The Editor's Godzilla

—by Lenard R. Roach

I was going over the articles that were submitted for the July/August Interface before I converted them to Commodore GEOWrite via Big Blue Reader, and I found myself a little jealous of the fact that I missed one heck of a party at the CommVEx v6 show. Both Robert and Dick did such a good job of uploading all the information in text that it is going to take me two issues of the Interface to tell it all. I am glad to read that everyone had a good time and that this was the biggest show ever in the way of attendance. I will be trying to filter in some money towards CommVEx v7 next year, and, as I have bragged before, I am planning to attend this meeting and if given the blessing, every subsequent meeting hereafter.

Some people don't understand that you sometimes need to get away and do something that you like to do just to break the monotonous routine of everyday life. Ever since the disintegration of the personnel at the Roach Hotel (as everyone has finally left to find themselves and do their own thing) I have discovered that work is not job one, but people are, and once in a while those people need to get away and do something you like just to make the mundane existence of life a little more bearable. No one can stay cooped up in a house or at a desk, or anywhere, for too long without going nuts. I should have taken more vacation time and spent it with the family instead of worrying about what is going to happen with the bills or where we are going to get groceries for the next week. After all, I have earned the vacation time so why shouldn't I take it? I used to think that I am so valuable to the jobsite that I cant take a vacation or else the shop would just fall into chaos and I would have a mess and a half to pick up when I got back, making me regret that I ever took any time off for myself. I forgot that the job I am doing was there before I was hired to do it and, much to my chagrin, it will be there long after I am gone, either by retirement, by quitting, or getting dismissed.

I heard one thing that really shook me up some time ago. I man on the radio station I was listening to tell the story of a gentlemen who spent all his time at the job. He felt he was too valuable of an employee to take time off and relax with his family. As time wore on his kids grew up without ever knowing who their dad was, his wife left him for someone who would spend the necessary time with her, and he came down sick

with an incurable disease. While lying in the hospital bed with more tubes in him than a old time ham radio, no one came to visit him. He was sure his kids would come, but they didn't know who he was so they just went on with their lives; he was sure his ex-wife would see him, but she was busy with her new husband and the family they had together; he was sure the corporation he worked so hard for would send a representative, but they had a company to run, and, to fill his position, they were training the new person to take on his responsibilities. He was left alone to die, which he did.

A few people from the company where he worked were kind enough to come to his funeral, but most people were too busy to notice that the man was no longer among the living. In fact, the only people who were at the cemetery when they were to bury him were the mortuary chaplain and a few men ready to shove dirt onto his casket. Once this was done, everyone went home and ate dinner and relaxed, and the man was never to be thought of again.

One winter night, as the cemetery lay dormant, looking pure under a blanket of fresh snow, an angel came down from heaven and stop to visit the man's grave. As he stood there starring at the cold marker bearing the man's name, the angel took his finger and wrote something in the snow on that marker. It was one word. The word was given to him by God to put there as an epitaph to sum up the mans life on earth. That word was FOOL. The man gave up everything that was important to a person in life, and gained nothing in the end to compensate.

I have recently learned, but maybe too late, I'm not sure, that to gain this world and losing all that is important, like human relationships, is not worth it. I have thrown away a lot of good relationships and even ignored family to gain what I thought was important. Looking back I can see that this was wrong, but unlike the man in the previous paragraphs, I now have a chance to correct the situation. I am starting to strengthen bonds that I have allowed to weaken; I am trying to mend bonds that have, through neglect, have broken; and I am looking to make new bonds with people I have just met and plan to meet in the future. Going on vacations to see things is one way of girding up those bonds and making them what they should be. This is one reason why I am trying like crazy to make this CommVEx v7 visit happen. Commodore people, though few in number anymore, make a bond over a common theme that is hard to describe in print. Im sure the same can be said for those who work other computer formats and even other hobbies all together. We share a common goal and attitude and that sometimes can be both fun as well as frustrating. Reading the text of the articles to come in this and the next issue make me mad that I have to miss some of the fun things that come down when it comes time for events to take place. I plan on making a more personal bond with the Commodore community, like that of FCUG members, as I begin to repair and replace what has been damaged by my former life.

What I am doing with this in the way of Commodore is making sure that I get to attend every meeting that I can at my local club here in Kansas City; answering e-mails that come to me in the form of someone wishing to donate their old Commodore equipment or just to ask a question; and keeping things in perspective when it comes to putting family first and work second, and when it comes to family, Commodore is second, as I hope it is in your life. As I write this article, I am on vacation from both jobs and I am going with my youngest son to Ohio as he leaves the nest to try and make a life for himself in a new environment away from the surreal life that mom and dad have created for him. I planned this vacation purposely around his departure time to make sure I get to see him off properly and to make sure he is moved in to his new digs comfortably before I begin the long road trip back to Kansas City and to an empty Hotel which will now

only house me, four cats, and two fish. As I said earlier, the Hotels personnel has changed, much of which is my fault, but with the help of God and great comrades like you all in FCUG as well as my local team of the CUGKC, I should be able to get the whole Hotel back to some sort of normalcy.

Now that I have sufficiently made a clown of myself, please enjoy the following newsletter article selections presented by the great members and staff of the Fresno Commodore Users Group. I will write to you again in the September/October issue.

Monthly Meeting Report

-by Robert Bernardo

The July 18 FCUG meeting was noteworthy in that it was held three days after my arrival from the United Kingdom and two days before my departure for the Commodore Vegas Expo. That left just enough time to get to the storage in Stockton and pull out a few Commodore and Amiga items for the show.

With all that traveling under my belt, it was only appropriate that we had an international visitor to this meeting. Daniel Strang, an American expatriate, had come all the way from the Netherlands. I had met him in 2008 at the Netherlands Commodore Show in Maarssen, NL, and he had visited California once before in 2009. In 2009 though, he did not visit FCUG but visited the Southern California Commodore & Amiga Network in the San Fernando Valley. This time he made it a point to come to our meeting, which was hours away from where he was staying near San Diego. I even made a case for him to visit CommVEx, but that would be nearing the end of his time here

and he wanted to save that time for family.

Actually, he had arrived the previous day, and fellow member, Roger Van Pelt, and I were waiting to greet him at the Piccadilly Inn Airport in Fresno, the Piccadilly being the hotel where we house our special guests. I had arrived around 4 p.m. and paid for the room. Roger came in at about 5:30. Before Daniel was to arrive, we planned to do some filming for Roger's CommVEx presentation, Commodore and the Ham Radio, and we were going to do the filming in Daniel's room before he arrived, his room being the quietest place in which to videotape, as compared to our relatively noisy FCUG meeting place at the Pizza Pit Restaurant. I brought in my film gear, and Roger brought in his C64 and VIC-20 set-ups plus the ham radio items. We had barely put everything together when the front desk rang and told us that Daniel was waiting in the lobby. He was early! I had expected him to arrive at 8, but there he was at 6:30.

We marched on over to greet Daniel, brought him to the room, explained to him what we were doing, and then we went over to the hotel restaurant for a dinner. We talked plenty about his trip over here and about Commodore as we chowed down.

Then back to the room we went, and it wasn't until 9 p.m. that we finally started filming Roger's presentation. After a few retakes, the video was finally finished by 11, and we got out of Daniel's room as quickly as possible so that he could have a good night's rest.

For the Sunday meeting, I arrived early and set up my SX-64 and 1701 monitor. Roger came in a short time later as did member Brad Strait. Daniel came about half an hour into the meeting, and I was relieved that he had not gotten lost on the way from the hotel to the Pizza Pit. Finally, we had more guests arrive - former FCUG member, John Weaver; his friend, Mike Devin, and Mike's young son, Nathan.

We started by ordering our food first, and the meeting officially started when I asked for old business and new business. Under old business, I reported on the latest updates to CommVEx. Under new business, John was there to give away surplus Commodore equipment and software. He had brought in a few boxes worth of keyboards, disk drives, and disks. Roger and Brad went through those, grabbing the choice bits. For presentations, Daniel spoke about his life in the Netherlands being a music teacher and how he was creating a synthesizer board using eight SID chips. He had previously made a prototype of the board, and from his carry bag he pulled out the first manufactured board sans any chips populating it. He said that he was far from demonstrating it, though I good-naturedly goaded him into having a full-fledged demonstration of it ready for the June 2011 Netherlands Commodore Show, a show which I would attend.

Daniel also showed a program he had created, 3VComposer, a C64 program which played musical tones.

I briefly passed around the Comet64 Internet Modem that I had acquired when I was in the Portland, Oregon area in June. This user port-to-Ethernet modem used the V-1541 software to access CommodoreServer.com, a new site where .d64s and other files could be virtually managed. I also showed Berzerk v1.0 - the new game which had been ported from its arcade version to the C64. It was supposed to be very faithful to the original, even down to its use of digitized voices. Nathan was entranced in playing the game, so much so that John took back some joysticks that he was going to give away, reasoning that Nathan would want to use them now. I mentioned to the group that the improved Berzerk v1.10 was to be sold in a special edition box at CommVEx and that I was still awaiting the printed manuals and boxes to be delivered.

With so much going on, the meeting didn't adjourn until 3:30. Daniel promised that when I went to the Netherlands in 2011, he would

let me stay at his place. Now that's hospitality! Roger and I bid Daniel farewell, telling him to be careful on the road. I did not find out until later that Daniel had been in a minor rear-end collision on the way back to southern California. Some inattentive woman driver had smacked into the rear of his rental car in the Victorville area. At least, he was not hurt.
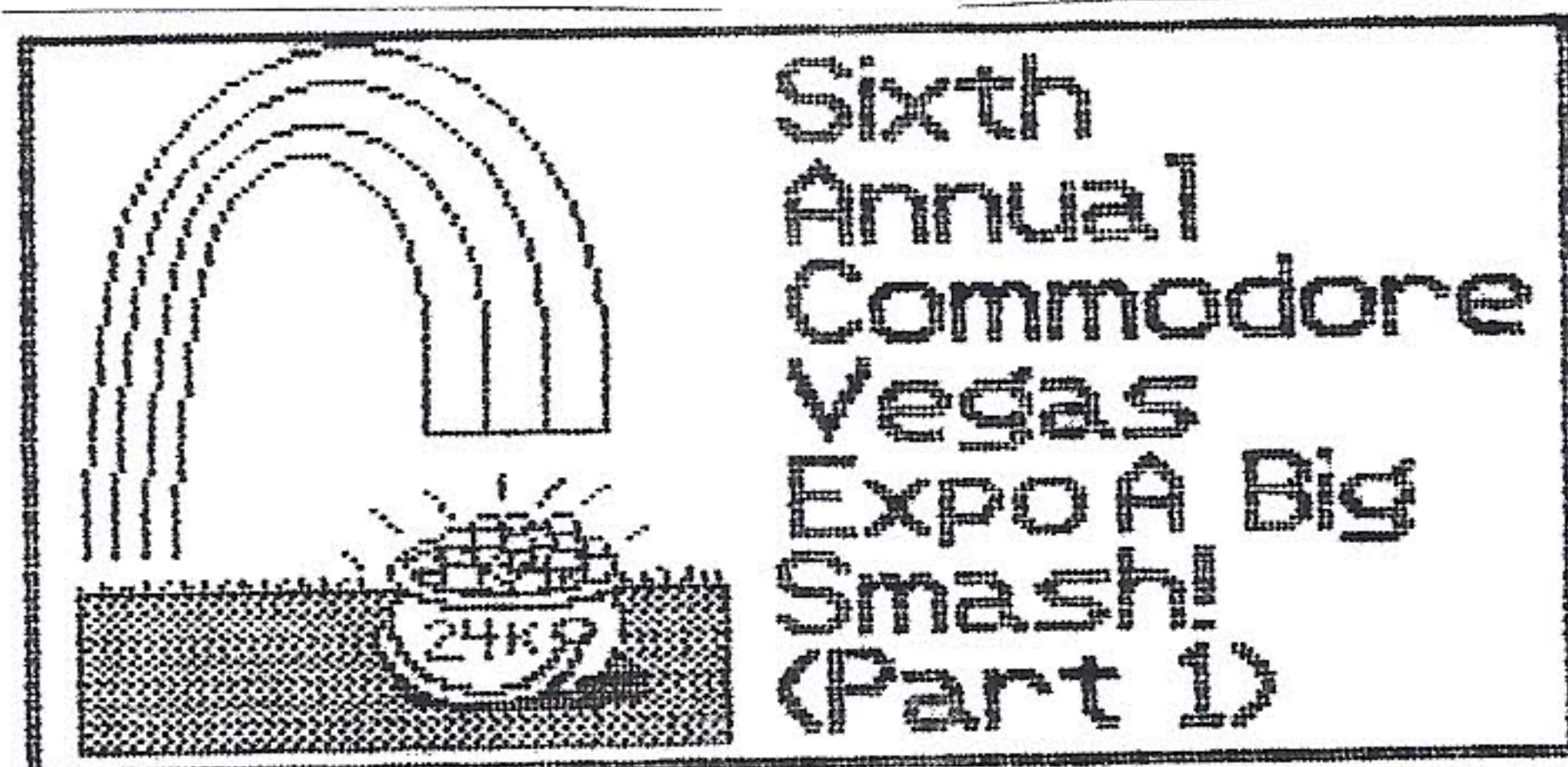
-by Larry Anderson of San Andreas, CA & Dick Estel of Clovis, CA

The Commodore Vegas Expo v6 (CommVEx) was held July 24th & 25th, 2010 at the Plaza Hotel at the head of Fremont Street in old-town Las Vegas. CommVEx was sponsored by the Fresno Commodore User Group (FCUG) and the Clark County Commodore Computer Club (CCCCC) of Las Vegas. Significant help came in the form of equipment loaned by Al Jackson of CCCCC.

Pre-Expo --
Tuesday, July 20
As we tagged along with Robert Bernardo, we made the drive to Vegas a few days in advance. From Stockton this year's trip was a bit more leisurely - 12 hours (I took some video shots this time but have not figured out how to put them up yet). Temperatures this year were around 110 in the day and not much cooler at night (going into Vegas, it was 104 in Baker, California at 9:30 at night). Fortunately, Robert's car and the hotel room's air-conditioning units worked well.

Wednesday, July 21--
The Plaza Hotel was relatively quiet early in the week, but as the weekend neared it became

busier. On Fremont Street there was the usual live entertainment at night, and come the weekend there was to be an Elvis Tribute Competition which would bring in the crowds.

Thursday, July 22 --

We got out to check out the Pinball Hall of Fame (p.s., don't look for that nifty, colorful, window sign you see on the webpage. The Pinball Hall of Fame is now located in a more unassuming stucco building with a smaller banner sign on it).

The Hall of Fame had over 200 machines, with 152 being pinball and the remaining being various other arcade classics amongst the pinball units. The pinballs ranged from pre-flipper machines to some of the latest including a Pinball 2000 unit. Included was a rare prototype of a 3D Circus pinball game. It was worth the effort to find the Hall of Fame and actually play a few games I had only read about or had seen in documentaries, to operate the ball elevator on the older pin machines, and to hear the classic click, thump, and bing of the mechanical units. Of the arcade machines, there were a few classic analog car driving simulators and some shooting gallery and baseball units. There was also a skee-ball and some interactive activity games - puppet, bulldozer, and rocket ship games; unfortunately, only the skee-ball and puppet were the only ones operating of those.

Definitely a place to check out for the arcade/pinball fan. (I would have snapped more photos, but my camera was low on charge.)

Dick joined us around 4:30 on Friday; his travel experiences lead off the next section, followed by our joint report on the actual event.

Friday, July 23 --

The unofficial start to CommVEx has been Friday, as we get access to the room to start to set up. Usually it begins in the afternoon and continues on until sometimes midnight . Some presenters drop off their stuff and/or setup, and many attendees say hi and stick around to help or chat.

Having made only three trips through Mojave and Barstow and across the desert since February, it seemed only logical that I should do it again. For the sake of variation, this time I bypassed the I-40 exit in Barstow and continued up I-15 to Las Vegas for the annual Commodore Las Vegas Expo at the Plaza Hotel and Casino, an 832-mile round trip. Since it's been in the low 100s in Fresno , a visit to the Nevada desert, with temperatures forecast to be around 110, should make our home weather seem cool in comparison.

I set out a little before 8 a.m. Friday, July 23, and arrived a little after four. I avoided a lengthy lunch stop by bringing a sandwich and soda. Instead of my usual 75 MPH on the desert, I held it to 70 most of the way and arrived with at least an 8th of a tank of gas; usually I need to fill up at the California-Nevada border. Although there was a lot of traffic, it was moving fast, and there was only one brief slowdown where two cars had been in a fender bender and were off to the side of the road. Traffic through Las Vegas was the quickest I have ever seen on a Friday afternoon (probably because the economic downturn has hit this area fairly hard).

Once I got checked in and settled into my room, I started helping Robert and Larry with the set-up. At first glance the job looked hopeless, with computers, cables, power supplies and countless other items scattered all over the tables, chairs and floor. But by the official start time of 11 a.m. on Saturday, the mess had been reduced to simple organized chaos.

Knowing that Robert will not stop until the room is completely ready (or until he collapses), Larry and I left to have dinner around 8 p.m. , eating at the hotel's buffet. We went back and did a little more work, but by ten p.m. I could no longer function and went up to my room for the night.

Saturday, July 24 --

Although the official start

time on Saturday is 11 a.m., people started drifting in by 8 or so, and if the past was any indication, the true enthusiasts would return after dinner to talk and play with the computers 'til late at night.

As in the past, my job was that of registrar, collector of admission, seller of raffle tickets, and keeper of the accounts. By 11 a.m., we had a small but enthusiastic and knowledgeable group of about a dozen, with several more known to be coming later.

Robert opened the event by welcoming attendees to the sixth annual CommVEx, and pointed out the raffle prizes and door prizes. The former included the ever-popular SX64, which is a complete system (computer, disk drive and monitor) in one box. Although it was called "portable" by the manufacturer, most owners referred to it as "luggable." I owned one for a while, but sold it some years ago; inexplicably I bought raffle tickets to try and win this one (I felt a mixture of relief and disappointment when my name was not drawn).

By mid-afternoon we had a paid attendance of 25, had good success with the raffle sales, and had covered our costs with a good amount of seed money for next year.

Today's demonstrations included:

Commodore on the Internet: Robert Bernardo, a die-hard commodore 8-bitter, demonstrated how easily you can connect the Commodore 128 to the Internet, from dialing up, checking email and doing Google and eBay searches, even without a fancy email program or graphical Internet browser, using the tools the Internet pioneers have used.

Robert showed the terminal program, DesTerm, that he used for e-mail and going on-line with a computer that first saw the light of day before anyone had heard of the Internet. (Although it dates to 1969, it was first called the ARPANET (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ARPANET), and consisted of a handful of government and university computers connected via wire. It was little known to anyone not directly involved.) DesTerm was developed back in 1980s, and the Internet experience on it would be strange to today's generation - it is text only. However, anything you could read on-line †within limits| with the latest Windows or Mac PC could be read with DesTerm, as well as other Commodore terminal programs.

Demo Scene and Phoenix Warriors game: Early demo makers learned the internal workings of the Commodore (as well as other platforms) to make them display visuals and sounds that were well beyondtheirapparentcapability.

Bilgem Cakir is a Microsoft employee from Seattle and a member of the "demo scene" - computer whiz kids who create small programs that show off the graphic and audio ability of their computers. Bilgem not only is involved with this activity, but is using demo techniques to develop "jaw-dropping, high-tech, crazy-fun" games for Commodore 64.

Bilgem - a.k.a. Night Lord - wowed the audience with his latest demo, an attempt at a real-time shooter, which will be named Phoenix Warriors via his Night Lore Games company. Where we have seen other coders get to 3-D maze generation on a 64, Night Lord got his at 25 frames per second with animated sprites (no, not Commodore sprites, 3-D sprites) wandering the corridors.

Just when you think the limit has been reached on the 1 mhz. C64, we see another software technological leap bump it up another notch. I can't wait to see how the game evolves in its development.

Night Lord offered the game to CommVEx attendees for beta testing, starting in late October. He expected to have the game complete by December, and will offer it free on his company website (http://night-lore.blogspot.com/). Players will also be able to buy a "collector's box" with professional quality cover design, user manual,

game posters, and other goodies.

CommodoreServer.com and Comet64 Internet Modem: Greg Alekel developed a member-based community (http://www.commodoreserver.com/) that lets members share ideas, "how to" information, sell their products, and primarily, manage D64 disks.

The Comet64 Internet Modem (available from his company for around $70), provides Commodore users with an Ethernet connection so they can upload D64s, access their files from a C64/C128, and run them, add more files, or copy them from one D64 to another, through CommodoreServer.com

The modem with a small boot loader enabled the Commodore 64/128 (and I would think soon the VIC-20) to easily access the Commodore Server as a virtual 1541 disk drive to manage files virtually on the Internet. Besides the 64 work, he developed a better Commodore font for modern computers and a mature website for the Commodore Server. Check out the many on-line tools and utilities, such as BASIC file listers and 65xx disassembler. He planned on adding more development tools and disk management interfaces as he goes.

The service is free as well as the font with notes on how to use it.

It's not too often you see someone's rapt attention given to a VIC-20 screen; Greg tested to see if the Comet and Commodore Server were VIC-20-capable, and from those early tests it looked very good!

Commodore fans in attendance are anxiously awaiting the chance to develop Commodore programs with a web browser; that will be sooo cool.

When the day's official program ended, about 15 of us walked a block down the street and enjoyed the buffet at Main Street Station (far better than the Plaza's buffet). Now at 8:15 , I headed for my room, Robert crashed out across a row of chairs in the meeting room, and a hardcore group of ten were just getting started for the unofficial evening version of CommVEx (which ended at midnight

On The Road ...
...To BlockParty And NotaCon 2010
Part Two
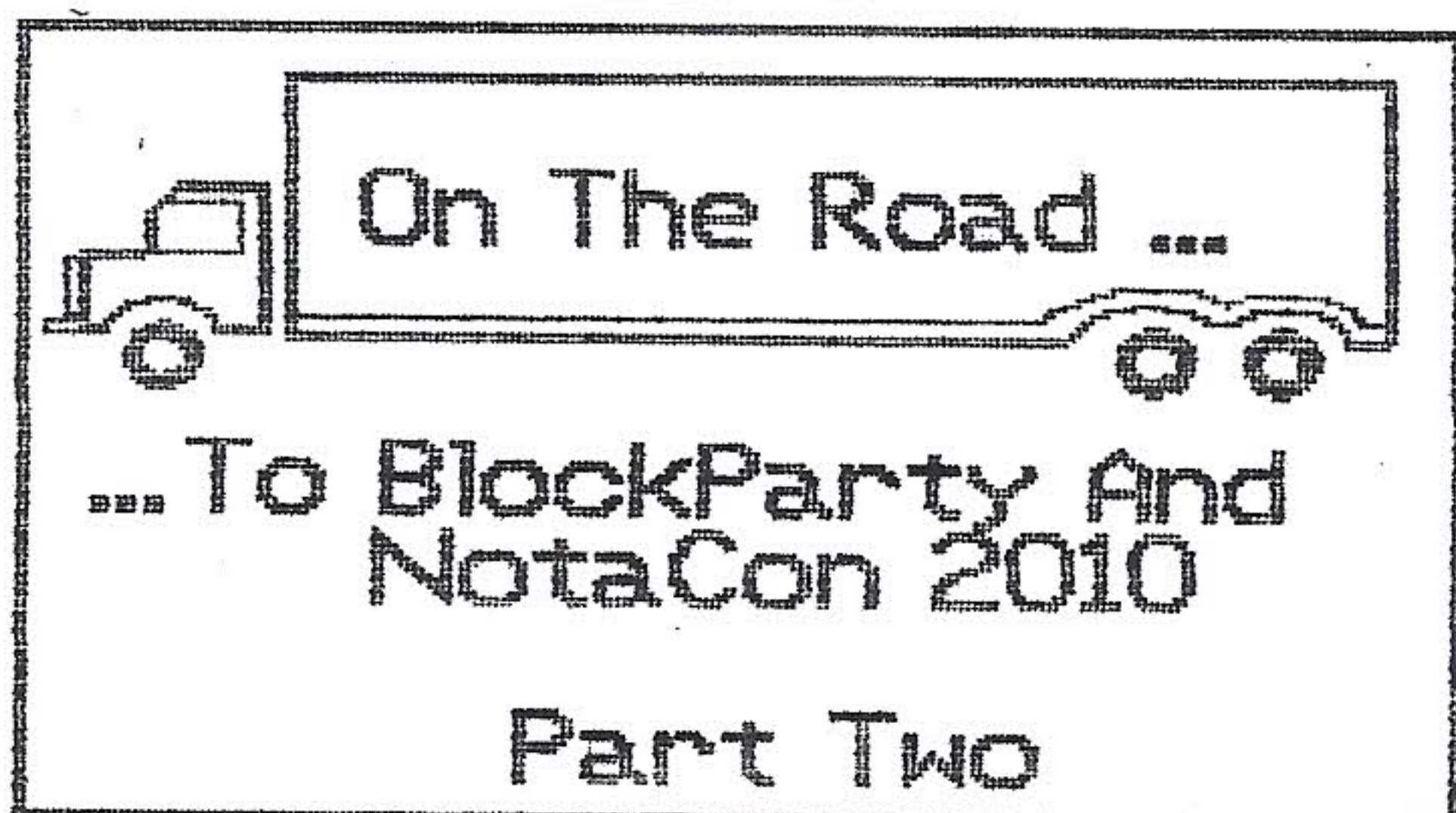
-by Robert Bernardo

(Robert attended the April 15-18 Notacon/Blockparty this year in Cleveland, Ohio. This is part 2 of his report.)

I woke up between 9 and 10 the next morning. I rushed downstairs for the hotel complementary breakfast before it close. After filling up on food and taking some fruit to keep me going through the day, I went back the room for a shave and a refreshing shower. When I left the Comfort Inn, the streets were wet, the sky overcast, and sprinkles were coming down. Fortunately, my short walk to the Wyndham didn't meet any downpours. I went up to the Notacon main floor the second floor and found the hotel lunch boxes were already up for sale at full price. I walked over to the posted calendar and looked through the sessions. None of them looked interesting to me, except Melissa Barron's Hacking 73H Or3gOn 7r4IL for the Apple (Hacking the Oregon Trail...). Hmm, Apple II...

I peeked into the demo-coding lounge. Few were there; they must have had a long night. I looked over the Notacon tables at the items they were selling to support the show. Nothing to interest me there. Not waiting for an elevator, I climbed up the vomit-smelling stairwell to the third floor. I looked through the gadgets in the hacking room for a minutes. Hmm, make your own secret, universal remote control to turn off public televisions. Did I really need that? Nah. Another device which was a pair of

sunglasses and flashing LED lights, touted to promote relaxation and well-being? Really? Other electronics kits, packaged and ready to be built. Maybe for engineer friend Jeri Ellsworth but not for me.

Speaking of Jeri, several attendees asked me where Jeri was. I could only tell them that she was moving to a new house in Oregon and thus couldn't come to Notacon/Blockparty.

I walked over to the gaming room. Not too much activity. Jim, my partner at the Commodore/Amiga tables was not around. I noticed that some of the Commodore monitors were off and/or their volume turned downed. That would not do! I got the systems up and running again in anticipation of more attendees to come play on the machines.

I passed the Notacon radio room; radio host, Kris Suter, was there with a /group of people clinging to the microphones. Later that day, I'd have to try and get in there to promote Commodore.

Over to the workshop room people were having a meditation session there, including fellow C= enthusiast, Eric Kudzin, who I had not seen the previous day at the show. I looked over to the A500 system sitting to one side. Musician Ken Snyder was not there, though the music tracker Octamed was running on the computer. I wondered if he and his group had finished the Ami music demo for tonight's Blockparty competition.

I wandered over to the N7C ham radio room. Joe and friends were getting ready to mount an aerial on the outside balcony. The VIC-20 with Hamtext cartridge was untouched, unconnected to any tranceiver. No one wanted to really try it out? Well, perhaps someone would connect to it eventually.

Back to the gaming room to await C= gamers. New C= friend, Keith Monahan, showed up, and we talked about Commodore, Amiga, California, and digital and film still cameras. It was good to have company. Eventually, Jim showed up. He had had a fine breakfast buffet, courtesy of the Wyndham, as

payment for his hours of work clearing viruses and spyware on the hotel computer in the business center.

It was nearing time to go to Melissa Barron's presentation, but I still had qualms about going to an Apple II session. Jim and Keith convinced me that the techniques learned there could be applied to the C64. Leaving Jim in charge of the C= equipment, I left but not before taking a photo of Joe and his comrades setting up that ham radio aerial on the balcony.

In the Palace West room, Melissa was already there, coordinating with the A/V people to have her laptop computer display correctly on the video projector. Froggy had told me earlier that DVDs of the presentations were not going to be sold this year, saying that all were going to be posted to the Web. Even so, I could not help feeling that I should be taping the presentations I attended.

Though Melissa's presentation pertained to the Apple II, as soon as she began speaking, I could see how the same Oregon Trail program could be hacked for the C64. All a person had to do was get into the text saved within the program and modify it. A relatively easy task! She demonstrated how the game was played in her version. The date of the Oregon Trail's scenario was set far in the future, instead of being in the times of the Old West. The names of the characters were changed, as were the names of the locations. A creative writer could invent a weird and wacky story for this educational program.

When the talk finished, I checked the food area of the floor; prices of the hotel lunch boxes were still at $10. I went to the demo-coding lounge and found Ken. I asked him whether any music demo had been done on the Amiga. No. He explained that there just was not enough time to create one on the Amiga, the coders being less familiar with it than other platforms. He and his friends decided to use a music tracker for Windows 95/98. However, he assured me that if I were to show up next year at the show, he would tell me

to bring along a C64 tracker and an Amiga tracker, and he and his friends would make sure to devote plenty of time to them.

He and I went to the workshop room, disassembled the Amiga set-up, and brought it back to the gaming room. More people had come in, playing board games. I reassembled the Amiga set-up and got a game running on it.

Eric, who I had seen very little of so far, came to join Jim, Keith, and I at Commodore Central. I talked to him about Jason Compton and his Emergency Chicagoland Commodore Convention which was held annually in September. He told about the Chicago SWRAP Commodore Users Group and the SWRAP Chicago C= Expos of the past.

And while we talked, attendees trickled in to play with the computers, and I would have to interrupt our conversation in order to help out those attendees.

About six p.m. Jim told me a dinner group was gathering in the first floor lobby. We decided to join them, and in a few minutes we took off in search of food. It was not long before we decided on the nearby China Sea buffet restaurant, to the right and across the street from the Wyndham. Good decision! Not only had we gotten there before it became busy, but it was also a relatively economical $11.95 per person. The food was plentiful and tasty, and I concentrated on the chicken and seafood dishes. Jim, Eric, Keith, and I had our own table, and as we ate, we conversed on topics ranging from Ohio to cameras to computers.

After the fine dinner, we strolled back to the Wyndham and found the gaming room to be a beehive of activity! The Rock Hero competition was in progress, and the competitors were vying for cash prizes. Oh, it was loud! To counteract that, I think it was Keith who told me to turn up the sound on the 1701 monitor that had the C64/Guitar Hero guitar/Shredz64 items. We would show those Rock Hero players what Commodore could do! The next attendee who came to play Shredz64 was very good, and the Rock Hero players and those watching that competition looked over to us. O.K., the pint was made, and after that one Shredz64 song, I turned down the 1701's volume so that the Rock Hero players could continue with their competition.

Unlike last year where the game room had a DVD player on which movies could be played, I had to use the Mac Powerbook laptop to run my eclectic mix of movies - Mothra, Fantastic Voyage, Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea, and Dark Star. Jason Viers of the Notacon gaming room even lent me some external speakers so that the movies could be heard over the din of the gaming room.

At 11 p.m. it was time for the Blockparty demo screenings. I went downstairs to the Palace rooms but found that like last year, the setting-up would go overtime. As I waited, I decided to sit in on the Notacon Trivia session in which contestants would win prizes for the best knowledge of demo scener trivia. Whoa! The questions were way over my head. Now if there were Star Trek or Commodore/Amiga questions, I would have a chance.

Finally, the partition was opened up between the Palace rooms, and I dashed for a seat near center front. Unlike last year when he was in full costume, emcee Jason Scott was dressed ordinarily. In fact, he seemed more subdued than last year. When he started speaking to the audience, I found out why. He had gone through significant life changes during the year - a job loss, a divorce, and a bout of health problems. He announced that this would be the last time Blockparty would be combined with Notacon. He thanked Froggy of Notacon and said that Blockparty would be moved to California in 2011 and would be held at a later time during the year.