,mcfg,minst
;
; From IOPLDR we need:
;
        .request        iopldr
        ext     iopldr,iop,nziop,uname
        ext     cout,eprint,phl4hc,$memry
;==========
;
enter:  jp      iopldr          ; IOPLDR does all the work
        db      'Z3ENV'         ; ZCPR3 Utility
        db      1               ; Type 1
z3eadr: dw      0               ; Z3ENV address provided
                                ;  by ZCPR33+
        dw      enter           ; ZCPR34 pad bytes
;
        db      'IOPCLK'        ; Default CFG filename
        db      mvers/10+'0',mvers mod 10+'0'
                                ; 8 characters total
        db      0               ; Termination
;----------
;
; IOP Configuration area - copied to IOP module at load time
;
config:
beep:   db      on              ; ON to beep every hour
seconds:db      on              ; ON to include seconds in
                                ;  clock display
time:   db      on              ; ON for 12hr time,
                                ; OFF for 24hr time
zsclk:  dw      0               ; ZSDOS clock driver address
;
; Prefix to put clock display in terminal message line. The
; prefix and termination character are completely terminal-
; dependant. This example is for the WYSE75:
;
term:   db      esc,'[>+\'      ; Message prefix
        ds      3               ; 8 bytes total
        db      0               ; Termination
;
termend:db      '\'             ;Message termination character
;
spaces: db      22              ; Spaces to start of clock
                                ; display
cfglen  equ     $-config
;=====
;
; IOPCLK-specific routines called by IOPLDR:
;=====
;
; NAME is the zero-terminated loader name and version number
; for use in the banner.
;
name:   db      'IOPCLK vers '
        db      mvers/10+'0','.',mvers mod 10+'0'
        db      0               ; Termination
;
; MDESC is a zero-terminated description of the module
; function that is displayed after the module name in the
; command line help screen.
;
mdesc:  db      ' Video Clock IOP',0
;----------
;
; MCML is displayed after the command line help screen to to
; allow the display of extended command line commands.
;
mcml:   call    uname
        db      ' D    Toggle time display between '
        db      '(hh:mm) and (hh:mm:ss)'
        db      cr,lf,0
        ret
;----------
;
; MLDMSG is displayed after IOP load/exists messages to allow
; the display of IOP commands.
;
mldmsg: ret                     ; No message required here
;----------
;
; MPARS does any required special command line parsing, system
; checks and execution of commands other than install and
; remove.
;
; Entry: HL=FCB+1
; Exit:  CARRY SET for error requiring exit without installing
;   IOP Z set if system checks ok but no command found. Look
;   for bad cmd. NZ set if system checks ok and command found.
;   Install IOP.
;
mpars:  push    hl              ; Save pointer
        ld      c,48            ; Extended DOS check
        call    bdos
        ld      a,h
        cp      'S'             ; Must be ZSDOS
        jr      z,clkchk
        cp      'D'             ; Or ZDDOS
        jr      z,clkchk
;
        call    eprint
        db      'ZSDOS/ZDDOS required!',cr,lf,bell,0
        jr      erret
;
; Check for good clock
;
clkchk: ld      de,clock        ; Check for clock
        ld      c,98            ; BDOS get time
        call    bdos
        inc     a
        jr      nz,pars         ; Clock present
;
        call    eprint
        db      'Can''t read clock!'
        db      cr,lf,bell,0
;
erret:  pop     hl              ; Discard pointer
        scf                     ; Set fatal error
        ret
;
; Parse command line
;
pars:   pop     hl              ; Restore pointer
        ld      a,'D'           ; Include seconds in display?
        ld      bc,8            ; Scan name field
        cpir
        jr      z,tsec          ; Found
;
        xor     a               ; Set Z-check for bad command
        ret
;
tsec:   ld      a,(seconds)     ; Otherwise toggle
                                ;  display flag
        cpl
        ld      (seconds),a
        jr      good            ; Set good return
;----------
```

```
;
; MCFG - does all required special configuration of the IOP
;        module after it has been relocated into high
;        memory and before internal IOP initialization is
run.
; Entry: HL,IX=address of IOP buffer, IY=address of local IOP
; Exit:  Z set if installation error
;        NZ set if ok
; Uses:  IX, IY must be preserved.
;
mcfg:   exx                     ; Save IOP addr
        ld      hl,(109h)       ; Get address of environment
        ld      de,42h          ; Offset to ZSDOS clock
driver
                                ;  address
        add     hl,de
        call    lhlhl           ; Get ZSDOS address
        ld      de,16h          ; Offset to clock address
        add     hl,de
        call    lhlhl           ; HL=address of ZSDOS clock
                                ;  routine
        ld      (zsclk),hl      ; Save it locally
;
        exx                     ; Restore IOP address
        ld      de,52h          ; Offset to IOP config area
        add     hl,de
        ex      de,hl           ; DE=loaded IOP config
address
        ld      hl,config       ; HL=local config area
        ld      bc,cfglen       ; BC=length of config area
        ldir
;
good:   or      on              ; Set good (NZ) return
        ret

;
; MINST - does all required special installation of the IOP
;         module after it has been relocated into high memory
;         and after internal IOP initialization is run.
; Entry:  HL,IX=address of IOP buffer, IY=address of local IOP
; Exit:   Z set if installation error
;         NZ set if ok
;
minst:  ret                     ; Nothing special required

;
; Load HL with the two bytes it is pointing to
;
lhlhl:  ld      a,(hl)          ; Low order to A
        inc     hl
        ld      h,(hl)          ; High order to H
        ld      l,a             ; Low order to L
        ret

;=====
;
; Data area
;
clock:  ds      6               ; Initial clock read buffer
        end
;
; End of IOPCLK.Z80
```

Computer Corner, from page 48

picture, text, drawing, and fancy graphics. It sure makes me miss using a MacIntosh. Icons in and of themselves are not the answer to easy use. In Mac machines, especially with the release of version 7, the look and feel is so uniform, that once a operation or technique is learned, you can use it in all programs.

Contrast this to PC based windows programs and you can easily see why the MacIntosh is still best. When using a PC, I have stopped using the mouse as it is too much work. Most of the programs I have all use the mouse differently—no standardization. Windows 3 added a more constant look and feel, but at present it is still each programming shop to their own way of doing things. I feel another 5 years from now and maybe the PC world will reach the same level of user friendliness that has been available on Macs for more than 5 years.

For Mac users or want-to-be-users you do not need to spend lots of money. No I am not talking about price drops but about other systems. A friend of mine just bought an Amiga with a MAC adapter card. He has been able to run almost everything available with better graphics and also have regular Amiga programs as well. I plan on doing the same here soon with my Atari ST. I think I can turn my 1 Meg machine into a Mac clone for about $300. Now I am not positive about prices right now, but I think you could buy a new Atari ST for say $1000 (color monitor). The Mac adapter at $300 means an Atari/MacIntosh for $1300 total. Now this is not getting you a classic model, but something closer to their IIs. For people who want to step up to 68K machines and real user friendly software it sure beats the "real thing".

Up Last

A last topic is industrial controllers. I was planning on reporting on a new controller running Forth, but I haven't received the information yet. The person is promising a demo model so I feel strongly I should wait and give a more complete accounting of the product later.

What I can report on is the flood of new products and interest in this area. I have commented before how it seems to be the last area for home grown production. Well it seems that a lot of people are taking me at my words. I am sure the number of small units available has never been greater. It is possible to get everything from 8031 to the newest chip on the market in something that fits in your hand.

If you are going this way a few words of advice. First off do your homework. Find someone who needs the product and work with them to get it going. This will help you shake out all those little "oops" that can slip by so easily. Think about your user and just what they need. Don't forget what level of knowledge your user may have. Make it a point of building and testing everything you say the system can do. Be able to prove beyond a shadow of doubt that it will work as advertised. Lastly don't do it if you really don't have the experience and knowledge needed.

I receive several industrial trade magazines and have seen lately talks about the dangers of poorly designed and tested industrial controllers. The project I worked on years ago was held up and changed several times due to concerns about product liability. When designing the system knowing what will happen if this or that fails may be the difference between someone saving their life or losing it. These are not items to be treated lightly or haphazardly.

Caution To the Winds

At this point I feel like throwing caution to the winds and saying how next time I will have information for you that you will wonder how you ever lived without it. But then I also got a bridge to sell as well....have fun!!!!●

Z-Best Software

Spotlight on Gene Pizzetta

By Bill Tishey

What a great time this is for anyone involved with Z-System! The "team" of Z developers continues to fill the Z-Nodes with new tools and refinements to existing utilities. As you can see, the list of new and revised programs is even longer than that of last issue! This, however, makes my job as this columnist even tougher. Due to the limited space here, it's impossible to cover everything in detail. What I would like to do each issue is provide some encapsulated reports on what is new and improved. Sometimes, as in this issue, I may focus on the contributions of a particular developer. In addition, however, I would like to highlight some programs of *your* choosing. Drop me a line (either directly or through the editor) with any programs which you'd like to see discussed. Maybe you want to know more about LSH, Rob Friefeld's command-line editing shell. Maybe you'd like to see some applications for Terry Hazen's ZFIND utility. Maybe you're looking for a good file-compare utility, or something that will unZIP MS-DOS self-extracting (.EXE) ZIPfiles. I feel that this column will serve its readers best if there are such questions to guide it. Let me hear from you!

Listing 1
New Releases:

```
Name          Vers   S ZSUS Siz Rec CRC  Library/Size Issued   Author
================================================================================

CFGZ.COM      1.00   0 0      6  47 F829 CFGZ10      5 05/03/91 Terry Hazen
  SYS     User-modified version of AMPRO CONFIG 2.6 utility to allow correct
  HLP=N   operation under both CP/M and NZCOM.
  CFG=Y

CMAZE.COM     1.80   0 0     28 220 D2AD CMAZE18    39 09/16/91 Lee Bradley
  SYS     MBASIC/BASCOM game which uses Z-System TCAP data.  Creates a maze of
  HLP=N   walls and asks you to position a ball in the maze.  Data entry is
  CFG=N   best done with ZEX scripts.  Uses Z3BAS library of routines.

CPD.COM       1.00   0 V211   4  29 83D1 CPD10      21 08/10/91 Gene Pizzetta
  DIR     Compares two directories and indicates which files exist in both and
  HLP=Y   which exist only in the first.  Allows setting of archive bit on
  CFG=Y   those files which exist in both directories.

FILT.COM      0.80   0 0      4  30 9588 FILT8      23 09/13/91 Gene Pizzetta
  WP      ZCPR3 rework of Irv Hoff's FILT7 tool which sets or expands tabs and
  HLP=N   removes several types of unwanted characters in ASCII text, WordStar
  CFG=Y   documents or assembler source code files.

JUST.COM      1.20   0 0      4  31 548B JUST12     40 09/13/91 Gene Pizzetta
  WP      ZCPR3 rework of Irv Hoff's tool to justify ASCII and WordStar text
  HLP=N   files.  Full command-line operation, DU support, error-flag setting,
  CFG=Y   quiet mode, and transfers create datestamps under ZSDOS.
```

Spotlight on Gene Pizzetta

Gene provides us four new tools and updates to three others. As you read the following paragraphs, one thing should be obvious—Gene's continuing work with program support for ZSDOS and datestamping in general.

CPD vs 1.0 (ZSUS Vol 2 #11)

Gene's ComPare-Directory utility, CPD, was an idea derived from CDIR vs 2.0 (by Rob Wilcox and Richard Brewster) and the result of some prompting from Howard Schwartz. See *Figure 1* for CPD's syntax.

CPD compares two directories and indicates which files exist in both directories and which exist only in the first directory. If no option is given, all matching non-system files in the first directory are displayed with files marked which also exist in the second directory. The duplicated files are marked in standout video (if supported by one's TCAP) and by an asterisk following the filename. The asterisk has the added function of allowing visible markings in printer output.

CPD's options allow 1) display of only those files which exist in both directories, 2) display of files in the first direc-

Bill Tishey has been a ZCPR user since 1985, when he found the right combination of ZCPR2 and Microsoft's Softcard CP/M for his three-year-old Apple II+. After graduating to ZCPR30 and PCPI's Applicard CP/M, he did a "manual install" of ZCPR3.3 (with help from a lot of friends!), and in late 1988 switched to NZCOM and ZSDOS, all on the same vintage Apple II+. Bill is the author of the Z3HELP system, a monthly-updated system of help files for Z-System programs, as well as comprehensive listings of available Z-System software. Bill is the editor of the Z-System Software Update Service and has compiled such offerings as the Z3COM package and the Z-System Programmer's Toolkit. Bill is a language analyst for the federal government and frequents the Foreign Language Forum (FLEFO) on Compuserve. He can be reached there (76320,22), on Genie (WATISHE), on Jay Sage's Z-Node #3 (617-965-7259) and by regular mail at 8335 Dubbs Drive, Severn, MD 21144.

```
LOCNDOPT.HEX 1.00   0 0      1   3 8FB5 LOCNDOPT   3 08/01/91 Bruce Morgen
  PROG4  Patch to LOCNDO.IOM vs 1.2 which adds 1) Z3 extended ENV drive vector
  HLP=N  support, 2) "//" help query and 3) proper trap if no valid ENV.
  CFG=N

MKZ3BASE.COM 1.00   0 0      2   9 241E MKZ3BASE   5 ??/??/91 H. zur Nedden
  PROG   Builds a Z3BASE.LIB by reading the current values for the equates
  HLP=N  from the environment descriptor.
  CFG=N

SSORTPAT.Z80 1.00   0 0      2   9 AD42 SSORTPAT   2 08/23/91 Bruce Morgen
  PROG4  Patch for MicroPro SuperSort v1.60 (SORT.COM) to allow multiple
  HLP=N  SuperSort commands under ZCPR33+ (including BGii 1.3x, NZCOM, Z3PLUS)
  CFG=N  from the system prompt or in Z-System aliases and other scripts.

TYPELZH.COM  2.00   C 0      7  54 191C TLZH20    60 07/27/91 Roger Warren
  LBR    Types LZH-encoded, Crunched, and Squeezed files.  Based on TYPELZ.
  HLP=N  Vs 1.0 (8/15/89) by Roger Warren.
  CFG=N

TYPELZHR.COM 2.00   C 0      7  54 B980 TLZH20    60 07/27/91 Roger Warren
  LBR    See TYPELZH.COM.  For R/CPMs with wheel at 03EH.
  HLP=N
  CFG=N

WINDWLIB.REL 1.00   0 0      6  47 A8D2 WINDOW10  18 04/29/91 W. Schmitten
  PROG3  Routines which allow use of up to 15 windows on (any) CP/M computer.
  HLP=N
  CFG=N

XRUN-ENG.COM 2.50   0 0      4  25 45BC XRUN25    38 02/28/91 Olaf Krumnow
  SYS    An ECP for ZCPR33.  Looks for files along the search path and
  HLP=N  constructs a command line depending on the extension of the file
  CFG=N  found.  Supports shell variables.

ZBIB.COM     0.50   0 0      8  64 529C ZBIB05    23 09/15/91 Joe Mortensen
 ?DBASE  Bibliographic database manager based on ZDB.
  HLP=Y
  CFG=Y

ZTIME+.COM   1.30   0 0      4  27 F6B4 ZTIME13   25 09/11/91 Gene Pizzetta
  DATE   See ZTIME.COM.  Z3PLUS version.
  HLP=N
  CFG=Y

ZTIME.COM    1.30   0 0      4  27 7E7B ZTIME13   25 09/11/91 Gene Pizzetta
  DATE   A hardware independent clock utility for setting or displaying the
  HLP=N  date and time under ZSDOS or Z3PLUS.  Options include the ability to
  CFG=Y  measure elapsed time.  ZSDOS version.
```

Listing 2
Revised Programs:

```
Name         Vers   S ZSUS Siz Rec  CRC Library/Size Issued   Author
================================================================================
CFGLIB.REL   1.00   4 V212   2  10 E955 ZCNFG19  109 08/21/91 Al Hawley
  PROG3  Library of routines used to link .CFG configuration files used by
  HLP=Y  ZCNFG.COM.
  CFG=N

DATSTP-P.3OM 1.70   3 0      5  39 33C5 DATSTP17  64 08/30/91 Gene Pizzetta
  DATE   See DATSTP-U.COM.  For Z3PLUS only.  Type 3 at 8000h.
  HLP=Y
  CFG=Y

DATSTP-P.4OM 1.70   4 0      6  46 3A31 DATSTP17  64 08/30/91 Gene Pizzetta
  DATE   See DATSTP-U.COM.  For Z3PLUS only.  Type 4.
  HLP=Y
  CFG=Y

DATSTP-P.COM 1.70   0 0      5  39 690C DATSTP17  64 08/30/91 Gene Pizzetta
  DATE   See DATSTP-U.COM.  For Z3PLUS only.
  HLP=Y
  CFG=Y

DATSTP-U.3OM 1.70   3 0      6  44 EE45 DATSTP17  64 08/30/91 Gene Pizzetta
  DATE   See DATSTP-U.COM.  Universal version (ZSDOS, ZDDOS and Z3PLUS).
  HLP=Y  Type 3 at 8000h.
  CFG=Y
```

tory which do not exist in the second, and 3) setting the archive attribute on those files which exist in both directories, facilitating copying those that do not.

FILT vs 8.0, JUST vs 1.2

Gene has reworked several of Irv Hoff's text-handling utilities for ZCPR. FILT8 is an update to FILT7, Irv's widely-used CP/M tool which sets or expands tabs and removes several types of unwanted characters in ASCII text, WordStar documents, or assembler source code files. JUST12 is a reworking of Irv's JUSTIFY tool which justifies ASCII and WordStar text files (see *Figure* 2 for their syntax). Both tools are now command-line driven, provide DU and DIR support, error flag setting, error handler invocation, quiet mode and ZCNFG configuration. Under ZSDOS and ZDDOS, both will preserve file create date stamps.

As Gene puts it, the hardest part in converting FILT7 and JUSTIFY was "deciding how to make the variously interactively chosen modes into a group of logical command-line options." In FILT8, mode options are provided for use with source code (S), ASCII text (A), WordStar documents "without" dot commands (W), and WordStar documents "with" dot commands (D). In JUST12, options allow for justifying lines starting with a space (S), for justifying lines regardless of their original length (L), and for retaining embedded form feeds. Both tools also have a quiet mode option (Q). FILT8 and JUST12 are a welcome addition to the word-processing/text-handling toolset and, if Gene had not intended it so, are also a fitting reminder to us all of the legacy of Irv Hoff.

ZTIME vs 1.3

ZTIME is a new, hardware-independent clock utility for setting or displaying the date and time under ZSDOS or Z3PLUS. See *Figure* 3 for its syntax.

Date and time entry with ZTIME is simplified by a syntax which allows missing elements to be filled in from the current setting of the clock. Thus, if you want to change the hour, say to daylight saving time, you need only type "ZTIME hh:". To adjust the minutes, type "ZTIME :mm", or to set the seconds, type "ZTIME ::ss". A unique feature of ZTIME is its ability to meas-

Figure 1

```
CPD   Version 1.0
Usage:
   CPD {dir:}{afn} {dir:} {{/}options}
Displays files in first directory, marking files
that are duplicated in second directory.
Options:
   B   display only files in both directories
   M   display only files missing from second directory
   A   set archive attribute if in both directories
   S   include system files
   P   don't page display
   L   echo to printer
   F   send final form feed
Options B and M are mutually exclusive.
```

Figure 2

```
FILT   Version 8.0   Copyright (c) 1986 by Irv Hoff
Usage:
   FILT {dir:}infile {{dir:}outfile} {{/}options}
The outfile defaults to the name of the infile.

Mode Options:
   S   Source Code
   A   ASCII Text [default]
   W   WordStar-remove dot commands
   D   WordStar-retain dot commands
Other Options:
   T   don't use tabs
   Q   quiet mode on


JUSTIFY   Version 1.2   Copyright (c) 1988 by Irv Hoff
Usage:
   JUST {dir:}infile {dir:}{outfile} {{/}options}
If no outfile is given, default is filetype "JUS".
In-Text Options, in first column of source file:
   )   center this line
   ]   justify this indented paragraph
   ;   do not justify this line

Command Line Options:
   n   line width for justifying (default 65)
   S   justify lines starting with space
   L   justify lines regardless of length
   F   retain form feeds
   Q   quiet mode on
```

Figure 3

```
ZTIME    Version 1.3
Displays or sets ZSDOS date and time.
Usage:
   ZTIME {{mm}/{dd}/{yy}} {{hh}:{mm}:{ss}}
sets clock, or
   ZTIME {{/}option}
Options:
   C   Show date and time continuously
   S   Set date and time interactively
   M   Store date and time in memory registers 18-23
   E   Show elapsed time since using option M
If no date and time string or option is given,
the current date and time is displayed.
```

```
DATSTP-U.4OM 1.70   4 0      7  52 F6BA DATSTP17  64 08/30/91 Gene Pizzetta
  DATE   See DATSTP-U.COM.  Universal version (ZSDOS, ZDDOS, or Z3PLUS).
  HLP=Y  Type 4.
  CFG=Y

DATSTP-U.COM 1.70   0 0      6  44 A480 DATSTP17  64 08/30/91 Gene Pizzetta
  DATE   Displays or changes the create and modify date stamps on any file
  HLP=Y  from the command line.  Universal version (ZSDOS/ZDDOS/ZRDOS with
  CFG=Y  DateStamper, under Z3PLUS will display but not change date stamps).

DATSTP-Z.3OM 1.70   3 0      4  31 3B3E DATSTP17  64 08/30/91 Gene Pizzetta
  DATE   See DATSTP-U.COM.  For ZSDOS and ZDDOS only.  Type 3 at 8000h.
  HLP=Y
  CFG=Y

DATSTP-Z.4OM 1.70   4 0      5  36 970E DATSTP17  64 08/30/91 Gene Pizzetta
  DATE   See DATSTP-U.COM.  For ZSDOS and ZDDOS only.  Type 4.
  HLP=Y
  CFG=Y

DATSTP-Z.COM 1.70   3 0      4  31 486D DATSTP17  64 08/30/91 Gene Pizzetta
  DATE   See DATSTP-U.COM.  For ZSDOS and ZDDOS only.
  HLP=Y
  CFG=Y

DSTATS.COM   1.20   3 V211   2  16 1A0E DSTATS12  19 08/09/91 Terry Hazen
  DISK   ZCPR3 disk/user statistics utility.  Displays disk block size, disk
  HLP=Y  capacity, allocated and free space, list of active user areas, etc.
  CFG=Y  Combines DSKMAP and many functions of UMAP.

EXTEND.4OM   1.40   4 V213   2  11 D4ED EXTEND14  10 08/14/91 Bruce Morgen
  WP     See EXTEND.COM.  Type 4.
  HLP=Y
  CFG=N

EXTEND.COM   1.40   4 V213   1   8 DE0D EXTEND14  10 08/14/91 Bruce Morgen
  WP     Text file extender for all Z80 machines.  Appends input line to new
  HLP=Y  or existing ASCII file.  Vs 1.0 (09/81) by Ron Fowler.
  CFG=N

HELPC.COM    1.50   0 V213   5  37 5794 HELPC15   24 09/16/91 Howard Goldstein
  HELP   Replacement for the standard Z-System HELP utility.  Handles crunched
  HLP=N  as well as normal, uncompressed help files.  Print options are
  CFG=Y  disabled when wheel byte is turned off.  Configurable with ZCNFG.
```

ure elapsed time. An "M" option stores the current date and time in memory registers, and an "E" option compares the current time with that stored in the registers to calculate the elapsed time in hours, minutes and seconds (up to 24 hours maximum). ZTIME also has an option to show the time continuously. Two versions are available for ZSDOS and Z3PLUS, with wheel byte support (setting the clock will not work unless the wheel byte is set).

ZSLIB vs 3.2

As mentioned last time, Gene has released an update (now vs 3.2) of ZSLIB, a set of routines which provides extensive date and time and file stamp support for ZSDOS, Z3PLUS and CP/M-Plus (in addition, it supplements SYSLIB with a number of general-purpose routines). Improvements include: greater compatibility with DSLIB routines, switchable date output in either American (mm/dd/yy) or European (dd.mm.yy) date order, switchable time output in either military (24 hour) or civilian format, and more flexible command-line parsing of date and time specs. Version 3.2 also adds a new set of video highlighting routines which are much smaller (although somewhat slower) than similar modules in VLIB4.

DATSTP vs 1.7

Gene has also provided some improvements to DATSTP, his utility for displaying or changing (from the command line) ZSDOS and Z3PLUS create and modify date stamps. See *Figure 4* for its syntax.

DATSTP does not just "replace" date and time specs, but "edits" them. An editing buffer is loaded with a file's current create date stamp and the command-line spec is applied to it. Any missing fields in the input spec remain unchanged in the buffer, allowing for very flexible entry. Create and modify date stamps can be edited individually or both given the same stamp. The major changes to DATSTP since last October (vs 1.4) are the use of ZSLIB32's more flexible parsing of date/time specs and the revival of support for DateStamper (DATSTP will now function as long as there is a !!!TIME&.DAT file on disk; DateStamper need not even be running). Version 1.7 adds a C option which allows use of the current system time as the stamp editing source. It moves the current date into the edit buffer as the default date, but does not affect which stamp is modified. You must, for instance, use the C and M options together to change the modify stamp to the current date.

RCOPY vs 1.2

RCOPY is Gene's tool to automate transfer of a set of files to a RAM disk at boot-up. As a side benefit, it can reduce considerably the size of STARTUP aliases. See *Figure 5* for syntax.

RCOPY can also be used to copy a

```
HELPLSH.COM  1.10   4 V212   3  21 5611 LSH11      66 08/24/91 Rob Friefeld
  HELP   Help program for LSH vs 1.1.
  HLP=Y
  CFG=N

LBREXT.COM   3.30   0 V213   8  64 159F LBREXT33   35 08/02/91 Howard Goldstein
  LBR    Extracts crunched, squeezed and LZH-encoded files from LBRs.
  HLP=Y  Vs 2.0 by Bob Peddicord.
  CFG=Y

LDIR-B.COM   2.20   0 V211   2  16 A343 LDIRB22    25 09/10/91 Bruce Morgen
  LBR    Displays LBR directories showing file dates and sizes.  Includes a
  HLP=Y  summary line of active/free/deleted/total member entries.  For CP/M
  CFG=N  2.2 or CP/M+ with runtime ZCPR3 support.  Vs 1.0 (87) by S. Greenberg.

LHC.COM      2.00   0 V213   5  40 29F0 LBRHLP20   45 09/16/91 Howard Goldstein
  HELP   Remake of HELP 5.3 which reads crunched .HLP files in LBRs.
  HLP=N
  CFG=Y

LHQ.COM      2.00   0 V213   5  37 166D LBRHLP20   45 09/16/91 Howard Goldstein
  HELP   Remake of HELP 5.3 which reads squeezed .HLP files in LBRs.
  HLP=N
  CFG=Y

LPUT.COM     2.20   4 V213   6  48 3D8A LPUT22     35 08/26/91 Howard Goldstein
  LBR    Automated CPM/ZCPR3 library maker.  Does for LBR creation what LGET
  HLP=Y  does for extraction.
  CFG=N

LSH.3OM      1.10   4 V212   8  59 FFE8 LSH11      66 08/24/91 Rob Friefeld
  SHELL  Log SHell is a screen-oriented command line editing shell.
  HLP=Y  LSHINST.COM installs program defaults and control key bindings.
  CFG=N

LSH.4OM      1.10   4 V212   9  68 9256 LSH11      66 08/24/91 Rob Friefeld
  SHELL  See LSH.3OM.  Type 4.
  HLP=Y
  CFG=N

LSHF.3OM     1.10   3 V212   8  59 17A6 LSH11      66 08/24/91 Rob Friefeld
  SYS    See LSH.3OM.  "Fixed-file", Type-3 version.
  HLP=Y
  CFG=N

LSHF.4OM     1.10   4 V212   9  68 86B3 LSH11      66 08/24/91 Rob Friefeld
  SYS    See LSH.3OM.  "Fixed-file", Type-4 version.
  HLP=Y
  CFG=N

LSHINST.COM  1.10   4 V212  11  85 6909 LSH11      66 08/24/91 Rob Friefeld
  SHELL  Install program for LSH vs 1.0r.
  HLP=Y
  CFG=N
```

Figure 4

```
DATSTP   Version U-1.7   (loaded at 0100h)
Edits and displays file date stamps under ZSDOS, Z3PLUS,
& DateStamper.

USAGE:
   DATSTP {dir:}filename {date} {time} {{/}options}
If no date and time or option is given, date stamps
are displayed only.  Edit and write default to the
create stamp.

DATE/TIME FORMAT:
   {mm}/{dd}/{yy} {hh}:{mm}   clock time
   {mm}/{dd}/{yy} +{nnnn}     relative time

OPTIONS:
   C   edit the current date and time
   M   edit and write the modify stamp
   B   write both the create and modify stamps
   Q   toggle quiet mode on
Option C overrides option M for edit.
```

Figure 5

```
RCOPY    Version 1.2
Copies list of files from A0: to A0:
Usage:
   RCOPY12 {{/}option}
Option:
   Q   toggle quiet mode on
```

list of other types of files from one directory to another (e.g., WordStar overlay files before a word-processing session). The source and destination directories and list of files is internally configured (with ZCNFG). The file list can contain up to 20 files (a limitation of ZCNFG; an unlimited number can be coded internally). Improvements since the last version (9/90) include the preservation of date stamps under ZSDOS/ZDDOS and the ability to set archive, system and/or no-stamp attributes on the destination files.

Program of the Month
ZCNFG vs 1.9 (ZSUS Vol 2 #12)

Remember when you had to edit the data options and reassemble the source code to configure a program such as FileFind to your particular system and style of usage? If you were lucky, someone provided an overlay patch so you didn't have to touch the source code itself. Well, much of this is behind us now. Al Hawley's universal configuration utility, ZCNFG, greatly simplifies the configuration of *any* program. Yes, given that conventions are followed in programming of its overlay (.CFG) file, any Z-System or CP/M program can now benefit from its simple, menu-approach to configuration.

ZCNFG's operation is simple. See *Figure 6* for ZCNFG's syntax and a sample configuration screen.

The data options and current selection for each option are displayed to the user in one or more menus. These may be in the form of "toggles" for yes/no options, multiple-choice options, or various edit options (the hex or decimal value of a byte, a DU: or Z3-style file spec, a printer init string, etc.) which the user changes to suit his needs. Help screens are usually available to explain each configuration option. When all options are "set", exiting with X or ESC overlays the appropriate data to the configuration block in the first page of the target program. That simple!

Al has made some major improvements to ZCNFG since vs 1.6 (7/90). Its search logic, for instance, has been changed to speed up response for common types of usage. Now, if either a partial or complete DU is given, the alternate directory is *not* searched. If the CFG name is taken from the target file's configuration block, the alternate directory *is* searched first. A colon or

```
LT.COM       3.00   C 0      7  53 55D6 LT30      56 07/17/91 C. B. Falconer
  LBR    Library Type can type normal, LZH-encoded, crunched or squeezed files
  HLP=N  whether standalone or in a .LBR.  Can extract/uncrunch any/all files
  CFG=N  at the same time.  Adapted from Steven Holtzclaw's LUXTYP (06/83).

NUKEYCLK.COM 0.30   0 0      2  16 7FCC NKYCLK03   6 07/13/91 Joe Mortensen
  IOP    Enables IOP Nukey to have current date/time available as macros
  HLP=N  within other applications such as WordStar.  For ZCPR33+ systems
  CFG=N  with built-in clock.

RCOPY.COM    1.20   0 0      3  20 72FD RCOPY12   20 08/17/91 Gene Pizzetta
  FILE   Copies a list of files between two directories.
  HLP=Y
  CFG=Y

STATPAT.Z80  3.00   0 0      4  30 0B9A STATPAT3   3 08/26/88 Bruce Morgen
  PROG4  Patches STAT.COM to work under ZCPR3.
  HLP=Y
  CFG=N

TPA.COM      3.3a   C 0      1   5 EDBB TPA33A    12 08/19/91 Jay Sage
  SYS    Reports amount of memory available in TPA (Transient Program Area)
  HLP=N  and allows one to temporarily lower the size of TPA.  Vs. 3.3 adds
  CFG=N  ZCPR "//" help screen, display in kilobytes.

ZCNFG.COM    1.90   4 V212   6  48 E021 ZCNFG19  109 08/21/91 Al Hawley
  SYS    Universal configuration utility which configures option data in
  HLP=Y  executable files.  Uses .CFG overlay file.
  CFG=Y

ZCRCK.3OM    1.40   3 V211   3  24 806E ZCRCK14   16 08/08/91 Bruce Morgen
  FILE   See ZCRCK.COM.  Type 3 at 8000h.
  HLP=N
  CFG=N

ZCRCK.4OM    1.40   4 V211   4  29 B3D6 ZCRCK14   16 08/08/91 Bruce Morgen
  FILE   See ZCRCK.COM.  Type 4.
  HLP=N
  CFG=N

ZCRCK.COM    1.40   3 V211   3  24 2EEA ZCRCK14   16 08/08/91 Bruce Morgen
  FILE   ZCPR3-compatible version of Sigi Kluger's NZCRCK1, which was
  HLP=Y  designed to combine the features of CRCK and CHEK on RCP/M systems.
  CFG=N  Original (05/86) by Bruce Morgen.

ZDB.COM      1.50   0 0      8  64 F4D7 ZDB15     23 09/09/91 Joe Mortensen
  DBASE  Small, fast name and address manager with built-in label and
  HLP=Y  envelope addressing features.  NZTCAP and VLIB4D support.
  CFG=N

ZDT.COM      1.00   0 0      8  64 3034 ZDT10     43 08/05/91 Joe Mortensen
  DBASE  Z-System Day Timer, a daily planning calendar derived from ZDB.
  HLP=N  Automatically reads the real-time clock and displays the current
  CFG=N  day's schedule.  Requires ZCPR3.0+ and extended TCAP.

ZERR.3OM     1.60   3 V212   3  23 DFDA ZERR16    49 08/24/91 Rob Friefeld
  ERROR  Bare-bones error handler derived from EASE vs 1.6z.  Configured
  HLP=Y  with ZERRINST.COM.
  CFG=N

ZERR.4OM     1.60   4 V212   4  31 A98A ZERR16    49 08/24/91 Rob Friefeld
  ERROR  See ZERR.3OM.  Type 4.
  HLP=N
  CFG=N

ZERRINST.COM 1.60   3 V212   4  31 65D1 ZERR16    49 08/24/91 Rob Friefeld
  ERROR  Install program for ZERR.COM vs 1.6.
  HLP=N
  CFG=N

ZERRLSH.COM  1.10   3 V212   4  29 B69B LSH11     66 08/24/91 Rob Friefeld
  ERROR  ZCPR 3.3+ error handler which performs all the functions of ZERR.
  HLP=Y  Automatically updates history file, if LSH history shell is active.
  CFG=N  Configured with ZERRINST.COM.

ZERRLSHF.COM 1.10   3 V212   4  29 6719 LSH11     66 08/24/91 Rob Friefeld
  ERROR  See ZERRLSH.COM.  "Fixed-file" version.
  HLP=Y
  CFG=N
```

```
ZFIND.COM    1.40   0 0      4  30 B54E ZFIND14    35 08/11/91 Terry Hazen
  FILE   ZCPR3 string search utility which very quickly finds ASCII strings in
  HLP=Y  text files.  Found string can be displayed in either line or delimited
  CFG=Y  block.  Output can be written or appended to a file.

ZLT.COM      1.50   0 0      6  47 E427 ZLT15      38 09/12/91 Howard Goldstein
  LBR    Z-System Library Typer, basically a Z'ified LT29 with file
  HLP=Y  extraction and parsing code removed.  Vs 1.1 (09/88) by Bruce
  CFG=Y  Morgen.

ZP.3OM       1.50   3 0      8  64 81DA ZP15       86 08/23/91 Terry Hazen
  FILE   See ZP.COM.  Type 3 at 8000h.
  HLP=Y
  CFG=Y

ZP.4OM       1.50   4 0     10  74 FAA2 ZP15       86 08/23/91 Terry Hazen
  FILE   See ZP.COM.  Type 4.
  HLP=Y
  CFG=Y

ZP.COM       1.50   0 0      8  64 A257 ZP15       86 08/23/91 Terry Hazen
  FILE   ZCPR33+/Z3PLUS/BGii screen-oriented file/disk/memory record patcher
  HLP=Y  using the ZPATCH command set.  Requires a VLIB4D+ Z3TCAP.  One-record
  CFG=Y  cache can be exchanged with file/disk/memory records.

ZSLIBM.REL   3.20   4 0     27 212 E201 ZSLIB32    94 09/08/91 Gene Pizzetta
  PROG1  Assembly language routines to assist programmers in handling date-
  HLP=Y  stamp maintenance under ZSDOS, Z3PLUS, and CP/M Plus.  Microsoft
  CFG=N  REL format.

ZSLIBS.REL   3.20   4 0     25 197 412F ZSLIB32    94 09/08/91 Gene Pizzetta
  PROG1  See ZSLIBM.REL.  SLR format.
  HLP=Y
  CFG=Y

ZSWEEP.COM   1.30   0 0     16 122 C80C ZS13       38 09/11/91 Pete Pardoe
  LBR    Z'ified version of NSWP207 with ability to act upon current file with
  HLP=N  any Z-System command up to 127 chars.  NDR support, datestamp display.
  CFG=N  Requires ZCPR33+ with extended TCAP.

ZSWEEPNB.COM 1.20   0 0     19 152 073A ZS12       49 08/03/91 Pete Pardoe
  LBR    See ZSWEEP.COM.  Generic version (regular TCAP).
  HLP=N
  CFG=N
```

Figure 6

```
ZCNFG, Z-SYSTEM CONFIGURATION UTILITY
Version 1.9, 08/20/91

Configures option data in Executable files.
Syntax:
  ZCNFG [du/dir:]<nam1>[.<ex1>] [du/dir:][<nam2>][.<ex2>]

       du/dir: defaults to the current drive and user
       <nam1> is the Executable file to configure.
       <nam2> is the configuration overlay file.
       <ex1>  defaults to COM, <ex2> defaults to CFG
Example:     ZCNFG ZCNFG    ;configures itself.
A related configuration data file must be present to provide
Screen layout, Menus, and configuration data.

B0:WORK>zcnfg zcnfg

         ZCNFG, Z-SYSTEM CONFIGURATION UTILITY
              Version 1.9, 08/20/91

                        ZCNFG CONFIGURATION

           T) Target Program Default Filetype              COM
           O) Overlay file Default Filetype                CFG
           Z) Z3ENV auto-install for ZCPR3                 YES
           A) Alternate D/U for Overlay files              D15
           L) console Lines per Screen                      24
           C) Configuration LBR name                CONFIG.LBR
           D) Use  TARGET DU as the default for the CFG filespec

                     ZCNFG INSTALLATION CONTROL
   X or Esc =Save changes & eXit      Q,^C =Quit with no changes saved
 / or ? =Explain Options      > or . =Next Menu     < or , =Previous Menu
       Which choice?
```

form-feed character has also been added as the first character of a line in help screens to invoke paging. But that isn't all. Back in May, I asked Al if ZCNFG couldn't be made to recognize its configuration (CFG) files from inside an LBR in a specified directory. There were so many of these files lying around that they were getting hard to keep track of and, for me, were taking up a lot of precious hard-disk space. Well, with version 1.9, Al has added this very feature, giving you the option now of allowing them to reside unLBR'ed in an alternate directory or setting up an LBR of CFGs, with a name and location of your choice. CONFIG.LBR (the default name of the LBR) is expected to be found in ZCNFG's alternate directory and is now searched first for the CFG file if there is no DIR form (D:, U:, DU: or DIR:) specified in the invoking command tail.

As Z-Librarian, I try to keep an up-to-date package of the latest Z-System COM files, along with their associated HLP and CFG files. Being able to maintain the CFG files in one, single library saves considerable time in finding needed files and disk space in storing them. In September I uploaded to the Z-Nodes CFG01.LBR, a full set of CFG files for the latest existing executables for use with ZCNFG19. It contained 66 files (there are now well over 70) and took up only 149k, instead of 312k if the files were to reside separately on a hard disk with 4k-per-file allocation.

What can I say? ZCNFG has improved to the point where it is now one of the most "essential" of Z-System tools. I think we can safely say that "Z-CoNFiGuration" is *the* "standard" for setting up configuration options for users in Z-System programs. It should become a standard for CP/M. Many thanks, Al!●

The ultimate test of Man's conscience may be in his willingness to sacrifice something for future generations whose words of thanks will not be heard.
—Gaylord Nelson

Reader, from page 30
journal has become my favorite computer magazine.

Please don't forget that some readers are still in the learning mode and are not on the same knowledge plane as the editor or the authors. I hope that I can feel free to ask some dumb questions from time to time and that the journal can be a learning tool while still being a method of exchanging ideas among peers.

B.R., Cabot PA

May I suggest the entire computer elite suffers from a common malady. It is *not* elegant to employ cryptic abbreviations and "well-known" mnemonics. The proper way to expose is to assume that *no* reader is an insider but that *every* reader truly desires to understand.

You should print no article without a complete glossary explaining any possibly obscure term. Take a paper you consider worth publishing. Place it in the hands of someone who is decidedly not knowledgeable. Extract from the subject an evaluation unencumbered by any form of intimidation or put-down by the resident experts. If it ain't right, fix it.

I am quite isolated. Have had this Atrix for several years and can operate it as an appliance, make simple repairs and do a bit of non-elegant BASIC programming. I would very much like to upgrade. The machine has an IEEE-48 port, a 50-pin D-connector receptacle on the motherboard and the ability to address external double sided 5 1/4 and 8-inch drives. I would like to add a hard disk or 8-inch floppy. So far, I have not found any source of information to help. Ya wanna help?

E.B. Swisshome OR

True, some readers are not at the level of the authors. In fact, no one is at the level of all the authors. TCJ was never meant to be light reading. This is a technical journal and authors should not oversimplify advanced topics as we frequently cover. Still, I hope that our authors note your thoughts and take the extra time to explain things. We are all intelligent people here, but we come from different computer disciplines and need terms defined.

Please do feel free to ask questions. Most authors give their address in their biographical paragraph. Otherwise, ask me and I will forward the question on.

We are promised an article on building a generic SCSI port daughterboard. This would allow you to add a hard drive to your Atrix. —Ed.

Thank you for providing a publication for the serious hobbyist!

R.S. Millers MD

I really appreciate your practical hardware and software approach and your Forth coverage.

I would like see a project of building a very small Z80-based portable, even if it requires a separate monitor and keyboard, using the super-integrated chips with CTC, DMA, SIO and PIO. My idea would be to mount a board on the side of a slim 3.5" floppy drive. Ideally, it would have native Forth in ROM that could boot CP/M.

I am an electronics technician who switched to software six and a half years ago. I have been making my living programming in Forth ever since. I would like to work on such a project with someone.

E.J. Portland OR

This man reads my mind! These were my exact thoughts the first time I saw a YASBEC. Anyone for a good hack?—Ed.

I love it! Could you suggest good back issues for someone just starting out in embedded systems?

G.S., Richmond Height OH

Take a look at issues 40 onward. I found Tim McDonough's articles in 45, 46 and 47 particularly good and continue to hope he will submit again. Matt Mercaldo's pieces starting in issue 44 are excellent.—Ed.

I am so enthusiastic to have found a publication that fits my interests that I plan to send a letter detailing just what kind of person your newest subscriber is. Is there a method of transmitting this letter electronically? This is a "must read" publication!

J.B., Brookshire TX

Letters and articles can be submitted over the Internet to cmcewen@gnat.rent.com, on GEnie at TCJ$ or on my bulletin board at (908) 754-9067. The Internet address is courtesy of Andy Meyer. The GEnie address goes to all the TCJ editors, so don't give away state secrets! Don't be shy about submitting an idea for an article, either.—Ed.

I believe a simple mistake has been made in relation to my subscription. The renewal notice states that my subscription expires with issue 54. It should expire six issues later as I subscribed for two years.

P.C., Balcatta WA Australia

Oops! My mistake. This happens now and then. Did you notice that the address label shows your expiration? Let me know if it isn't right. All I need is a note to look into it.—Ed.

One small note of editorial concern: In issue 52, Richard Rodman's column gets to the bottom of page 49, then launches out into hyperspace, never to appear again in the magazine.

B. M., Gainesville FL

Your electronic mail was my first clue of this mistake. It was the first of a flood, and I learned my lesson: Never mess with Richard's column!—Ed.

I wanted you to know that I am impressed with *TCJ's* content! It is by far the most bang-for-the-buck I've seen in ten years in the magazine industry.

P.T., West Lafayette IN

Thanks! Glad you're enjoying it.

I own a CP/M computer named "Alphatronic PC" here in Germany and "Royal Alphatronic" in the UK. It was never intended to add a hard disk to this machine, which I would like to do. I read that there exists a kind of SCSI card for systems like mine that one needs only to remove the Z80 chip, then plug in that board and then put in the Z80 chip in that board. Do you know where in the States I can order such a board, preferably with an appropriate hard disk and the software? I have the BIOS for my system, so software is not the problem. Were there some articles in former *TCJ* issues describing how to add a hard disk to systems like mine?

U. N., Bonn, Germany

Check Wayne Sung's article in issue 40 on adding a Bernoulli drive. He tells how to adapt the parallel port to a generic SCSI. Also, George Warner has been saying he will write an article about this.—Ed.

TCJ The Computer Journal Market Place

Editor, from page 26

many letters as we have room for. The authors also welcome your comments.

What is missing may be more important than what is here! Time just ran out and I had to bump some very promising articles to the next issue. Bridger Mitchell returns to discuss *I/O Redirection*. David Goodenough will be here to discuss *Interrupts and the Z80*, while Brian Moore will tell us how to install *ZCPR on a 16-bit Intel Platform*. George Warner tells us how to double the clock speed on an Ampro. We have a good article on cyclical redundancy checking in Forth, and I expect more on the system software for the YASBEC. Stay tuned!●

I am one of the REH CPU280 users and love it. It's fast and the operating system Tilman built with the automatic changing of formats is better than Uniform. It's great for a member of a club who often has to change formats for send software disks to members.

We have a OMTI 55xx card working with the CPU280 and I use a 68MB RLL Toshiba HD. Tilman built a AT-BUS adapter card and Uwe Herzceg made the BIOS for the AT-BUS hard disk. It will work together with my CPU280 and I hope I have the time doing the same with my GENIE IIIs.

I am collecting old CP/M computers and have a Genie I, III, IIIs, a Kaypro II, an Epson Px-8, a REH CPU280, a Morrow MD3, a Sharp 3541, a Tatung TPC-2000. The C128 is for the only PROM burner I have.

If someone has a Genie III or IIIs or a Speedmaster I can send him the opcode of the BIOS (OS) CP/M 2.2 and 3. Maybe that these nice computers found the way to the USA.

I want to get all the old *TCJs*. What would it cost and can I get them?

F.C., Saarstr. Germany

Your computer room has more inventory than most stores over here! To the best of my knowledge, some of your machines never made it to these shores. You must have your work cut out for you in supporting your users with disks. I know what I go through for ZSUS!

Your group is likely the most active in the world, and you surely have some high powered help. I look forward to hearing more about what everyone is up to.

Take a look on pages 46 and 47 for a listing of the available back issues. Some are sold out, others nearly so. Still, there are enough issues still available to make it through a cold long winter.—Ed.●

The Computer Journal

Back Issues

Sales limited to supplies in stock.

Special Close Out Sale on these back issues only.

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- RS-232 Interface Part 1
- Telecomputing with the Apple II
- Beginner's Column: Getting Started
- Build an "Epram"

Issue Number 2:
- File Transfer Programs for CP/M
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The Computer Corner

By Bill Kibler

It was a busy summer and not just with outside activities. The computer industry seems to have been on double shift these days. The number of new items seems to belie any signs of there being a recession. So lets talk about two new items to play with.

DOS 5.00

By the time you read this, I doubt any of you will not have tried or installed the new DOS 5.00. I have mine and have been doing some playing with it. First off let me say it appears to work correctly and as advertised. For Microsoft that is a new step up. Not only are they usually very late with their product releases but they have a tendency to fall somewhat short of expectations.

The expectations of DOS 5.00 however have never been too great, so if it does what you want, then it must be OK. In reviewing some of the programs I can see that for the most part the new features are those public domain utilities which everyone used to make up for DOS's shortcomings. An example is DOSKEY which stores keystrokes for later recalling and editing. I know lots of people who have been using similar programs like that for years.

So what does this new version give you to make it worth all the hoopla, relocatable drivers. Beside working without bugs (at least so far) the ability to put DOS and their drivers into extended memory is probably the most important change. We use LAN based programs and the LAN drivers had our program memory space down to 340K. Several programs have trouble working in that space, but with DOS 5.00 I have been able to get 478K of program space. It is still not what I really need and any 68K based computer would not have these problems, but for DOS it is a great step forward.

It took some time of playing around with the extended memory drivers before I got the extra memory. It may be possible to get more but it took half a day to get that. The book is fair for support. They have tried to explain things in term for all levels of users. Unfortunately the drivers section is a complex issue and so much variability exists in user systems that I am not sure it can be explained properly anywhere. Microsoft's attempt is good but falls short. I think it needs a more cook book approach with some complete and typical examples. As it is, the instructions are broken into many small sections and the overall relationships between the parts is lost.

After a few hours of trying different options I believe I understand the relationships between the parts. It appears that the drivers can go only into what I call the shadow memory behind the ROMS and video ram. That means maximum of 340K of RAM less system and other special block or in my case 140K of upper memory. And yes there are all kinds of new terms bantered around. UMB got used everywhere and is defined as Upper Memory Block, but how it is really used is left out.

I guess my only complaint is the absence of a real explanation for how it works internally, and thus how you can beat or overcome their limits if your case doesn't fit one of their normal options. The overall report however is good and I reserve the right to change my mind about it as time goes on.

Time Moves On

Well I have spent some time working with MINIX and reached some stumbling blocks. It is not so much actual problems as it is philosophical ones. I have gotten lazy in my latter years and a two year old boy eats up what little time remains. When starting on MINIX I discovered just how many learning steps were involved. The question is do I want to know about all these new items.

Those items range from editors, to assemblers, make files to linking scripts. The number of steps to put together a working system is mountainous. What it has boiled down to is do I want to become a UNIX-like guru or do I want a simple operating system that can be ported easily between platforms.

Currently I am still mulling over the dilemma and would tend to lean toward the small C operating system. I used a commercial industrial controller based on it and found it adequate. The whole code fits on a 360K floppy without zipping. Compare that to MINIX and the multiple sections of code, many disks of compressed files, complex assembling and linking, and dozens of new utilities. The small C operating system uses C based utilities to give it a DOS like feel.

DOS has made me lazy over the years and I have found their utilities rather user friendly, simple, and straight forward. MINIX utilities at present for me are complex, cryptic, and hard to use. I know if I spend many hours playing with MINIX I will probably find the tools they have more powerful and in time easier to use. For now however I am not sure I have the time or desire to learn them. I am finding this fact even with DOS 5.00 that many of their new utilities are better and more helpful and yet I am not sure I will learn their full use if any use at all. I often remark on how CP/M did everything I needed for many years, so why do I need more complexity in my life now?

Make It Simple

I took a refresher course the other day on Aldus PageMaker 4.0 and had a wonderful time. We put together a simple one page newsletter in three hours that included a

See Computer Corner, page 37

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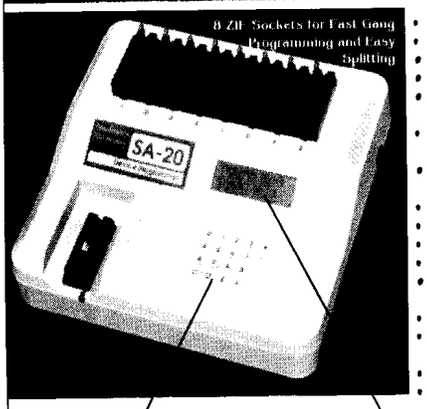

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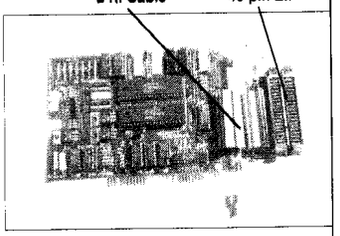

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