



## **“WHAT GOOD WILL THIS DO ME?”**

**by Lenard R. Roach**

I had quite a few visitors come to my table during the CommVEx 2019 and look intently at my wares and the booted SX64 showing a display of the “5 Program Bonus Disk.” A few people played around with the various functions offered by the computer but most curious people looked at the Money Manager written over thirty years ago and published by Run Magazine by someone who was not me. This was disappointing to me since I spent so much time working on the other four programs offered on the disk.

One particular Commodore user sat down during the show in the chair across from me and the SX64 displaying the program and toyed with the Money Manager. This time my frustration factor was up so I started to explain to the user some other features that the disk offered. He looked me squarely in the eye and said something to the effect, “I haven't written a check in over five years. All my bills are paid online. What good would those other programs do me?”

I sat there in my chair completely angry but only half by half. Half at him for not appreciating that someone took time to write a program in BASIC for the Commodore 64 and half at myself for not having a solid answer for the user right off the tip of my tongue. I still wasn't good at sales and I guess I expected the program to sell itself instead of me standing behind my own product, especially as the creator of 4/5 of the work. After stewing on and off the subject for the last few months I have formulated an answer for that user

and anyone else who is interested in knowing the value of the “5 Program Bonus Disk” as a valuable asset to their own Commodore collection.

I know I can't speak for everyone else who reads this article but I personally have a few bills that would require me to physically write a check or go down to the local market and get either a cashier's check or money order in order to pay them. I have also learned from past experiences from dirty bill collectors that you never give anyone electronic access to your checking account. I don't care who they are and reputable the company tries to come off as, you know they are lying to you over the phone if you can hear words coming over the speaker. Therefore, after I negotiate a set price, in writing, for the said amount agreed on coming from me for the debt I incurred, I tell them they will be receiving a check from me for that amount. Now the caution flag that comes up here is that these dirty dealers can supposedly steal my bank routing information off my check, but that constitutes as fraud and you can sue them for hefty amount. They dare not play such a game and they know it.

Okay, lecture over. Back to the programs ...

For the sake of lack of an example let's say that I owe the local university hospital about a grand for emergency surgery done and months later I just get the bill. Due to insurance companies dragging their feet (a negotiation ploy) that's would be all that's left and the hospital would call me for immediate settlement. I'm sure that most Commodore users have a grand in the left pocket to pay so they would pay and that's the end. With me being a poor boy from the Midwest I don't have that luxury so I negotiate a price. Let's say a hundred a month. With all this information packed in a nice little folder I enter the computer room and turn on my trusty Commodore computer and boot the “5 Program Bonus Disk.” Sadly, the proper use I see for these programs are not in order but were entered into the Main Boot Screen in accordance with when they were finished. The first program to boot in my opinion would be the “Checkmate” check face writing and

saving program. I entered all the data needed for the upcoming check into that program's database and save under the title of UNIV. HOSP. (trying to keep filenames under 16 characters if possible.) I exit "Checkmate" then boot "Check It Out." I enter the date I'm writing the check then select Option 2 from the menu to load the information I just put in from "Checkmate." This data quickly comes up in just a few seconds and everything is listed accordingly. I put a check into my MPS 802 printer (the best printer for the job in my opinion) and print off my check. In about twenty seconds I have my check written for the said hundred dollars. I pull it out and sign it, but I'm not done yet. I've only used two of the five programs.

Next is user's choice but this user goes right to "The Ledger" and write all the data I collected from the caller or bill into the Commodore to save to disk. This program has a present tally of what I owe. started with said thousand; I'm down to nine hundred now. I'll save that information to the disk. Next up comes "TEA 4.2" so I can create an envelope to put the check in so I can mail it. Yes, the US Post Office is still in existence even after all this time so please feel free to utilize their services. I create my own return address that goes in the upper left hand corner of the envelope and the sending address goes right in the middle. You can even write on a seven inch, a ten inch, or create a foldable paper to be put into a payroll style envelope.

Okay, now to put the finishes on this whole deal of creating checks and writing them out for bills and that's to boot "Money Manager 2K." This program has lots of functions that was well worth my spending the long hours coding it into my Commodore when I first got the magazine but for the sake of space I will only focus on the Add Transactions function. Hit Option 1 after initial boot and entering the date to get into this menu. Here you can enter the department, the name of the recipient (University Hospital), the check number, and the amount (\$100). This whole process is pretty neat and everything is done on an old fashioned Commodore 64 in BASIC. For those still insistent on still using the Internet to

pay their bills there's no crime in that. I know that entities on the web are doing their best to make sure all data is safe but there are still problems that need to be conquered, yet still the "5 Program Bonus Disk" can still be a benefit. "The Ledger" can still keep a tally of how your payments are progressing and "Money Manager 2K" can show how your payments are stacking up.

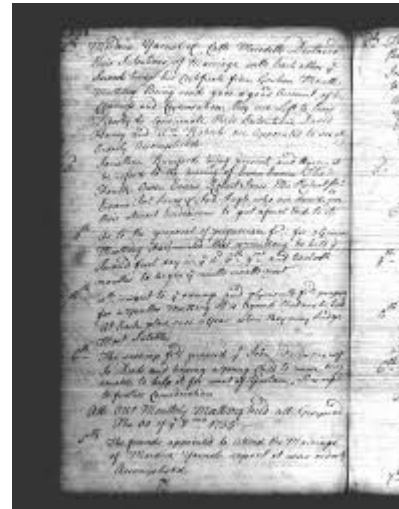
For those who were at the CommVEx 2019 and bought a copy of my "5 Program Bonus Disk" for the special CommVEx price of a dollar you should have the updated PRINT FRE (0) command on the Main Boot Screen menu. I would like to advise that if you are bouncing around between programs on the disk then please, when you go back to the Main Boot Screen, be sure to hit Q to exit the program and that way the PRINT FRE (0) command can do its function. Once you exit to the READY screen then just type RUN to re-enter the Main Boot Screen but this time all the garbage collection will be cleared out of the computer's memory. The failure to put the reboot to Main Boot Screen when you exit Money Manager 2K is to help the user in case he does forget to use the PRINT FRE (0) command encoded in it. You can also type LOAD"BOOT",8,1 from the READY screen on Money Manager 2K and get back into the Main Book Screen. My thanks to our Commodore friends from Mexico City who visited the show and took time enough to show me how this small function works so powerful in the programs.

One thing I did do during the programming phase was create an opening prefix to each filename so a user can use the same filename for each program listed on the disk. Also, the programs are easy to copy off the "5 Program Bonus Disk" so they can be used on separate disks. I know that the programs themselves take up about half of a 664 block disk. A user may never have to use another disk again but if you're constantly using the disk and filling them with new data a separate disk may be handy.

Why did I write the "5 Program Bonus Disk?" Most of it was for money which was a bad idea. I've learned that always work for principle and

money will follow. Chasing money is like chasing the wind. I found a better reason to compile this disk and that reason was to make my bill collectors mad. Companies love it when you as a debtor pay with a credit card online. They get your money right away; I like to be a little facetious with people I owe money to, especially those who pester me for payment like medical facilities. So, with the “Check It Out” and “TEA 4.2” programs I create the proper documents and mail them off. Usually, it takes three days for pick up and delivery (five if I mailed them on a weeked) and three days for processing. Quick payment is just that – quick. Besides, as forementioned, some organizations don't use such devices even here in this century, and with carpel tunnel in both wrists my hands hurt to write once in a while. It seems that resting my hands on a keyboard and a steering wheel are the only comfort they receive outside my wrist braces. I am thankful for the creation of the computer that allows me to accomplish the necessary function of bill paying and I look forward to more years to come working on one.

I hope that this little written lecture helps clear up any questions that a user has about the logic behind the “5 Program Bonus Disk.” I'm only sorry that I couldn't come up with a great answer when I was first asked the question back in August of 2019. I want to thank everyone who bought the disk and I hope they have a clear understanding on how the programs interact with each other.



## MONTHLY MEETING REPORT

by Robert Bernardo & Dick Estel

September 2019

September brought another good turnout, with Robert Bernardo, Roger Van Pelt, Dave Smith, Randy Stoller, Bruce Nieman, and Dick Estel in attendance.

The October 20 meeting will be our annual club lunch, at Hometown Buffet on Shaw Avenue. Members are invited to bring their families, and the club pays for lunch.

Robert reported that CommVEx videos and photos are now on-line. He will be going to the AmiWest show in Sacramento October 23 – 27.

Recently Robert made a trip to Washington, to drop off items for repair by Ray Carlsen, and to see the latest descendant of of the musical group Quarterflash, Ross-Frazier-Koontz. He also met with people at the Living Computer History Museum in Seattle and scheduled the date for the 4<sup>th</sup> Pacific Commodore Expo NW on June 13 and 14, 2020.

Robert also visited the Seattle Commodore Club, which meets in the evening at the leader's workplace. There were a dozen in attendance. Activities were divided between gaming and

hardware hacking, with no formal agenda or business.

On his return back to California, Robert was happy to learn that Ray had already completed all repairs, allowing Robert to fill up the tiny remaining space in his vehicle.

We took a new group photo for the website. In keeping with our interest in old technology, Dick used a Nikon film camera with black and white film. A temporary photo will be on-line waiting for Dick to finish up the 36-exposure roll and get it developed.

Moving on to software demonstrations, Robert loaded up several C128 80-column programs. First was a nice genealogy program, Pedigree 128 from Loadstar. It offered the standard ancestor tree display, with options to print out the tree as well as additional notes that can be entered about each individual.

Next was an 80-column graphic editor, Electropaint 128, a color-graphics screen editor for the C128, in which you use PETSCII keyboard graphics to create 80-column graphic screens for such things like a BBS.

There was ST View ][, a C128 picture viewer for graphics created that were originally made on the Atari ST. The included pictures displayed very well!

Robert could not get Fast Hack'em 128 v.6 to work from the SD2IEC drive, probably because the program was expecting a real disk drive. However, he was able to run SIDPlayer 128 (for playing music SID's), Millifoot 128 (a game), and the ZED 0.77 text editor that he's been using for many years instead of a word processor.

Roger took over the keyboard for Home Designer, a cross between a CAD program and a drawing program. We were able to create lines and boxes, and with a little more research, we have high hopes for this one.

## October 2019

In keeping with a tradition going back decades, the October meeting is our annual picnic. Or maybe "picnic." We used to have a potluck picnic in the beautiful back yard of one of our members who has since passed on. So we eventually transitioned to an annual lunch with a few well defined guidelines:

It's held at a different restaurant from the one where we have our regular meeting. It's held at a different restaurant each year. There is no formal business, no demonstrations, and only minimal discussion of computer-related matters. Also family members are invited, and the club pays.

This year we had seven in attendance – Robert Bernardo, Dick Estel, Roger Van Pelt and his brother Aaron, Dave Smith, Mike Fard, and his wife Sherry.

We ate at the Hometown Buffet, just across the street from our regular Panera Bread meeting place. It's an "all-you-can-eat" buffet, and we made a good effort to live up to the name. There's a big variety of food – a salad bar, two or three kinds of chicken, fish, pasta, vegetables, a ham and roast beef carving station, and of course, way too many tempting desserts.

We checked in with Robert on the large, storage building going up in his backyard. It's completed, needing only insulation, and he has started moving some of his huge collection of Commodore, Amiga, and other equipment and software into it. A film crew that's been following him around for a decade came up from southern California and spent 3 days filming some of the action. If this movie ever gets released, it may rival "Gone With the Wind"... at least in length.

Robert also let us know that he will be attending a party put on by Amiga engineer R.J. Mical. The situation is somewhat complicated by the fact that the event will be held at the Heineken Brewery in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, necessitating hotel reservations and a long plane ride. We're looking forward to seeing photos and hearing

about the trip at our next meeting.

After three hours in the restaurant, we finally managed to get to our feet and head out the door, vowing to eat no more until at least the next morning.



**Farewell, Las Vegas!**  
**by Robert Bernardo**

2019... the year of "lasts".

The Chinese restaurant, the Visalia Tea Garden, in downtown Visalia had its last day after 52 years in business. The music group, Quarterflash, had its last official concert after 38 years of playing music. And the Commodore Vegas Expo had its last show after 15 years.

The venerable Commodore Vegas Expo has left Las Vegas, and we left on a high note! The final show had more participation, more enthusiasm than previous years! We said good-bye to the Plaza Hotel and thank them for hosting us for so long!

We also wanted to express our gratitude to all the hundreds of CommVEx participants and exhibitors over the years, some of whom have passed away. And not to forget, the participation of the engineers and leaders – Jeri Ellsworth, Chuck Peddle, Bil Herd, Bob Russell, Andy Finkel, Dave Haynie, Bill Seiler, and Leonard Tramiel. They really made CommVEx special, and in a sense, took care of us.

All through the final show, I kept thinking, "This is the last time for me to contact the Plaza Hotel sales manager and set up the room. This is the last time for me to announce CommVEx raffles and give away the prizes. This is the last Saturday after-show dinner at the nearby buffet. This is the last after-hours activity in the CommVEx showroom. This is the last time take down of the hardware on Sunday and go to the Sunday dinner with CommVExers."

Thought wistful, I knew that though CommVEx was gone, the other Commodore shows would continue!

CommVEx now turns the reigns over to the Commodore Los Angeles Super Show (CLASS) and the Pacific Commodore Expo NW (PaCommEx). Our home may now be different, but our vibe is the same – Commodore and Amiga enthusiasts gathering to enjoy their computers, to talk about the good ol' days and the new days, to show off the old and the new. We want to have fun, and we invite you to join in the fun, too. So, visit the CLASS of 2020 and PaCommEx 2020! Look for the upcoming show at

<http://www.portcommodore.com/class>

and

<http://www.portcommodore.com/pacommex>

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The Final CommVEx (sung to the melody of The Final Countdown)

We're leaving together,  
But still it's farewell  
And maybe we'll come back  
To earth, who can tell?  
I guess there is no one to blame  
We're leaving ground (leaving ground)  
Will things ever be the same again?

It's the final CommVEx  
The final CommVEx

Oh  
We're heading for Venus (Venus)  
And still we stand tall  
'Cause maybe they've seen us (seen us)  
And welcome us all, yeah  
With so many light years to go  
And things to be found (to be found)  
I'm sure that we'll all miss her so

It's the final CommVEx  
The final CommVEx  
The final CommVEx  
The final CommVEx  
Oh

The final CommVEx, oh  
It's...



## **TECHNOLOGY VISIONARY**

### **Always Building, From the Garage to Her Company**

**By Guest Contributor John Markoff**

Jeri Ellsworth started as a self-taught computer hacker and chip designer. In an industry dominated by men, she's the head of a company focusing on augmented reality.

Jeri Ellsworth began playing pinball when she worked in a bowling alley as a teenager, and a manager there would occasionally give her a few free credits. Today, she has a collection of more than 70 pinball machines, but her passion has moved from the mechanical into a new digital augmented reality, which she believes will be the future of entertainment.

Ms. Ellsworth, 45, is a self-taught computer hacker and chip designer who recently started a new augmented reality gaming company, Tilt Five, based in San Jose, Calif. She is emblematic of a generation of Silicon Valley hobbyists who were passionate about computers and only later turned their passions into commercial enterprises. She originally gained visibility as an independent computer chip designer living in a rural ramshackle farmhouse in Yamhill, Ore.

Ms. Ellsworth was able to squeeze the entire circuitry of a decades-old Commodore 64 home computer onto a single advanced silicon chip, which she then tucked neatly into a joystick that was connected by a cable to a TV set. Called the Commodore C64 Direct-to-TV, her device was able to run 30 Video games, mostly sports, racing and puzzle games from the early 1980's, all without the hassle of changing game cartridges.

She was later hired by the gaming company Valve Software, to lead its research effort in augmented reality, technology that uses special glasses or holographic displays to superimpose three-dimensional objects and text on the physical world.

In 2013, she created castAR, a start-up based in Palo Alto, Calif., to design an augmented reality company that planned to design a system to support desktop 3-D gaming. Ultimately, the company raised more than \$1 million in a Kickstarter campaign, then gave the money back when it was unable to raise a second round of financing. With other castAR employees, Ms. Ellsworth acquired the original technology from investors and has used it to start Tilt Five, which has raised \$1.3 million in Kickstarter funding.

The following conversation has been edited and condensed.

**What would you like people to know about your work?**

**JE:** I've always been passionate about making complete user experiences, whether that's for a kid's toy for a 12-year-old or something more professional, like, making sure it's got the complete package, that it's really easy to use on the physical side. It's got all the software and the interactions, and that's what I really get passionate about. And hopefully, people will remember that in my various things I've done.

**What inspired you to go into your field?**

**JE:** I don't know if there's one single person. I think an awesome role model for me was my father who was a really hard worker when I was a kid. And I saw him struggle to do his own business. So I think that's why I always lean toward doing my own thing instead of going and working for a monolithic company. But along the way, there's been lots of mentors. Getting to know, first from a distance, people like Steve Wozniak or Nolan Bushnell, whom I later met in person, or all these kind of famous early Silicon Valley folks. I'd like to be like them making these amazing products. So from afar, they inspired me, but to actually meet them later in life was really cool.

**When you were growing up, what did you want to be?**

**JE:** I wanted to be an astronaut. Yeah. I was really into space as a kid. At one point, I wanted to be a pilot and actually considered going into the Navy or the Air Force, to be a pilot. And my father talked me out of that. I was actually talking to recruiters and telling them, "I want to fly." And my dad said, "you know what, they're going to figure out that you're really good with radios and computers and communications, and they're going to stick you in the bottom of a ship running radios." And so yeah, who knows how it would have happened, but I veered off from that.

**Did your dad run a service station when you were growing up?**

**JE:** Yeah. He had me help him. I was maybe 12 years old, just old enough to be able to reach things under cars. He had me changing oil. I was just a young kid pulling heads off of engines and lapping valves and stuff. He didn't isolate me from any of that stuff, which was awesome.

**What obstacles have you faced in your field?**

**JE:** There are lots of obstacles in Silicon Valley, especially for a female entrepreneur. The money that female entrepreneurs can raise is dismal compared to men. It's like 2 percent. It rewards the kind of male bravado where you go in and get a fist bump and get a bunch of money. That's how it feels. There's been some really disheartening surveys recently. They followed 300 women and 300 men, and then they determined, what questions do venture capitalists ask men versus women and men get asked, "Tell me all about the upside," while women are asked, "Tell me how you're going to defend yourself from the marauders." And so that's been a bit of a challenge for me.

**How do you define success?**

**JE:** I've done a lot of things in my life. And not many of them are public, and I think they've been successful. Some of them are just my mentoring and giving back. I don't get much recognition for some of these things. Sometimes it's the satisfaction of doing something that folks think will be impossible. So, I mean, a few years ago, I built semiconductors in my garage. I began doing research and people told me it would be impossible. They said you have to have clean rooms and millions of dollars of equipment and I decided I think I can do it in any case. I spent like five years researching. It was like a passion project, and then I did it.

## How do you plan to change your field?

**JE:** Well, I'm super-excited about augmented reality. I think it will be the next computing platform. I feel that we're at the point in history that maybe parallels the early home computers. Augmented reality in the next 20 years is really going to transform the way that we compute. We're going to be more intimately connected to the way we compute and these glasses or whatever technology comes along that does this kind of augmentation of our world is going to know probably more about us than we know about ourselves. And it's going to be this persistent improvement in our life because it will change the way we can interact with data, and the way we receive information.

## Where do you find your sources of creativity?

**JE:** I pull it in from all over the place. I'm a very curious person. Since I was a kid, I'd flip over rocks and just look at what was underneath. And so I think that even in my adult life, I'm constantly flipping over rocks. And so it can be almost anything, it can be an interesting optical phenomenon and I'll decide, I've got to understand what this strange phenomenon is. Or maybe some new electrical thing that I see. Or it could be on the art side, I do quite a few art projects. It all ties together and becomes a holistic approach I take to designing products. It's because I'm so curious in these different areas of science and arts and music. It helps me make better products.

I've always been passionate about making complete user experiences, whether that's for a kid's toy for a 12-year-old or something more professional.

## How does technology interact with your profession?

**JE:** I have to stay up with it, and I try to always be as much on the leading edge of technology as possible. I have optics tables at home and I have plasma etchers. I even have holographic world

combiners. I have all this stuff just right in my living room. I try to be fearless when it comes to technology, and I try to adopt it as fast as possible.

# Club Officers

## >>--> Officers and Keypersons <--<<

President ..... Robert Bernardo  
Vice-president ..... Roger Van Pelt  
Secretary/Treasurer ..... Dick Estel  
The Interface Editor ..... Lenard Roach  
Librarian ..... Roger Van Pelt  
Club equipment ..... Roger Van Pelt  
Meeting place reservation ..... Dick Estel

## -The Small Print-

The Fresno Commodore User Group is a club whose members share an interest in Commodore 8-bit and Amiga computers. Our mailing address is 185 W. Pilgrim Lane, Clovis, CA 93612. We meet monthly in the meeting room of Bobby Salazar's Restaurant, 2839 North Blackstone Ave., Fresno, CA. The meetings generally include demonstrations, discussion, and individual help.

Dues are \$12 for 12 months. New members receive a "New Member Disk" containing a number of useful Commodore 8-bit utilities. Members receive a subscription to The Interface newsletter, access to the public domain disk library, technical assistance, and reduced prices on selected software/hardware.

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Our disk library contains over 3,000 public domain programs for the C64 and C128.

Members are entitled to copies of these disks at no cost if a blank disk is provided. We do not deal with pirated, copyrighted, violent, or obscene programs. Please call our attention to any programs found in our library which may violate these standards.