INFO Now Has Five Bulletin Boards For Micro Users

The ACF is now maintaining several electronic bulletin boards for microcomputer users. One of these, the ACF's Microcomputer Bulletin Board, was established late last spring, and is devoted to information of particular interest to the community of microcomputer users at NYU. The recently added bulletin board facilities consist of extracts from several nationally read bulletin boards; they are particularly geared toward users of Zenith/Heathkits, Apple Macintoshes, and IBM PCs. Another new bulletin board focuses on information about Kermit, a program which is used to transfer files between popular brands of microcomputers and many of the computers at NYU. (A version of Kermit for the Macintosh became available at NYU recently. See the item on page 6 of this Newsletter.)

The bulletin boards were all implemented as part of INFO, an experimental system which, at present, also offers information on logging in to the NYU computer systems. INFO and the bulletin boards can be reached via dial-in by anyone who has a modem, a microcomputer, and communications software. Here's how to do it.

1) Connect to the NYU Computer System Selector (or "switch") by dialing 777-7600.

2) In response to the SELECTION? prompt, type INFO and press the RETURN key. (If the word "GO." appears, press the RETURN key again.)

Microcomputer Software Can Now Be Ordered At Discount From NYU Central Supply

NYU Central Supply has begun to stock several popular microcomputer software packages, and will sell them at an excellent discount to departments at NYU. Only departments with NYU budget numbers may purchase from Central Supply. Individual faculty members who are interested in obtaining one of these packages from Central Supply must order through their departments. At present, Central Supply has software for the Apple Macintosh and the IBM PC, as listed below.

For the Apple Macintosh

Microsoft Multiplan, a popular spreadsheet
Microsoft File, a simple database management program
Jazz, an integrated spreadsheet, database, word-processing, graphics, and communications program from Lotus

For the IBM PC

WordPerfect, one of the leading wordprocessing packages for the PC
Microsoft Word, another excellent wordprocessing package
Lotus 1-2-3, the premier spreadsheet for the PC
Symphony, an integrated spreadsheet, database, wordprocessing, and communications program from Lotus
dBASE III, the most popular database management program for the PC

The ACF Microcomputer Laboratory would like to remind departments and faculty at NYU to select software carefully. The packages offered by Central Supply are very good indeed, but they by no means exhaust the list of

Central Supply continues on Page 10.

About This Newsletter . . .

This is the third issue of the ACF Microcomputer Newsletter. A publication of New York University's Academic Computing Facility (ACF), the Microcomputer Newsletter is intended for current and prospective microcomputer users in the NYU community. It is one way in which we hope to provide information which will help them select and use personal computers and personal computer software.

We welcome your comments, suggestions, anecdotes and ideas. Please send them to: The ACF Microcomputer Newsletter, c/o Gary Chapman, ACF Microcomputer Laboratory, 251 Mercer Street, New York, N.Y. 10012. Those contributions which we feel will most benefit our readers will be included in future issues of the newsletter.

The Microcomputer Newsletter is a joint effort of the ACF’s Microcomputer Laboratory and its Documentation Office. We hope to publish bi-monthly during the academic year. This issue of the newsletter was prepared on a XEROX 8010 STAR Information System and an Apple Macintosh computer, and printed on a XEROX laser printer and an Apple LaserWriter.

This issue of the ACF Microcomputer Newsletter was written by Gary Chapman and Estelle Hochberg.

Newsletter Editor: Estelle Hochberg
Editorial and production assistance: Judith Shotwell, Jenny Wilker

The Academic Computing Facility, New York University
NYU Faculty, Students, and Staff Can Purchase Macintosh Computers at Low Prices

Members of the NYU community can now purchase Apple Macintosh computers at a good discount, as a result of an agreement between New York University and Apple Computer. Apple's purchase plan for NYU faculty, students, and staff is coordinated through Computer Era, an Apple dealer here in New York City. Computer Era takes orders, acts as the distributor of the computers, and handles service arrangements.

The purchase plan currently offers a particularly good package consisting of a 512K Macintosh, an Imagewriter-2 printer, and peripheral cabling. MacWrite and MacPaint, Apple's software for wordprocessing and for graphics on the Macintosh, are also included in the package. The price is $1874, plus Apple's $35 processing fee, sales tax and delivery charges. Delivery within the tri-state area costs $27.50 and takes an estimated two to three weeks. Shipment is made directly to the purchaser, and payment is by check or money order made out to Apple Computer, Inc.

The $1874 package is a particularly special offer that lasts only through December 31. After that date, other packages, some peripherals and software will continue to be available at substantial savings under the purchase plan. Additional packages and items may be offered in the future. Please call Computer Era at the number given below for details. You might also watch the campus newspapers for Computer Era's advertisements of packages and special offers available under the purchase plan.

Aside from Apple's purchase plan, Computer Era has some specially-priced accessories and supplies for NYU faculty, students, and staff. They also offer (at $199 for the package described above) a "follow-on" limited warranty plan that extends Apple's three-month warranty period to 15 months. Apple Care (Apple's service contract) can also be purchased at Computer Era, as at any authorized Apple dealer.

To order or to obtain further information, contact Computer Era at (212) 686-1705. Computer Era is located at 460 Park Avenue South, at 31st Street.

The ACF Opens A Macintosh Facility for Faculty and Students

The Academic Computing Facility has opened a small laboratory of Macintosh computers for use by NYU faculty and students. Located in the ACF's Education Building site (35 West Fourth Street, second floor), the Macintosh Lab is an experiment in making microcomputers generally available to the University community.

Macintosh computers are powerful single-user micros. They are easy to use and quite versatile. (See, for example, this issue's edition of Dr. Micro for a discussion of the Mac's wordprocessing capabilities.) Currently there are twelve 512K Apple Macintosh computers in the Mac Lab, all connected to a LaserWriter (Apple's laser printer). The LaserWriter provides high quality, nearly "camera ready" printed output. Users of the Mac Lab are also provided with MacWrite, the wordprocessing program which comes with the Macintosh. MacWrite offers considerable flexibility in layout, font style, and so on.

To use the Macintosh Lab, you will need a valid New York University ID card. In addition, if you

New Macintosh Facility continues on Page 10.
Discounts on Zenith’s New PC-Compatibles

Over the past few months, Zenith Data Systems has announced an expanded line of IBM PC-compatible microcomputers and has made an arrangement with NYU to offer the micros at discount prices to members of the NYU community.

While Zenith is not best known for its microcomputers, it is in fact a leading manufacturer of IBM PC-compatible microcomputers. It has a significant share of the microcomputer market, and is a major supplier of micros to government and educational institutions.

Up until the announcement of the new line, Zenith offered three models: equivalents to the IBM Portable PC, the IBM PC, and the IBM PC-XT. The new line includes several new PC-compatible micros, as well as upgraded versions of their older machines.

Under the discount arrangement, NYU faculty, students, and staff may purchase Zenith micros, as well as video monitors and terminals, at from 40% to 50% off list price. Here is a list of the micros which Zenith now offers with the prices adjusted for the NYU discount. All come with 256K RAM installed, one or two floppy-disk drives (buyer’s choice), parallel and serial ports, and the MS-DOS operating system. (Video monitors are not included in the prices shown, and must be purchased separately.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Computer</th>
<th>NYU Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ZF-148-42 PC Entry Level System (not expandable)</td>
<td>$ 999.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZFA-138-42 Transportable</td>
<td>1,149.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZFA-161-52 PC Portable (two floppies)</td>
<td>1,299.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZF-158-42 PC Desktop System (expandable, equivalent to the IBM PC)</td>
<td>1,299.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZFL-171-42 Lightweight Portable LCD Computer (full-size, backlighted LCD screen, two floppies, battery and AC powered)</td>
<td>1,349.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZW-158-42 PC Desktop System w/10 MB hard disk (equivalent to the IBM PC/XT)</td>
<td>1,999.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZF-241-82 Z-200 Advanced Desktop PC (equivalent to the IBM PC AT)</td>
<td>3,079.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further information and order forms can be obtained afternoons from the ACF’s Faculty Microcomputer Laboratory, Room 317 Warren Weaver Hall. Please telephone 460-7160 before stopping by to pick up these materials.
Update on the ACF's Faculty Microcomputer Lab

The ACF's Faculty Microcomputer Lab has continued to acquire hardware, software, and publications for examination by members of the NYU community. The following recent additions may be particularly interesting to our readers.

- An Apple LaserWriter printer, which produces printed output that is nearly typeset in quality. We have hooked it up to our Apple 512K Macintosh.

- A Zenith ZW-158 PC with a 10 megabyte Winchester disk. It can be used to explore the capabilities of the line of Zenith PC's that are available at a discount to members of the NYU community.

- A selection of software sold by IBM for the IBM PC. These include TopView, PC Graphical Kernel System and Graphics Development Toolkit, DisplayWrite 3, Script PC, IBM 3101 Emulation Program, APL, IBM PC Macro Assembler Version 2, the IBM PC Assistant series of programs, the IBM Pascal Compiler, IBM Professional Fortran, and the IBM PC XENIX and XENIX development system.

- Miscellaneous software for the IBM PC, including CDC's Connect, Nota Bene, Freestyle, Framework and Ability demonstration disks, and Microsoft Word.

- Miscellaneous software for the Apple Macintosh. These include MacFortran, Microsoft File and the MacMemory Disk.


The ACF's Faculty Microcomputer Laboratory was established at the beginning of the Fall 1984 semester. It is a place where faculty and research staff can explore different kinds of microcomputer software and hardware. The Lab is located in Room 317 Warren Weaver Hall. Visits to the Lab are by appointment: please call 460-7160 to arrange a time. Hours between noon and 8:00 p.m., Mondays through Fridays, are generally available.

Bobst Research Guide Focuses on Microcomputers

A recent addition to Bobst Library's series of Research Guides focuses on microcomputers and microcomputer software. "Microcomputers and Software: Selected Reference Sources" (Bobst's Research Guide/45) lists books, periodicals, directories, and indexes which can be used to obtain background information on microcomputer hardware and software. A number of the indexes and directories mentioned are available online, either through Bobst's online search services or via dial-in from your own microcomputer.

Many of the sources listed in this guide could be useful supplements to the reference materials available at the ACF's Microcomputer Laboratory. The guide was compiled by Martin Kesselman, Danielle Mihram, Michael Miller, and Donald Yucht. Copies can be obtained in NYU's Elmer Holmes Bobst Library (70 Washington Square South). A rack containing all Bobst Research Guides is situated at the rear of the atrium, directly opposite the library's main entrance.
Apple Macintosh Users at NYU Have Kermit

A version of Kermit for the Apple Macintosh is now available. Kermit is an error-checking communications program which is used to transfer files between micros and other computers. It is the file transfer program which is most widely supported at NYU. The version produced for the Macintosh is called CKermit.

With CKermit, you can use your Mac to log on to an NYU computer. You can then send files either from your Mac to an NYU machine ("upload" them), or from an NYU computer to your Mac ("downloading"). CKermit's error-checking mechanism prevents telephone-line interference from altering the files while they are in transit.

Incidentally, CKermit also permits the Mac to emulate a DEC VT-100 terminal. At present, however, it does not support the use of a numeric keypad. Keypad support is planned for future versions of the program. (Numeric keypad support makes it possible to use a full-screen editor on the NYU system with which one has connected. There are other communications programs which already allow use of a keypad. At present, Kermit's greatest value is as a file-transfer program, rather than as a terminal emulator.)

Members of the NYU community can obtain copies of CKermit from the ACF's Faculty Microcomputer Laboratory, Room 317 Warren Weaver Hall. Versions of Kermit for the IBM PC, the Apple IIe, and for CP/M machines like the KAYPRO are also available from the Lab. They are all distributed on diskette. Please remember to telephone 460-7160 for an appointment first, and be sure to bring a blank diskette when you come!

In order for Kermit to work, there must be a version running on each of the two computers -- your micro and the NYU system involved in the transfer. In addition, if you are dialing in, you will need a modem. For information on setting up your micro for dialing in to an NYU computer, see the ACF writeup DATACOM. Copies are available from the ACF's Documentation Office, Room 306 Warren Weaver Hall.  □
Ask "Dr. Micro"...

[Ask "Dr. Micro" is a question-and-answer column which we include in each issue of the ACF Microcomputer Newsletter. In it, we try to address questions of general interest to our readers. We welcome your questions: instructions for mailing them are given at the end of this article.]

It should come as no surprise that microcomputer owners at NYU -- as in other academic communities -- are particularly interested in software which can aid in the preparation of papers and other publications. Wordprocessing (or "text processing") programs are intended to do just that: to help you to write and revise papers and other documents, change certain aspects of a document’s format more or less at will, print the document, and save it on disk for future use.

This edition of Dr. Micro is an informal discussion of wordprocessing programs from the point of view of the academic user, who typically wants special wordprocessing features which are not needed in the business world. This will by no means be an exhaustive or systematic treatment of the subject. What we will try to do is give you our impressions of some of the popular programs available for commonly used microcomputers. We will also go into a few features which you might look for.

1. What is the best wordprocessing program available for use on a microcomputer?

As with computer software in general, there is no such thing as the "best" wordprocessing program. Each program does different things, in different ways, and with different built-in limitations. Furthermore, each person has different requirements. For example, one person might find footnoting capabilities particularly useful. Another might have a greater need for automatic indexing. One person might be preparing short documents of a few pages each and want an easy-to-learn system. Another may want a wordprocessing program that can handle longer documents, even if the system is somewhat more difficult to learn.

There are literally hundreds of different wordprocessing programs available for microcomputers. A prospective buyer who wishes to consider all the options, compare features, and make a rational choice, faces a very difficult task indeed.

In our experience, prospective buyers tend to look around a little, talk to a few people, and then select a wordprocessing program based on general reputation and the recommendations of acquaintances. Often, they purchase a program only to discover, later, that it does not provide one or another desirable feature.

2. What is the best program, given the microcomputer that I have and the kind of wordprocessing that I would like to do?

At the present time, your options are limited by the kind of microcomputer on which your wordprocessing will be done. For example, there are only a few wordprocessing programs which can be used with a KAYPRO. Wordstar and Perfect Writer are the most notable of these. Of the two, Wordstar is far more versatile, and there are a number of utility programs which you can buy to enhance its usefulness.

Dr. Micro continues on Page 8.
Three popular programs for the Apple II are Word Juggler, Appleworks, and WordPerfect. Appleworks, the best-selling microcomputer program for the Apple II, contains a limited wordprocessing component. Word Juggler is more complicated to learn, but more versatile. WordPerfect, a relative newcomer, may be the most powerful of the three.

If you are looking for anything approaching state-of-the-art word processing for academic purposes, however, you have to turn to a more powerful microcomputer, such as Apple’s Macintosh or the IBM PC. Sophisticated word-processing software has been developed for both of these machines, making them comparable to “standalone” office word processors.

3. What kinds of things can I do with a Macintosh?

At the present time, there are two main wordprocessing choices for the Macintosh: MacWrite and Microsoft Word. MacWrite, developed by Apple, comes with the Mac when you buy it, and many people find that MacWrite satisfies just about all of their requirements. Microsoft Word, however, is more versatile and has some features that are particularly convenient in the preparation of manuscripts for publication. For example, Word provides such features as automatic footnoting and endnoting, and multiple “windows.” With automatic footnoting, you simply indicate that a passage is to appear as a footnote. Footnotes will appear at the bottom of the appropriate page automatically and the text will be spaced so as to allow sufficient room for the notes. Endnotes (or reference notes) will be placed at the end of the article. Windows allow you to look at more than one document at a time and to easily move pieces of text from one document to another.

Both MacWrite and Microsoft Word take advantage of the Macintosh’s “user-friendliness.” They both allow you to print in a wide variety of font styles and sizes on the Apple ImageWriter, an inexpensive dot matrix printer. Although it is also possible to use a daisy wheel, letter-quality printer (like the NEC 3550) with the Mac, it means giving up the range of type faces that the ImageWriter offers. For office situations, it may be economical to use Apple’s LaserWriter. In this context, its hefty price tag ($7000 list) can be offset by shared use.

4. What’s available for an IBM PC?

With the IBM PC, there may seem at first to be an over-abundance of choices. If you are interested in serious academic wordprocessing, however, you can readily eliminate a large number of the more than 100 programs available. Programs which do not handle footnotes and endnotes automatically should probably be the first to be removed from your list. The most versatile wordprocessing programs for the PC include Microsoft Word, XyWrite, and WordPerfect. Microsoft Word is comparatively slow, but boasts great flexibility in page-formatting and can be used with laser printers. XyWrite is remarkably fast and offers the greatest number of options for customization. However, these same options make it comparatively hard for novices to learn. WordPerfect is generally regarded as offering a good blend in terms of its ease-of-use and speed, and the number of convenient features which it offers.

Last spring, the Modern Language Association recommended Nota Bene, a wordprocessing program designed specifically for academic use on an IBM PC. Nota Bene (from Dragonfly Software) offers all standard wordprocessing capabilities, plus several features particularly useful in the preparation of academic papers and publications. For example, it provides several different footnote formats, among them MLA style and Chicago style. Text-oriented
indexing is another useful feature for the quick location and retrieval of material which you
(or a colleague) have written previously and stored on disk. In general, storing information
on a computer is like putting papers and manuscripts in folders in a file cabinet. The folders
may all have labels, but six weeks after filing a piece of information, it may be difficult to
remember which folder you put it in. Nota Bene addresses this problem by, in essence,
indexing all your documents. Then, when you are writing something new, and want to find a
reference you noted down a few weeks before, you instruct Nota Bene to do a "string search."
That is, you simply tell it to search for a word, a phrase, or a part of a sentence (in other words,
a "string" of characters) that is likely to be found in that reference. Nota Bene will look
through its index for the string and then display on your screen any passage which contains
that word or phrase, along with the name of the file in which it is found.

5. What if I need foreign language characters or Greek and mathematical symbols?

When a foreign language is involved, or when statistical or mathematical expressions must
be included in the text, wordprocessing becomes considerably more difficult. This is because
most microcomputers (including the IBM PC) are not designed to have the kind of flexibility
which they would need to display on your screen a wide variety of non-English characters.
Similarly, many printers cannot produce foreign language characters or Greek and
mathematical symbols. In some cases, an individual who wishes to do specialized kinds of
wordprocessing will have to obtain new hardware or software.

Among popular microcomputers, Apple's Macintosh is clearly the most versatile with respect
to fonts and characters. In particular, it has the greatest degree of "font flexibility" -- the
ability to easily modify the set of characters displayed on the screen or produced by the
printer. Even with the Macintosh, however, if you desire high-quality printed output, you
may have to go to considerable additional expense. The best solution -- today's laser printers
are still too expensive for most individuals. Moderately priced printers, such as Apple's
Imagewriter, force users to compromise somewhat on the quality of printed output: it is good
but, perhaps, not quite "letter quality."

6. Where should I look for more information (and to keep myself up-to-date on new
developments)?

Read the microcomputer magazines. Short of "hands-on" experimentation with the
different wordprocessing programs, the best source of information is in magazines that are
published for microcomputer users. They frequently contain reviews, surveys, and charts
comparing wordprocessing software. The charts themselves are often helpful, since they
allow you to determine whether or not certain features are present in a given program. Many
of these magazines can be found on the newsstand, in Bobst Library, or at the ACF's
Microcomputer Laboratory.

"Dr. Micro" will gladly try to answer questions from microcomputer users at NYU. Send questions to
"Dr. Micro", c/o Gary Chapman, ACF Microcomputer Laboratory, 251 Mercer Street, New York, N.Y.
10013. Questions of general interest to our readers will be included in subsequent issues of the ACF
Microcomputer Newsletter.
Microcomputer Bulletin Boards continues from Page 1.

3) This will connect you to INFO and its main "menu". To access the bulletin boards, select MICRO, press RETURN, and a second menu will appear. This menu will offer you a selection of bulletin board facilities. MICROINFO is the ACF's bulletin board for microcomputer users at NYU. Also in the menu is POST, the facility which you can use to submit a message for inclusion in MICROINFO.

Central Supply continues from Page 2.

products currently available to microcomputer users, and different users have different needs. For that reason, you might wish to compare packages available from other sources, before making a decision to purchase. Most important, however, is to make sure that you have the hardware needed to use a software package before purchasing it. Only then, if the software that you have selected is available at NYU Central Supply, should you take advantage of their excellent discounts.

For further information, call Central Supply at 598-3197.

New Macintosh Facility continues from Page 3.

wish to keep any work that you do on the Macs, you will need to bring your own Macintosh floppy disk. Single disks can be purchased on the NYU Book Center's upper level for about $3.00. (Be sure to ask for a single-sided disk for use with the Macintosh.)

New users of the Lab can borrow a "starter kit" from the operator at the Lab site. The starter kit contains the ACF's document "Using the ACF's Macintosh Laboratory", Apple's fine manuals for the Macintosh and MacWrite, and a blank practice disk. The ACF document is recommended whether or not you have used a Mac before.

The ACF's Macintosh Lab is located in the ACF's Education Building site (35 West Fourth Street, second floor). It is open weekdays from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. and Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
How to Get Future Issues of this Newsletter

If you would like to receive future issues of this newsletter, please fill out this form and send it to *The ACF Microcomputer Newsletter, c/o The ACF Documentation Office, 251 Mercer Street, New York, N.Y. 10012.* (No need to send us this form if you have already submitted one.)

Name: __________________________________________ Please check one:

Address (a University address, if possible, please):

_________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________

Please check here if you would also like to be included in the mailing list for the general newsletter of the Academic Computing Facility. That newsletter describes recent developments at the ACF, and contains a directory of ACF personnel and resources. ___.

Check here if you would like to receive a copy of our brochure (*The Academic Computing Facility: An Introduction for Faculty and Students*). ___.

(Microcomputer Newsletter, Nov. 1985)

Are you interested in other ACF resources, services, documents?

The Academic Computing Facility (ACF) provides a wide range of computing services to faculty and students at New York University. Microcomputer-related activities are just one part of what we do and of the facilities that we offer.

If you are interested in learning more about the ACF and how our services might be of help to you, we can send you a copy of our brochure, *The Academic Computing Facility: An Introduction for Faculty and Students*. Please fill out the form just above, and be sure to indicate (by placing a check on the appropriate line) that you would like a copy of the ACF's brochure.
Microcomputer Newsletter

The Academic Computing Facility

New York University