

# GBBS Pro News

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## Ho, Ho, Ho: A GBBS holiday wish list

By STEPHANIE A. MCGRATH  
Pro News editor

A year ago there was Peripherals Plus, just about alone in its marketing of GBBS Products. But with the growth of GBBS 'Pro' as a bulletin board system, more people have gotten into the act.

This year, there's a lot more software to choose from, a lot more GBBS sysops selling hardware and software, and there's no way I could possibly list everyone.

But these are some of the best-known companies and their best-known GBBS and communications-related products. Several of them are regular advertisers.

In fact, First Word, of all those marketing products to the GBBS community, has been, by FAR, the most supportive of this newsletter. Those of you who have subscribed to the newsletter and have seen the quality should thank the guys at First Word for the financial and moral support they have given in this endeavor.

On with the products!

**First Word:** 4110 Roseland Ave, Houston, TX, 77006.  
(713) 526-9711 (voice) (713) 526-0714 (data, 3/12/2400).

• **AutoKit.** A huge GBBS sysop utility that collects board features onto one easily modifiable menu. \$24.95.

• **Commander in Chief.** A world leadership simulation for GBBS. \$50.

• **Commsoft Libraries I and II.** Collections of public domain GBBS programs. \$29.95, \$34.95 respectively.

• **Den of Iniquity.** Adult adventure for GBBS. \$24.95.

• **Extended Command System.** Expanded Acos editor. \$39.95.

• **First Word Mall.** An electronic merchandising center for GBBS. \$29.95.

• **Grid Management System.** Multiporting for GBBS 'Pro'. \$34.95.

• **Hardware:** CMS hard drives, off-brand modems.

• **Match!** A matchmaker system for GBBS. \$34.95.

**Mike Golaszewski:** 14564 E. Wagontrail, Aurora, CO. 80015.

• **EXfer.** A file transfer system for GBBS. v4.0 was \$25.

**L&L Productions:** P.O. Box 5354, Arvada, CO., 80005. (303) 420-3156 (voice), (303) 420-3568 (data).

• **SuperTac.** File transfer system. \$10 (see article below).

See Support, page 12

## SuperTac 3.2 gets the nod from L&L Productions

GBBS 'Pro' has a new "official" transfer module: SuperTac 3.2.

Lance Taylor-Warren announced the decision last month to use and support SuperTac.

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--See Andy Nicholas' column, page 11.

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"This program is the answer to your file transfer area needs," Taylor-Warren posted on the L&L Productions BBS. "East to install and easy to run. Most importantly it is supported by L&L Productions for GBBS sysops and is available at the low price of \$10."

Shipping of the new product was to have started in October, and it was available on the L&L Volume 4.

(For best downloading of SuperTac, get a copy of BLU v2.20 or higher, and download the ".BNY" file, rather

than individual files, to save yourself time. BLU works on the Apple IIe with an 80-column card.)

SuperTac is no longer freeware, as the v3.2 drivers are copyrighted by L&L Productions and distributed for registered GBBS 'Pro' sysops only.

SuperTac author Andy Nicholas says anyone using v2.2a or earlier may continue to do so. SuperTac 3.0, however, IS copyrighted by L&L Productions. Nicholas says the y.up driver on 3.0 is bugged, anyway.

He says v3.2 is different from v3.0, and v3.5, which was to have been available as Pro News was going to press, would add even more extras.

The new SuperTac was to be online at L&L soon, he said.

Among Nicholas' changes are some new functions in xdos. For example, he added "getinfo," which serves instead

of Mike Golaszewski's xtype. He also wrote a freespace function into xdos and fixed a bug that locked up the system if you asked it to catalog an ACOS path that didn't exist, and modified the "catalog" command.

Admittedly, there are some problems with the new drivers. Some term programs, Nicholas said, have to set a timeout value higher than normal. In addition, it doesn't support DOS 3.3 Xmodem transfers.

"I made the drivers so that they could be 'intelligent,' that is, you could set it for one protocol and let it go," Nichols said. "Maybe DOS 3.3 backfit will be provided in future versions, but not right now."

He says the current protocols support ProDOS AE Pro, MouseTalk AE, Talk-Is-Cheap, ProTerm and most other term programs that use standard Xmodem.

# Highlights:

**L&L: (303) 420-3568**

## **The Apple Pack:**

**(703) 370-4223**

Lance has been having some strange, inexplicable hardware problems that have all but shut down his Xmodem ability. Whatever the problem is, it is causing the system to lock up whenever it encounters a "use" file.

Speaking of "use" files, how about someone writing a compendium of those available, for publication in a future Pro News? Several of us know of bunches of them that are available, but although we may have them, we don't have documentation to USE them. Paul Hutmacher posted on L&L about one called "xfree," which shows blocks available on the harder, and Andy Wells posted a short note about his new "finduser." As of Oct. 23, Andy was planning to release his on the Sysop's Exchange BBS. I've also heard of xcopy, which copies files from within ACOS, and several others for which I've never seen documentation. How 'bout it??

Sysop's Exchange was also down for part of October, and Lance was hoping to have it back up as Pro News was going to press....

**Hackers:** Hutmacher warns sysops after last month's discussion of hackers, that in EFTS or EFTS Pro, a sigop can delete your files or even link to a file on the drive specified on his Sig. So.... beware.

**Help wanted:** Larry Hawkins wonders if there's any way to clear a bit map full error other than deleting the effected area -- specifically his mail file. Also, is there a way to increase the bit-map size to allow more mail or messages?

**Hardware:** Everything you ever wanted to know about hard drives but were afraid to ask because you knew everyone would jump all over you.... That's how it was last month on L&L. Everyone has a favorite hard drive story, and they all told 'em. And when the dust settled, Rich Morrissey spoke clearly from the rubble: "A+ has a big review on hard drives this month."

**Modem configurations:** Beginning with complaints from Hutmacher about no loss-of-carrier detect on his Avatex

modem (see "Europa" below for a discussion of how he solved the problem), several sysops chimed in with their own complaints about off-brand modems.

Greg Broiles suggested a G-files section where people who have successfully used off-brand computers/serial cards/modems can post their working configurations, so we don't have to keep asking about the same products every few months.

If anyone puts up such a section, be sure to let me know, so I can update Pro News with the information.

A friend of Hutmacher's suggested inserting the following line in the logon under the "clear" label and in the main.seg under the "term.4" label:

```
print "+++"
```

He says the three plus signs will make the modem disconnect and await the next call. There was MUCH discussion about whether this actually works; if you can't figure any other way to drop carrier, you might try it.

## **Peripherals Plus:**

**(214) 424-2001**

Sysop Jan Porter said that as of Oct. 29, P+ still doesn't have a release date for Spur II.

Doug Granzow (#127) posted the difference between "baud" and "bits-per-second":

"When we see bps and baud we think of the same thing -- how fast the characters run across the screen. But if you want to get technical, bps is not baud. Baud measures how many 'slices' a second gets divided into. A 300-baud modem divides a second into 300 slices, and sends one bit during each of those slices. A 1200-bps modem operates at 600 baud and sends two bits at a time. A 2400-bps modem also operates at 600 baud but sends 4 bits at a time. 9600 -- well, it depends on what brand you buy, since there is no standard yet -- but at least one (the USR, I think) operates around 15 baud and sends 512 bits at a time.

"Of course this is all 'textbook definitions' and none of us live in a textbook, so it doesn't really matter anyway."

**Strings:** This was posted on the P+ SPUR sub-board, but I'm not sure it applies only to SPUR. Oscar Fisher (#141) has been trying to assign date\$ and time\$ to a variable and finding that doing so messes up those system strings. He says that supposedly when\$ can be made to equal a two-byte address for the date; can anyone tell him that address in ACOS or another way around the problem?

One way is to use partial strings: z\$=left\$(date\$,2):z1\$=mid\$(date\$,4,2):z2\$=right\$(date\$,2). That returns z\$ as the month, z1\$ as the day and z2\$ as the year, and keeps date\$ from becoming gobbledegook.

## **The Cottontail Ranch:**

**(602) 433-0159**

Sysop Steven Playford switched to GBBS 'Pro' v1.3 sometime recently, and he's still running the EXfer support sub-board, contrary to rumour.

Mike Golaszewski has started beta-testing EXfer v4.1 here, and as of Nov. 3, he had most of the system bugs worked out and was hoping to release the new version soon.

Playford, on suggestion from Chet Day, has put up a new EXfer section called "ACOS Programmers' Library." Open only to GBBS sysops, it is to be a library of programming hints and tips, tutorials, and explanations of complicated code that is barely discussed in the GBBS manual. I hope we can use some of these kinds of articles in Pro News, as well. This might be a good place to send your "configurations," as discussed under the L&L heading, too.

## **Europa: (713) 526-0714**

After a bit of work with cabling, sysop Paul Hutmacher has gotten the BBS to run at 3/12/2400 baud on his new Avatex modem. In fact, after getting a cable from MicroData Systems, his modem even detects loss-of-carrier, something many Avatex owners had some trouble with. For other Avatex users, he initializes his

# First Word

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(Profile is a trademark of Apple Computer, Inc. GBBS Pro and ACOS are trademarks of L&L Productions.)

**The Best.  
The Best Price.**

## 'Tis the Season

Of course, you knew that. Retailers remind us that it's the season the first chilly October night New York has. But we believe there's something very important about Christmas besides retail performance: Caring.

Take a moment to think of someone else, even if it's just, "What would John like?" Surprise an elderly lady in the grocery store by picking up her tab. You'll never spend a better ten bucks. Take an hour to think about peace. Real, world peace, and the one thing that will make it happen: caring about others.

Now think about what you did come next July. If you have to wait that long. How about Christmas in July? How about Christmas every day.

First Word wishes you and yours the very best.

## So what'd you get me?

We didn't think you'd want another tie, and they were out of your favorite cologne, so we thought we'd let you pick your own Christmas gift.

**Holly:** Receive a free copy of the program You Can Quote Me with any order. You Can Quote Me comes with over 250 built-in borderline quotes; users never see the same quote twice; compressed BIN storage; random-file updater; online help; user manual.

**Mistletoe:** Receive AutoKit free with any software order over \$75 or with any order over \$200.

**Tannenbaum:** Receive CommSoft Library 2 free with any software order over \$100 or any order over \$250. Merry Christmas.

## First Word

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# Mods!

If you're tired of looking at the same old Top-Of-Screen stats, then you're not alone. Over the last few months there have been several discussions on the major GBBS 'Pro' support boards about how to go about changing that top-of-screen display.

The following are a few suggestions and ideas culled from the various discussions. Before making any of the suggested changes to your ACOS.OBJ, make a backup copy. I cannot stress how important this is. These modifications have been tested on ACOS v1.3 with an apple IIe 80-column driver. Other combinations of drivers or versions should use extreme caution. **When in doubt, BACK UP!**

In the following modifications, "YOURPREFIX" is the location of your duplicate ACOS.OBJ, the one in which you will be making the changes. If you couldn't already guess that, then you probably should not try these mods.

## Technical Expertise: Al Anderson "displays" the screen display

```
] BLOAD /YOURPREFIX/ACOS.OBJ
] CALL -151
AA5L
```

The ACOS.OBJ routine that prints to the screen window is found at location \$AA5 (comments after the semicolons are Anderson's; they may or may not be 100 percent correct.):

ØAA5-A2 ØØ	LDX #ØØØ	;load x-register with Ø
ØAA7-A9 2D	LDA #Ø2D	;load acumulator ;with dash
ØAA9-2Ø 3A ØA	JSR \$ØA3A	;print inverse dash ;across screen line Ø
ØAAC- A2 Ø3	LDX #Ø03	;load x-register with 3
ØAAE- 2Ø 3A ØA	JSR \$ØA3A	;print inverse dash ;across screen line 3
ØAB1- CA	DEX	;change x-register to 2
ØAB2- A9 2Ø	LDA #Ø2Ø	;load accumulator with ;space
ØAB4- 2Ø 3A ØA	JSR \$ØA3A	;print inverse space ;across screen line 2
ØAB7- CA	DEX	;change x-register to 1
ØAB8- 2Ø 3A ØA	JSR \$ØA3A	;print inverse space ;across screen line 1
ØABB- A9 Ø4	LDA #ØØ4	;load accumulator with 4
ØABD- 85 22	STA \$22	;POKE 34,4
ØABF- 6Ø	RTS	;return from subroutine

OK. Knowing this, you can change the inverse dashes to any character you want. Pull out an ASCII chart and pick a character. To change the dash to an asterisk, you want to change location \$AA8 to \$2A, the ASCII equivalent of an asterisk. That is, type:

```
ØAA8:2A
If you list the program again (AA7L<return>) you will see:
ØAA7- A9 2A LDA #Ø2A
```

You can also set the screen window so that when you first

log on, it will be visible, but once the screen starts to scroll, you can make any of the lines (except line 0) disappear. To do this, just change the location \$ABC to a value less than 4, but ALWAYS greater than 1 (or GBBS will go into its error routines!). Currently things look like this:

```
ØABB- A9 Ø4 LDA #ØØ4
Let's say you want to change things so that a user's phone number and flags are invisible. You would change location $ABC to a $Ø2, which is equivalent to the BASIC command POKE 34,2. You simply enter:
```

```
ABC:Ø2
And now if you list things (ABBL<return>), you will see:
ØABB- A9 Ø2 LDA #ØØ2
When you initially log onto your board, all the stats are visible, but as soon as the screen starts to scroll, stats on the phone number and flags line disappear. If you need to see them at any time, press CTRL-K and they reappear. It seems that CTRL-K not only makes the user's password visible, but it refreshes the stat window completely! As soon as the screen scrolls again, those stats will disappear once more.
```

Anderson has modified the code to display only one blank line, and he can press CTRL-K to make all of the stats appear. This gives him three extra lines to view what's happening on the system ("I hate it when something scrolls off the screen prematurely!" he said.)

His modification looks like this:

ØAA5- A2 Ø1	LDX #ØØØ	;load x-register with 1
ØAA7- A9 2Ø	LDA #Ø2Ø	;load acumulator with ;space
ØAA9- 2Ø 3A ØA	JSR \$ØA3A	;print inverse space ;across screen line 1
ØAAC- CA	DEX	;change x-register to Ø
ØAAD- 2Ø 3A ØA	JSR \$ØA3A	;print inverse space ;across screen line Ø
ØABØ- A9 Ø1	LDA #ØØ1	;load accumulator ;with 1
ØAB2- 85 22	STA \$22	;POKE 34,1
ØAB4- 6Ø	RTS	;return from subroutine
ØAB5- EA	NOP	;nothing
ØAB6- EA	NOP	;nothing
ØAB7- EA	NOP	;nothing
ØAB8- EA	NOP	;nothing
ØAB9- EA	NOP	;nothing
ØABA- EA	NOP	;nothing
ØABB- EA	NOP	;nothing
ØABC- EA	NOP	;nothing
ØABD- EA	NOP	;nothing
ØABE- EA	NOP	;nothing
ØABF- 6Ø	RTS	;return from subroutine; ;just in case the first ;RTS didn't take

This routine only prints blank lines to the screen, not user stats. Anderson believes the print #9 statement in the logon.seg automatically sends an extra line (line Ø) to the screen whether you want it or not.

To save your changes forever, exit the monitor with a

CTRL-C <return>, and type in:  
] BSAVE ACOS.OBJ,A\$800,L\$5000

For those who are interested in the status screen window particulars, they're at location \$5270 in ACOS v1.2 (without the .p prompt in the editor) or at location \$5370 in ACOS v1.3 and v1.2 (with the .p prompt in the editor). The first several lines look like this:

```
5370- 20 2E 2E      JSR  $2E23
5373- 2E 2E 2E      ROL  $2E2E
5376-2E 2E 2E      ROL  $2E2E
5379- 2E 2E 2E      ROL  $2E2E
537C- 2E 2E 2E      ROL  $2E2E
537F-2E 2E 2E      ROL  $2E2E
5382- 2E 2E 2E      ROL  $2E2E
5385- 2E 2E 2E      ROL  $2E2E
538B-2E 2E 2E      ROL  $2E2E
538E- 2E 2E 2E      ROL  $2E2E
5391- 2E 2E 2E      ROL  $2E2E
5394-2E 2E 2E      ROL  $2E2E
5397- 20 20 53      JSR  $5320
```

"There's much more," says Anderson, "But that will allow you to search for it. It's easier to change these items with a sector editor than trying to enter them from the monitor."

## Unhighlight Bar When User Seeks Chat, by Andy Nicholas.

```
] BLOAD /YOURPREFIX/ACOS.OBJ,A$800
] CALL -151
B00:00 <return>
B1C:AD <return>
<CTRL-C> <return>
] BSAVE /YOURPREFIX/ACOS.OBJ,A$800,L$5000
```

## Disable CTRL-K Key, by Andy Nicholas

```
] BLOAD /YOURPREFIX/ACOS.OBJ,A$800
] CALL-151
*13D2:EA EA EA EA
*<CTRL-C> <return>
] BSAVE /YOURPREFIX/ACOS.OBJ,A$800,L$5000
```

Why would you want to do this? Maybe you have snooty friends. Or maybe you have a top-of-screen display like this (this routine would replace all of the "print #9" code in the logon.seg):

```
top.scr
text:home
print #3,chr$(45,79)
print #3,"Call: "cn$ / ";
print #3,a3$ of "a4$", "a5$ " ";
print #3,Phone: "ph$
print #3,"TC: "right$(" "+str$(tc),5)" ";
print #3,"UL: "right$(" "+str$(ul),5)" ";
print #3,"DL: "right$(" "+str$(dl),5)" ";
print #3,"BU: "right$(" "+ul$,5)" ";
print #3,"BD: "right$(" "+dl$,5)" ";
print #3,"BP: "right$(" "+str$(bp),5)" / ";
print #3,"Baud: "info(2)*300
print #3,"Access: ";
for x=1 to 34:print #3,flag(x);:next
print #3," Logon: "date$ "time$
print #3,chr$(45,79)\
poke 34,5:home
```

That routine displays some of the user's stats on three lines, between two lines of dashes. The only problem is that if you hit CTRL-K, it messes it up horribly. So, the disabling of CTRL-K is very important if you're using this mod.

# Advertise!

## What do you have that your fellow sysops might want?

Great mods? Hardware at prices that no self-respecting sysop could refuse? A bulletin board that deserves attention from other GBBS sysops?

Tell them about it, and at the same time show your support by buying an ad in Pro News, the monthly for GBBS 'Pro' sysops.

A full page is \$25; a half page, \$12.50; a quarter page, \$6.25. Other sizes available on request. Ad materials and payment are due by the first of the month.

Send to Chameleon Publishing, P.O. Box 671521, Houston, TX, 77267-1521. Or call (713) 875-9868 (data, 1200 bps), or (713) 875-9866 (voice) for more information.

# GBBS 'Pro' bulletin board systems

The following is an unofficial compilation of GBBS 'Pro' bulletin boards around the world. The majority of the list was compiled last June by Jono Smith, but it contains BBSes that have been brought to the attention of Chameleon Publishing as of Oct. 24, 1987.

System Name	Phone Number	Baud	Comments
Jersey Shore.....	(201) 223-2834	1200	PC
The Power Pack.....	(201) 297-4090	1200?	PC
Caddy Shack.....	(201) 920-2353	1200	PC SYS
The Magic Bag.....	(201) 988-9489	1200	PC SYS
AppleVenture ][.....	(202) 563-4930	1200	PC SYS
Prep's Penthouse.....	(203) 646-8250	1200	
ProDOS News.....	(203) 783-9597	2400	
The F][re House.....	(203) 869-7569	1200	SYS
Pokey's Place.....	(204) 253-1342	1200	
Infonet II.....	(204) 661-2138	1200	
NorthStar.....	(204) 661-8337	1200	
DOS.....	(204) 832-5397	2400	
SchoolNet.....	(204) 889-3584	2400	
The A.P.P.L.E. Crate.....	(206) 251-0543	1200	PC
????.....	(206) 841-3223	1200	
Capital City Micros.....	(207) 623-5380	1200	
Children's TV Workshop....	(212) 595-4588	1200	PC
The Blackboard BBS.....	(213) 212-0775	1200	PC
The Bull Board.....	(213) 473-3128	1200	PC SYS
North Texas BBS.....	(214) 221-8876	300	PC
Sydney Australia.....	(214) 241-4378	1200	PC
Tholden's Pyramid.....	(214) 250-2230	2400	PC
Grey Haven.....	(214) 262-5044	2400	PC
King Arthur's Court.....	(214) 330-4156	1200	PC
Peripherals Plus.....	(214) 424-2001	2400	PC SYS
The Dead Zone.....	(214) 522-5321	1200	PC
The Intermission.....	(214) 612-1233	1200	PC
The Thieves' Guild.....	(214) 661-2051	1200	PC
The Darkened Lantern.....	(214) 758-4215	1200	PC
Texas Trading Post.....	(214) 785-4997	1200	PC
Information Unlimited II...	(215) 250-0341	1200	PC
Phoenix Systems.....	(215) 398-4983	2400	PC
The Nuclear Escape.....	(215) 540-9811	1200	PC
Tower of High Sorcery.....	(215) 934-6274	1200	PC
No Anchovies IV.....	(216) 466-1152	2400	
Cloud Nine BBS.....	(216) 650-2989	2400	PC
The AppleTree.....	(216) 758-7617	1200	PC
After 5pm wk-24hrs wke			
Capitol Apple.....	(301) 498-8140	1200	SYS

Certified Craziness.....	(301) 549-2584	1200	SYS
The Razor's Edge.....	(301) 561-6161	2400	
The Inner World.....	(302) 323-0762	2400	
The Whole Apple.....	(302) 734-1766	1200	
Les-Com-Net.....	(303) 233-5824	1200	PC
KROX.....	(303) 322-1544	1200	PC SYS
Aces High BBS.....	(303) 329-6579	1200	PC
L & L Support.....	(303) 420-3568	2400	PC
L&L File Transfers.....	(303) 467-3839	2400	PC \$\$
APSNET.....	(303) 693-6737	2400	PC
DJ.....	(303) 789-0500	9600	PC
Dementia...	(303) 989-8470	1200	PC Denver Mensa
GEHS BBS.....	(304) 645-6437	2400	
Weirton Computer Assoc.....	(304) 797-1302	2400	
Hades.....	(305) 254-3196	2400	PC
The RainForest.....	(305) 434-4927	2400	\$ NOT PC
Pursuit Accesible!			
The Chicken Ranch....	(305) 676-3873	1200	PC SYS
Space Frontiers.....	(305) 773-1251	1200	PC SYS
Cocoa Com.....	(305) 783-6524	2400	PC
The Slice of Life.....	(309) 379-2156	2400	
Dementia.....	(309) 755-6684	1200	
AppleSider ][.....	(312) 371-1396	1200	PC
The Phoenix.....	(312) 798-9150	1200	PC
The Roger Park ABBS.....	(312) 973-2227	300	PC
Electronic Odyessy Elite...	(313) 474-5794	2400	PC
The Electronic Forum.....	(313) 396-2061	1200	PC
The Emerald Forest.....	(314) 351-3808	1200	
The Spider's Web.....	(314) 576-6232	1200	SYS
The Racket Club #1.....	(314) 725-0090	300	
Country Courthouse #1.....	(314) 725-0711	1200	
The Racket Club #2.....	(314) 725-9555	1200	
Country Courthouse #2.....	(314) 725-9600	300	
The Fourth Dimension.....	(314) 664-2850	300	
The Boiler Room.....	(317) 743-6762	1200	
MOM-<Linc>.....	(318) 387-2298	300	
Star <LINC> BBS.....	(318) 688-0522	1200	
Star <LINC> ][.....	(318) 989-8950	1200	
The Owl's Nest.....	(319) 396-6166	1200	
?????????.....	(402) 734-4748	1200	
Ascending Adventure.....	(404) 327-2327	2400	PC
The Pilot Exchange.....	(404) 669-0410	2400	PC
The Atlanta Connection....	(404) 929-0800	2400	PC
The DuckNet BBS.....	(405) 355-9678	2400	
Polis.....	(405) 366-7538	2400	
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Codes:

\$ = Fee Required

PC = PC Pursuit Accesible

SYS = Un-official GBBS Support Board

Wk = Weekdays

Wke = Weekends

# Mini-mods!

## Set user levels

Jan Porter, sysop of P+, wrote a mod so he could simply enter the LEVEL that he wanted to set for a user in the system.seg. He got tired of scrolling through EVERY level with the "?" option.

### SYSTEM.SEG

```
ed.pass2
; add the next line among the "keychecks"
  if a$="/" goto ed.pass7

; add the following new labels
ed.pass7
  open #1,"b:data2"
ed.pass8
  input @2 \ "Set Level #:"a$:if a$="" close #1:goto
  ed.pass2
  x=val(a$):if (x<1) or (x>34) print \ "Levels 1-34":goto
  ed.pass8
  position #1,32,x:input #1,a$:if a$="" then
  a$="Undefined level"
  print \a$" set":flag(x)=1
  goto ed.pass8
```

(EDITOR'S NOTE: in the second-to-last line, you might want to make flag(x)=(flag(x)=0). That way, it will turn a flag either on or off.)

## Sysop status: In or Out?

Steve Freitas wrote a simple modification that allows you to display the status of the sysop -- whether you're IN or OUT. The PEEKed memory location finds the status of the open-apple key (paddle button 0). To signal that the sysop is IN, just leave it alone. To signal OUT, tape the key down or wedge it in (a ball-point pen cap works for me....). For this to work on an Apple II+, you must have a switch hooked up to the button 0 port or have a joystick hooked up.

### check.me

```
if peek(-16287)>127 then th$="OUT":else th$="IN"
print "The sysop is ["th$"]"
```

(EDITOR'S NOTE: If you can think of a use for it, you may check the closed-apple key (paddle button 1) with peek(-16286). If the button is pushed, the value will be more than 127, just as with the open-apple key.)

## OOPS! Trace/Chain errata

The trace/chain mod in September 1987 Pro News had an error in it. In the second column, the label show5a should read as follows:

### show5a

```
b=a:gosub post:a=b
if xy=1 then a=aa:aa=0:return
goto show2
```

## What DAY is it? Ask your H.O.

Joe Prinz wrote this mod, which computes the day of the week on an Applied Engineering Timemaster II H.O. clock card. He stresses that it has ONLY been tested on the Timemaster II H.O.

Use this routine on logon or wherever you need the day of the week in your system. The first part of the modification also sets up the month in a word, rather than a number.

```
; d1=month, d2=day, d3=year, d8$=month,
; da=timemaster's numerical designation of day of the
; week, wd$=weekday, hl$=holiday, dq$=final string
; with your day or the week et al.
```

### find.day

```
d1=val(left$(date$,2))
d2=val(mid$(date$,4,2))
d3=val(right$(date$,2))
if d1=1 d8$="Jan."
if d1=2 d8$="Feb."
if d1=3 d8$="March"
if d1=4 d8$="April"
if d1=5 d8$="May"
if d1=6 d8$="June"
if d1=7 d8$="July"
if d1=8 d8$="Aug."
if d1=9 d8$="Sept."
if d1=10 d8$="Oct."
if d1=11 d8$="Nov."
if d1=12 d8$="Dec."
```

### read.clock

```
poke -16191,0:poke -16189,0:poke -16192,0:poke
-16190,255
poke -16191,4:poke -16189,4
poke -16190,16
poke -16190,54:da=peek(-16192)-240
poke -16190,47
```

### get.day

```
if da=0 wd$="Sunday"
if da=1 wd$="Monday"
if da=2 wd$="Tuesday"
if da=3 wd$="Wednesday"
if da=4 wd$="Thursday"
if da=5 wd$="Friday"
if da=6 wd$="Saturday"
```

; The next section sets special days; add events as needed.  
; The one below is an example.

### set.spec

```
if d1=12 and d2=25 hl$="Christmas Day"
```

### set.info

```
dq$="":dq$=wd$+", "+d8$+" "+str$(d2)+", "+str$(d3)
if hl$<>"" then dq$=dq$+": "hl$
```

# Highlights:

Continued from page 2

modem with the following string to make it work:  
AT&FM0&C1&D2&W

In response to a customer suggestion, the First Word Mall is now available to non-validated users, meaning no validation call is needed to peruse the First Word listings or to order. The Mall contains descriptions of all GBBS Pro offerings from First Word, listings of all the individual programs in the CommSoft libraries, and a complete list of peripheral products.

Europa also recently added the new Ymodem drivers that allow batch up- and downloading.

## Chameleon: (713) 875-9868

The dead power supply on the hard drive has not stopped me from putting up my GBBS sysop support sub-board, but there's no file transfer section, so there's not too much going on.

## Correspondence:

Russell Johnson, sysop of the Owl's Nest, (319) 396-6166, wrote to say that anyone having trouble with a user's daily time online not being reset after midnight, should

find the label term2, and the line:

```
byte(7)=(byte(7)+clock(1)/60))
```

and then add the next line:

```
if left$(cm$,8)<date$ then byte(7)=0
```

That will check the logon date with the current date and set the time back to zero if the dates are different.

If you would like your BBS to be included in this roundup but you are either non PC Pursuitable or not on my regular calling list, just drop me a line with a summary of the discussion on your GBBS 'Pro' sub-board. You may either mail it to Chameleon Publishing, P.O. Box 671521, Houston, TX 77267-1521, or if it's less than 4K, drop by Chameleon BBS, (713) 875-9868, 300/1200, accessible via PC Pursuit, and leave it to me in Email.

This is not a snob system; I just don't have time to call all of the GBBS systems I'd like to call, nor do I have time to summarize all of the discussions. So don't be shy. If there's something interesting happening on your BBS, or if you have an interesting modification that you want to tout, just drop me a line. I'll be glad to include it.

PLEASE don't bother to send me summaries of "wars" or "bashing sessions." I'm interested in helpful, interesting discussion of problems that could help other sysops write better code or solve other system problems.

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# What have you been missing in Pro News?

## April:

**Page 1:** The birth of Pro News; the release of GBBS 'Pro' v1.3 and instructions for upgrading.

**Sysop of the Month:** Steve Schneider of the RainForest BBS.

**Columns:** Lance Taylor-Warren's official policy on technical support for GBBS 'Pro'; cry of a sysop's spouse.

## May:

**Page 1:** A bug list for the early versions of GBBS 'Pro' v1.3, including a chart that was accidentally left out of the manual.

**Sysop of the Month:** Ron Gabbert of The Apple Pack.

**Columns:** Mike Golaszewski on the mystery of the message files; Stephanie McGrath on responses to the April subscriber questionnaire.

**Mod of the Month:** Steve Schneider's "Change # of New Messages" routine.

## June:

**Page 1:** "Making users buy lunch": assessing bulletin board fees.

**Columns:** Mike Golaszewski on YModem; Steve Freitas on packing programs.

**Special:** Part one of Jono Smith's June 16 compilation of the GBBS list.

## July:

**Page 1:** Using the clock(x) commands.

**Mod of the Month:** Steve Schneider's "Direct Backscan" mod and documentation.

**Column:** Stephanie McGrath on GBBS pirates.

**Special:** Part two of Jono Smith's June 16 compilation of the GBBS list.

## August:

**Page 1:** Part 1 of Joe Abernathy's discussion of multiporting with GBBS.

**Mod of the Month:** Steve Schneider's Backup segment (backs up important data files).

**Column:** Frank Capo on being a small-town sysop.

**Special:** A hilarious advertisement for Schneider's BBS.

## September:

**Page 1:** Part 2 of Abernathy's multiporting discussion.

**Mod of the Month:** Stephanie McGrath's extremely long trace/chain mod for v1.3: gives GBBS one of RBBS's greatest features.

## October:

**Page 1:** A discussion of the GBBS back door, including Lance Taylor-Warren's assurance that there isn't one.

**Mod of the Month:** Steve Schneider's "Save Message-in-Progress If Carrier is Lost" mod.

**Columns:** Jan Porter on charging for software upgrades; Stephanie McGrath on the ethics of writing about GBBS "back doors."

## Plus:

Every issue contains highlights of a month's posts from 'Pro' support boards such as L&L, The Apple Pack, P+, and Cottontail Ranch, as space permits.

They also contain advertisements from companies that support GBBS through software or hardware sales.

**Yes!** Send me a year of Pro News! U.S. subscriptions are \$12 a year; Canadian, \$14; other foreign, \$20. All must be in U.S. dollars, and foreign checks must be payable to a U.S. bank.

I also missed the back issues circled below. Enclosed is \$1.50 for each.

**April May June July Aug. Sept. Oct.**

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## Rainer Mueller

# They complained, but paid to BBS

I know it's a tough pill to swallow, but pay bulletin board systems are a sign of the times, and they're here to stay.

I paid \$100 for GBBS 'Pro' originally, plus I don't know how much more for several upgrades (I'm on my sixth version of GBBS). Add to that the price of several extremely well-written game modules, the price of long-distance time to connect to the "mother board," not to mention the one-megabyte ram card, 800K drive, 20-megabyte hard drive and faster modem, and you realize I have quite a bit of money involved in my system.

There is no other hobby where anyone would invest \$4,000 and then just let others use it. It's almost like having the ultimate stereo system and then having strangers demand that you get their favorite albums so they can listen at their leisure. And if something breaks, well, you'd just better fix it fast if you expect them to return.

No one wants to be treated badly.

My original BBS was created because I felt I could do a better job with better software, better hardware and more dedication than the vast majority of sysops in my immediate calling area.

Access was free, and handles were allowed, but nine months later, after several unpleasanties, handles were abandoned in favor of real names. Many users vehemently complained.

Six months later, I decided I had invested too much money and time to give it all away for free. At the time, Mainstreet Data had 200 active users. I had hoped that at least a quarter of them would be willing to pay \$10 per year for online membership. I was too optimistic. In reality, fewer than 20 users sent in their money before the conversion date.

Many figured Mainstreet Data would die on the vine. It hasn't; it has flourished.

The marketplace -- that is, the users -- determines which systems will live or die. If you have a system that users are willing to support, they are likely to support it with their wallets as well as their calls.

The key is to be professional, dedicated and innovative.

Because of the high quality I attempt to maintain on my system, many former users began to realize that they really missed the board. Within a month, the "quality

See Users, Page 12

## Andy Nicholas

# SuperTac: fact is, it's a good deal

**To: Everyone who thinks buying SuperTac is a raw deal**

I have a contract with Lance Taylor-Warren that says I would write the GS Port drivers; the GS clock drivers; and external files capable of handling six protocols, including Xmodem checksum, ProDOS Xmodem, CRC Standard, ProDOS CRC, Standard Ymodem and ProDOS Ymodem (tic-style).

That's all. However, I saw that the protocol files I was writing would do no good unless there was a transfer section included, and I was writing SuperTac 3.0 at the time, so I decided to "give" SuperTac to him. The only reason Lance is charging anything for that program is to recoup the money he paid me for writing the drivers. Otherwise, the drivers would not have been written, and SuperTac 3.0/3.2 would not exist. If he wants to charge for the product, he has every right to do so, since he paid me to develop it.

For those of you who are thick-headed, I have already stated that SuperTac 2.2 and below are freeware. Give them away, destroy them, I don't care, as long as it's something meaningful to yourself!

SuperTac 3.0 and 3.2 are both copyrighted by L&L Productions. SuperTac 3.0 was a fluke, and I hope it never happens again. Also, it's not like Lance is going to come after people running 3.0 without paying the \$10; he doesn't have that much time or energy. If you want to run it, it's your business, just don't expect support for the product. If you want support, pay the upgrade fee, and you'll get it.

I just get a little ticked off when I get jumped on for giving away something I wrote, that's all. If you don't want SuperTac, then just don't buy it. Simple as that.

Version numbers. SuperTac is numbered sequentially from 1.0 through 3.2, though the most common freeware versions are 2.0 through 2.2. From 2.2 we went straight to 3.0, which was accidentally distributed, and to 3.2, which Lance OWNS.

I am sick and tired of trying to do good for the GBBS community and getting slapped in the face for it. For a year-and-a-half, I wrote SuperTac, received no remuneration for my work, modified countless external files, ended up writing my own external files from scratch, and

See Credibility, Page 12

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# Support your fellow 'Pro' sysops this holiday season!

Continued from page 1

• **Hardware**, software, cables and assorted other necessities of GBBS life. Not to mention GBBS itself....

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- **Hardware**, such as Applied Engineering products, and software, too.

(Chet Day of "Shem The Penman Software" tells me that his products, A Day at the Morgue and One Bug Too Many, are no longer being sold, but are being distributed as shareware.)

In addition, several GBBS Pro sysops sell hardware, software, disks and anything else you might need for your Apple system. Patronize your fellow sysops!

Here are a few:

- **Arbuckle Computer Supply**, 3613 Arbuckle Dr., Plano, TX., 75075. (214) 867-8724 (voice).
- **CAJS Computing Corp.**, 2269 Chestnut St., Suite 230, San Francisco, CA., 94123. (415) 567-0217 (voice).
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- **Sunshine Computer Products**, P.O. Box 720, Sykesville, Md., 21784-5935. (301) 549-2693 (voice), (301) 549-2584 (data).

## Users investing in a BBS take more pride in it

Continued from page 11

core" of my free system paid their membership fees and returned, some with more bitching and moaning than others.

I do not advertise my system on other boards; I rely strictly on word-of-mouth (or word-of-modem). But I do periodically send out press releases when something of importance comes up. It has paid off. Mainstreet Data has been written up in area newspapers and was a major part of a feature story about bulletin board systems in our local daily newspaper. Mainstreet Data was the only membership system featured; six months after the article came out, we are the only system still online.

The \$10 membership fee in itself is almost insignificant. Yet it "buys" a certificate, a bound system manual, and 3 hours of daily connect time (though the statistical average call is 20 minutes). But the \$10 does something to the users. The quality of posts and uploads is excellent. These people like their system, and because they have invested in it, they take pride in it.

I average one new paid member per week, and I don't get rich off that.

But it sure helps my attitude.

••••

*Rainer Mueller is sysop of Mainstreet Data, (619) 439-6624., in Oceanside, Calif.*

## Credibility of SuperTac higher with "blessing"

Continued from page 11

subsequently evolved it into version 3.2, where we are today.

I wrote things for free because I felt that the GBBS community could profit from it (in other ways than \$\$\$). I am still doing this, as with the public releasing of source code to little things I wrote long ago (like the directory-creation routine, which I built into the new copy of xdos).

I received no monetary reimbursement from the sale of SuperTac, nor do I want any. The only reason I gave it to Lance was because I thought it would do more good for GBBS sysops if it were an actual part of the GBBS package, as it will be in GBBS v1.3k.

Another reason I gave Lance SuperTac was because I felt that it is not only a very good product, but that other people would like to get a chance to use it. The only way to do that with a shade of credibility was just to give it to Lance and let him do with it as he pleased.

I did, he did, and the rest is history. Can we just let the rest of it be, and get back to the business at hand: the imminent appearance of Pro/Link, in which I hope I'll have a hand?

••••

*Andy Nicholas is author of SuperTac.*