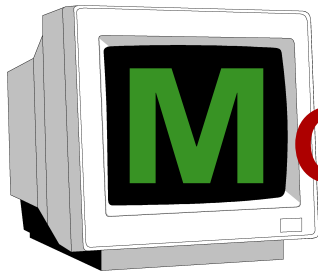


# The CVAUG Monitor

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AUGUST 2000

HAGERSTOWN, MARYLAND

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Subject: *Computer Recycling*

## Non-profit Searches for Hardware to Link Schools, Businesses; Reduce Waste

by Richard McIntire

Tucked away in a small warehouse not far from downtown Baltimore is a months-old non-profit organization that is filling the technology gap many schools are straddling while helping reduce the solid waste stream of businesses throughout the region. Less than eight months ago, Computer Donation Management Inc. (CDMI) began taking in abandoned computers and peripherals, then started tearing them down only to re-build them for use by schools, non-profit organizations and Third World nations.

Standing amongst a convenience store-sized computer graveyard neck-deep in central processing units and monitors, are Bob Donald and Michael Fannon, CDMI's founders.

"We're the first ones, we believe, that are doing this, trying to pull out the good machines to donate them first," said Donald. "We're getting in the middle making sure that only the good stuff gets through to those who need it. Then whatever is left, we do a salvage operation. We are primarily a donation operation."

CDMI is unique in another way. It is set up so corporations can also donate to a specific group, school or charity.

Since opening, CDMI has provided machines to battered women's shelters for vocational training, schools, and other non-profit organizations. "We need specifications for what clients require in a system," Fannon said. "We're acting as a facilitator for them. We'll do the grunt work and they get the by-product."

CDMI gets its re-usable treasures from corporate, community college and school donations or during local government-sponsored public drop-off days. During a two-day public drop-off event in Montgomery County earlier this year, CDMI collected 15 tons of com-

puters—two tractor trailer loads.

Normally, CDMI brings in about 200 machines per week. Most of the machines are 286s, 386s, 486s & low end Pentiums that are usually 100 or 133 megahertz. A lot of 13- and 14-inch monitors also are collected. The firm saves 486s and better for donations, the others are salvaged.

The partners said the plastic used in computer hardware is hard to recycle since its composed of "a mixed bag" of plastics. A precious metal refiner will incinerate old printed circuit boards—found inside a computer—to recover gold, silver, palladium, copper and other metals from the ash. The metals are separated, then used in the manufacturing of other goods.

Fifteen-inch monitors can be repaired in most cases. Fourteen-inch monitors are used in inner city schools and exported to markets in Asia and South America. There is actually a world shortage of smaller monitors, the men said. The only monitors that are "truly trash" are ones with amber or green monochrome screens. But the cathode ray tubes in irreparable monitors can also be recycled. They are made of glass, copper and lead. Tubes can be ground up and the remaining material given back to computer monitor manufacturers to make more tubes, so it is a closed loop system.

Other salvaged parts can include video cards, floppy drives, power supplies, hard drives, modems, sound cards, CD-Roms, zip and tape drives. Floppy disks can be reformatted and re-used as well.

CDMI's leadership also views its operation as a clearinghouse for spare parts.

The men advise computer donors against removing hard drives, disk drives and other components. Without those key mechanisms,

the machines are essentially useless and will more than likely end up on the scrap pile.

Donald and Fannon have known each other for a few years through joint school projects with their children. Donald has worked for Harford County's solid waste division, while Fannon has been in waste equipment sales and waste hauling/management for many years.

As the non-profit corporation grows, the men hope to work with other non-profits to provide training for clients so they can earn and learn a marketable skill. Training participants would assist in breaking down and re-building machines. High school students could come in and earn community service hours by dismantling, upgrading or testing re-built machines.

"As we go along we're seeing more avenues of how this company could evolve, and how there is such a tremendous potential for it in so many different aspects," Fannon said. "Not only in handling a waste stream that really isn't being addressed right now, but also in where it is giving back to the community by providing training and jobs."

The organization is currently seeking grant funding and partnerships for testing equipment so it can certify that re-built or upgraded machines are in prime condition.

"Whenever you read about computers and people doing computers, it's always the latest and greatest technologies," Donald added. "We're more like the guys following behind the elephants in the parade with brooms and shovels cleaning up after everyone else has finished playing games with their computers."

For more information on Computer Donation Management Inc., to arrange a donation or make a request for some computers, call (410) 644-9400.

## CVAUG CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Computer Yard Sale in Middletown August 12th

Workshop August 19th at the Church

Next Regular Meeting September 2nd

## The Take-It-For-What-It's Worth Department

The VOGON News Service

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VNS TECHNOLOGY WATCH: [Mike Taylor, VNS Correspondent]

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[Littleton, MA, USA ]

COMPUTERWORLD 1 April

CREATORS ADMIT UNIX, C HOAX

In an announcement that has stunned the computer industry, Ken Thompson, Dennis Ritchie and Brian Kernighan admitted that the Unix operating system and C programming language created by them is an elaborate April Fools prank kept alive for over 20 years. Speaking at the recent UnixWorld Software Development Forum, Thompson revealed the following:

"In 1969, AT&T had just terminated their work with the GE/Honeywell/AT&T Multics project. Brian and I had just started working with an early release of Pascal from Professor Nicklaus Wirth's ETH labs in Switzerland and we were impressed with its elegant simplicity and power. Dennis had just finished reading 'Bored of the Rings', a hilarious National Lampoon parody of the great Tolkien 'Lord of the Rings' trilogy. As a lark, we decided to do parodies of the Multics environment and Pascal. Dennis and I were responsible for the operating environment. We looked at Multics and designed the new system to be as complex and cryptic as possible to maximize casual users' frustration levels, calling it Unix as a parody of Multics, as well as other more risqué allusions. Then Dennis and Brian worked on a truly warped version of Pascal, called 'A'. When we found others were actually trying to create real programs with A, we quickly added additional cryptic features and evolved into B, BCPL and finally C. We stopped when we got a clean compile on the following syntax:

```
for(;P("\n"),R;P("|"))for(e=C;e-;P("_"+(*u++/8)%2))P("|"+(*u/4)%2);
```

To think that modern programmers would try to use a language that allowed such a statement was beyond our comprehension! We actually thought of selling this to the Soviets to set their computer science progress back 20 or more years. Imagine our surprise when AT&T and other US corporations actually began trying to use Unix and C! It has taken them 20 years to develop enough expertise to generate even marginally useful applications using this 1960's technological parody, but we are impressed with the tenacity (if not common sense) of the general Unix and C programmer. In any event, Brian, Dennis and I have been working exclusively in Pascal on the Apple Macintosh for the past few years and feel really guilty about the chaos, confusion and truly bad programming that have resulted from our silly prank so long ago." Major Unix and C vendors and customers, including AT&T, Microsoft, Hewlett-Packard, GTE, NCR, and DEC have refused comment at this time. Borland International, a leading vendor of Pascal and C tools, including the popular Turbo Pascal, Turbo C and Turbo C++, stated they had suspected this for a number of years and would continue to enhance their Pascal products and halt further efforts to develop C. An IBM spokesman broke into uncontrolled laughter and had to postpone a hastily convened news conference concerning the fate of the RS-6000, merely stating 'VM will be available Real Soon Now'. In a cryptic statement, Professor Wirth of the ETH institute and father of the Pascal, Modula 2 and Oberon structured languages, merely stated that P. T. Barnum was correct.

In a related late-breaking story, usually reliable sources are stat-

ing that a similar confession may be forthcoming from William Gates concerning the MS-DOS and Windows operating environments. And IBM spokesman have begun denying that the Virtual Machine (VM) product is an internal prank gone awry. {COMPUTERWORLD 1 April} {contributed by Bernard L. Hayes}

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## PICNIC, WORKSHOP POORLY ATTENDED

The picnic at Bendell's on July 8th saw only a half-dozen members in attendance but a good time was had by all. Food was abundant and delicious as usual. The weather was near perfect. Maybe that's why more didn't attend.

Our thanks to Charlotte and Bendie for having us and for their fine hospitality.

The workshop at the church the following week (July 15th) again saw only a handful of members showing up. Two brought computers. One was a Color Classic (real nice) and an iMac (also real nice). The Color Classic received a reinstall of the OS and some software and the iMac got a check of the hard drive using Disk Warrior and Norton Disk Doctor.

All in attendance had a good time and were satisfied with the services rendered!

### The CVAUG MONITOR

The Newsletter of Cumberland Valley Apple Users Group

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