1984, JOIN THE PARTY OF YOUR CHOICE!

by Cheshire Catalyst

Brave New Conference

The "Brave New Con" is being set up in the mold of a "science fiction convention". An "SF Con" is basicly a weekend-long excuse for a party, with speakers and other program items. It is being held from 1984 January 13-15. It will be held at the Sheraton International Conference Center in Reston Virginia, about 30 miles outside of Washington DC, and free transportation from Dulles airport for guests. The Sheraton Hotel Directory at your local Sheraton should have a map for finding it. Rooms are $46 a night for a single, double, triple, or Quad. Bring your friends and save a bundle!

I've been asked to put on the computer games exhibit, and with help from the New York Metro area software pirate, Dragon Lady, we'll be setting up our Apple computers with a number of really neat games. Any one bringing their own computer to let people play games on, well, we'd have to make a copy of the games to run on your machine, now wouldn't we?

Brave New Con begins Friday morning and lasts untill Sunday afternoon. About a third of the conference will be on the convention's theme, drawing from Orwell's 1984. The rest will range from a look at the space program from a different perspective, to cartooning, to how tough it is to run a good convention. Oh yes... There will also be parties. The film program will include science fiction classics in 16mm, and laserdisk video of almost anything that's legally available. Wargaming (the board game variety, not movie style) will be available as well.

Convention registration is $12 at the door. Dragon Lady and I will be hosting a party on Saturday evening, and I'll be dragging along some full "bricks" of all the back issues. Anyone wanting to purchase a full set of all the back issues from issue 1 (June 1971!) should drop me a postcard to let me know how many "bricks" to drag along. They're fifty bucks a piece.

The New Year's Eve party I had planned back in March of '83, "1984 - The Party" died for lack of interest, but not before I had gone out to get membership cards printed so people could be Card Carrying Members of The Party (1984 style). Anyone showing up at our party in Reston will get one of these souvineer keepsakes.

And for the Europeans who can't make it:

Euro-Party '84

After reading an interview with an American computer hacker in the 1983 November 14 issue of Der Spiegle magazine, the Leuro Seminars company of Munich got in touch with the hacker and asked him if he would like to lecture at their 2 day seminar on Computer Crime in Munich in March. "Sure," I said, "but can you get me literature about your company by this Friday?" "Why Friday?" they asked. I replied, "Because on Saturday I am being interviewed by West German television for their documentary on 'Computers in America' to be aired in Germany on 1984 March 28th."

With that, they got me the liturature by Friday, and changed the dates of the seminar to use the airplay for publicity. As a result, I'll be spending Saturday, 1984 April 7th at the Frankfurt Airport Sheraton. I'm hoping to get ahold of some of the films that were entered into the Telecom '83 Golden Antenna Awards to show on Saturday Afternoon.

If anyone would care to join me for this 16mm party, please drop me a post card so I have some idea of how big a room to rent. In the mail we've gotten since the Der Spiegle article was published, alot of the people have asked how they can get together with others in their area. Well, we don't give out people's addresses, even to other subscribers, so here's your chance to get together with others that just want to meet and discuss out-of-the-ordinary subjects. Please make your own reservations with the Hotel if you plan to stay overnight. Mention you're with the TAP group, and it may get you a reduced rate. I'm negotiating with them via telex as I go to deadline.

Frankfurt was chosen because it has the best airline connections in that part of Europe. The hotel was chosen for its good parking for drivers, and train connections between Frankfurt and the Airport. Latest intelligence reports also indicate that it has an indoor pool (which just may have influenced the decision a bit. The pool party will be Sunday afternoon). Attendees will be asked to contribute US$10 (or equivalent) per person to help defray costs in setting this up.

As at Brave New Con above, if you'd like a complete set of back issues, let me know, and I'll bring along as many "Bricks" as I get requests. They weigh about half a kilo, so I only want to bring as many as I have requests for. See you in April!!

TAP

The Hobbyist's Newsletter for the Communications Revolution

December 1983 Issue 89

EXCHANGE SCANNING (99XX)

Almost every exchange in the Bell System has test #'s and other "goodies" such as loops with with dial-ups.

These "goodies" are usually found between 9900 and 9999 in your local exchange. If you have the time and initiative, scan your exchange and you may become lucky!

Here are my findings in the 914-268 exchange:

9901 - Verification (recording of a/c and exchange)
9927 - Osc. tone (possible tone side of a loop)
9936 - Voice # to the Telco central office
9937 - Voice # to the Telco central office
9941 - Computer (digital voice transmission?)
9960 - Osc. tone (tone side loop) -- may also be a computer in some exchanges
9961 - No response (other end of loop?)
9962 - No response (other end of loop?)
9963 - No response (other end of loop?)
9966 - Computer (see 9941)
9968 - Tone that disappears--responds to certain touch-tone keys

Most of the numbers between 9900 & 9999 will ring, go to a "what #, please?" operator, or will go to "you have reached a non-working..." # recording.

What you find depends upon the switching equipment in the exchange and the Telco operating company.

Since I have done the above 914-268-99XX scan, Rangers (269) has installed new switching equipment (DMS100). Some of the numbers are the same, but I have noticed that on the DMS100, the recordings are also stored in this area. 268-9903, 9906, 9909, & 9912 are all different recordings. Also, there are 2 fortress fone recordings at 268-9911 (deposit 5 cents or else) and 268-9913 (deposit 10 cents).

In some areas (like Delaware) , I have noticed that 9906-7 is ringback. If you find anything interesting, be sure to drop TAP a line.

Have phun and remember it's only a local call to see what your CO has in store for you!

I.C.B.S.

*****BUSY
****Accept
****ring

ANNEE MONDIALE DES COMMUNICATIONS
WORLD COMMUNICATIONS YEAR
AÑO MUNDIAL DE LAS COMUNICACIONES
1983

Getting Sprint Numbers

Many times it is a good idea to have a few Sprint or MCI numbers in case your regular (stolen) account gives out. There are several methods to getting free accounts, each having a different degree of difficulty and risk.

The most simple is to hook a recorder to the ear-piece of your telephone (which is illegal by the way IF you own (rent) a Bell fone) and call up your local common carrier and listen for cross-talk. If it is a good night than you can hear the other party perfectly (but they can't hear you) and after they hang up stay on the line (this is accomplished by hitting a digit to stop the tone and then pushing reset (# or *) before the system dumps you) and you will hear the next caller enter his access and destination numbers. Make a tape of as many of these as possible on a good tape recorder such as a tape deck. This method counts on luck somwhat since strong cross-talk isn't always availible.

Another method is to put a tap on the line of a subscriber, but this is rather tedious. However if you know where your local common carier office is then you can put a tap on one of their incoming lines. It would be a good idea to put a cycling one mineut timer on the recorder, since your tape would get all "clogged up" from the talk between two callers. This method can also be used to get calling card numbers by tapping calling card phones. Who knows you might even get a WATS extender or two in the proccess !

Once you get the recordings you must translate them into numbers. I have included a schematic diagram for a PLL tone recognition device, ready for your immediate use, misuse and abuse. The outputs can be wired to LEDs or other output devices such as a computer.

If you don't (or can't) make one, you can still use the numbers you have aquired. Just retape the first 6 or 8 digits onto another tape and then play it to the net after you have dialed them up. Then put in your destination number and away you go.

RS-232, GETTING THE "STANARD INTERFACE" TO WORK

by Cheshire Catalyst

Every computer on the market these days is "RS-232" compatible. Well, just what the fuck is RS-232, and why is it such hot shit? The RS in RS-232 stands for Reccomended Standard (original aren't they). The RS series of standards is promulgated by the EIA (Electronic Industry Association).

ANSI (American National Standards Institute) has a standard called ASCII (American Standard Code for Information Interchange). ASCII is a standard method for representing the letters and numbers, the characters, that make up the English language. The method for transmitting ASCII characters through modems over telephone lines, is to put the data out an RS-232 port to the modem, which sends the data over the phone line. At the other end, the data comes in from the phone line, and the modem passes the data through an RS-232 port into the recieving data device.

A serial interface is a connection that allows computer devices to communicate with each other one bit at a time. Therefore, you only need one line for data to go up, and one line for data to come back down. However, like a light bulb, electricity can't flow without a return path. With the RS-232 standard connection, a common "ground" is used so that only three wires are necessary for data to flow.

The standard says there are two sides to the connection. The DTE (Data Terminal Equipment) and the DCE (Data Computer Equipment). The main thing to remember is that things are kept track of from the Data Terminal Equipment side of the house. Therefore, when Pin 2 says it is Transmitted Data, it is sent from the Terminal to the Computer (DTE to DCE). When pin 3 is described as Recieved Data, it is recieved by the DTE (DCE to DTE). Pin 7 is the only other pin that NEEDS to be connected to make communications possible. That's the line called Signal Ground. The RS-232 standard mentions what voltage levels go through the pins, and sets up what goes over the 22 other pins, but for most purposes, connecting these three pins will be all you need to do.

But what happens when you do that, and it doesn't work? The first thing to do is to reverse pins 2 & 3. Some terminals (VT-100, for instance) think they are such whoppe-do stuff, that they have their connectors hooked up as DCE. In this case, a "null-modem" is used to do nothing but have a connector in the middle that will swap pins 2 & 3. If you tried swapping them and it still doesn't work, there is one more sure fire thing to do.

When hooking up your terminal to a modem or computer (or hooking up your home computer to act as a terminal with a modem or mainframe computer), some of these modems are obnoxious enough to want to see a signal on pin 20 which is called Data Terminal Ready. Most dumb terminals (and many home computers) are made so cheaply, that they don't have these signals on their connectors. The only thing you can do is a hardware hack that will "fool" the DCE into thinking that it has a DTR signal. If the device is obnoxious enough to want DTR, it will be snooty enough to supply a signal called Data Set Ready (DSR) on pin 6. If you run a wire from pin 6 to pin 20 on the connector that gets plugged into the modem or computer, it will "see" its own signal, thinking it came from the terminal device. It should then happily crunch away (if your pins 2 & 3 are connected back the right way).

One happy little device is called "The Break Out Box". You plug one end into your terminal, and the other end gets the cable that would have been plugged into your terminal, and you get to throw a switch for each of the 25 pins on the connector. If you need to swap 2 & 3, you throw the switches so the signal can't get through, and then take a patch wire from pin 2 on one side to pin three on the other, again for the other connection, and there you have it neat and clean. Then if you need to patch 6 & 20 together, you just plug in the wire! Unfortunately, you can't find a good break out box for less than a hundred bucks. One good source for this sort of stuff is The Black Box Company, PO Box 12800, Pittsburg PA, 15241. Write them for catalog.

HOW (& WHY) I TESTIFIED ON BEHALF OF PA BELL

by Cheshire Catalyst

The New York Telephone Company is about to split area code 212 into two regions. Manhattan and the Bronx will remain area 212, and Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island (herein refered to as "The Other Boroughs" (ya had to be there)) will become the geographical representations of area code 718.

While this is being done for purely technical reasons (like they're running out of exchanges), the New York State Public Service Commission decided that Public Statement Hearings would be held. This would allow the public to voice their opinions on the matter, but have no effect on the outcome. The date came for the Hearing, and political pressure was making itself manifest already. There had been a decision to hold Public Statement Hearings in The Other Boroughs as well, mostly on the "request" of Hizzoner Mayor Koch, and the Borough Presidents of the affected boroughs. I didn't make it to the circuses in The Other Boroughs, but I made it to the one at the PSC Hearing room at the World Trade Center.

I had tried to get a friend of mine from the Telecom Library (a great mail-order book store, write for a catalog at 205 W 19 St 9th-flr, New York City 10011, and tell 'em Cheshire sent you) to testify instead, but he was too busy. I didn't want to testify myself, because being as close to the newsletter as I am, I try to shy away from places with lots of legitimate press representatives. Besides, if they ever shut us down, there will be a bunch of new knowledgeable Consumer Advocates hanging out in the halls of the PSC come rate hearing time, and it's a card I'd prefer to hold out. But no one wanted to do it, and no one else who had the time had my expertise of bringing it off in the hearing room. This kind of opportunity comes by only once in twenty years, however, and I wasn't about to let it pass by.

I put on the pair of "Clark Kent" glasses I keep around for just such emergencies, and as a mild mannered Computer Communications Consultant from the Upper West Side, I went in and testified on behalf of The Phone Company. That's right, in favor of the split. After all, it is a technical consideration they want this for, and we are certainly in favor of the technological expansion of The Network.

And besides, most of my calls to Brooklyn and Queens are done by my computer, or autodialer. The four extra digits (1+718) won't mean much to me. However, I did mention that the extra four digits will probably be an inconvienience to the little old ladies and gentlemen, and their civic organizations that were represented in the hearing room. One other thing I mentioned as well.

It was twenty years ago at the New York World's Fair when my parents dragged me around Flushing Meadows in Queens. I specifically recalled one Bell System exhibit that asked me to dial my home phone number in Upstate New York (including the area code) on the rotary dial while it timed me. Then, it timed me while I punched in the same number. As unfamiliar as I was then with Touch Tone(tm), my dialing time was cut in less than half.

Therefore, with de-regulation comming in a few short months, shouldn't The Phone Company remove the extra charges for Touch Tone service in exchange for permission to split the area code? After all, it has been twenty years since Touch Tone was introduced. Surely all exchanges could by now be converted to TT with very little hassle.

Also the fact that providing Touch Tone cuts other costs for The Phone Company. Not to mention the fact that customers would soon have to provide their own equipment, therefore the customer could then decide whether to pay the premium price that touch tone still exacts in the marketplace, although tone equipped telephones are cheaper to produce than pulse diallers.

Since the central office incoming registers that accept dialled digits from home telephones will have to be replaced with ones that determine how to switch the call after seeing 6 digits instead of 3, surely the extra cost of a few more chips cannot significantly increase the already staggerring price The Phone Company claims the conversion will cost. Previously, if the register saw "1+", it knew the folowing digits were an area code, and it would look at the next three digits to determine which toll office to route the call to. Now when the incoming register sees "1+", it must determine whether the call is local enough to go via local circuits, or be routed through the long distance network. Therefore, it must look at the first six digits that are dialed before making a determination. instead of looking at the first 3 digits to determine if the call is only going to Westchester to the North, or Long Island to the East.

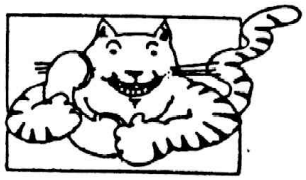
Well, the Adminstrative Law Judge in charge of the proceedings made a note, and invited me to come back the following week for the evidentialry hearings when it would be possible to ask questions of the New York Telephone expert witnesses.

There are times when the years of phone hacking, and digging around in dark and dusty library corners all seem worthwhile, such as when you have a Phone Company lawyer squirming in his seat as you begin your questioning. The Telco engineers were good, and knew their shit.

When I asked the engineer whether, as I claimed in my previous testimony, that Touch Tone was cheaper for The Phone Company to provide, The lawyer was up like a shot claiming that this was not a rate case, and therefore the question was immaterial to this proceeding. I tried a few other rather transparent questions along the same lines, and got shot down the same way each time. When I asked the engineer, "Is it true that Touch Tone is more convienient to use than rotary dials?", like a good boy, he looked to the lawyer first, looked quizical, and finally answered "I think so, Yes."

One question I couldn't get answered regarded the amount of money spent by The Phone Company when 714 split in Southern California, and 713 split in Texas. The "Not a Rate Case" argument was used, and the Judge had to admit the Bell Flack was right, so she had to uphold the objection. These folks are claiming it's going to cost $30 a line to change all the lines in New York City, when I know damn well they are only going to change the registers. Oh well, as the saying goes, The Phone Company doesn't care, they don't have to.

I doubt if anything will come of this, and of course, this is only a local problem here in New York City, but it was a fun experience for me. The best part of all was spending part of the next day bringing the Assistant State Attorney General up to speed on the goings on of Telephone Regulation (I had loaned him my copy of Notes on the Network overnight). Oh well, when you're unemployed you have nothing better to do with your time. And there's a rate case coming up next month.



VENDING MACHINE KEYS

by The Pyro

This worked for a friend of mine at scool (I would never do anything like this) it got him over $900 in one day.
Here's how to do it:

On almost all vending machines they have those damn round almost unpickable locks on them so:

When no one is looking quickly press a piece of AIR-HARDENING clay into the lock. (Press hard enough to get a good impression.)

Remove the clay carefully and let it dry for however long the clay has to dry for as specified on the package.

You now have a key to fit that lock,
(this type of 'key' can be easily crushed if you're seen. But if you're smart you won't though)

Have Phun!!

DEPARTMENT STORE FUN

by Agent 191

Many of the department stores in my area use a large plastic device stapled to clothing as a security precaution. Several years ago, an adventurous friend of mine got ahold of one of these somehow, and we took it apart. Inside was a heavy paper strip laminated to aluminum foil (?). As I recall, this paper strip was about half an inch wide and 3-1/2 inches long. When this device got close to a pillar or column at the exits of a store, an alarm would sound.

My friend put this paper in his wallet, and we had a lot of fun wandering in and out of various stores at a local shopping center. We would enter when a group of people would enter, or exit with several other shoppers all together. When we wntered a local Sears in the shopping center in the main corridor of the indoor mall, a loud bell rang. A family with kids was just leaving. The nearest clerk ran out the entrance to look at everyone standing around. A plain clothes security guy appeared out of nowhere. Everyone had a good time. The next store we went in was also packed with people and the Manager (?) got paranoid when the alarm went off. If you move about discreetly and don't wear a jacket or a coat, you can liven up the busiest of stores. But don't go into an empty store with one of these in your wallet. That's a no-no.

Could you please secure a quantity of these paper strips and send them out with your next issue? Or offer them for sale? They can be great fun, especially in a Xmas shopping mob. The one we had came un-laminated and wouldn't work any more. This might be a great money maker for TAP. You may even want to devote an entire issue to this neat gadget. These strips could be left inside candy wrappers and in the bottom of a Coke cup and placed near these detector columns or pillars. Put one in a plant near a pillar. The uses and fun could be endless. The ringing of the alarm could also be endless. A good senior class project would be to freak out every alarm in every store so equipped, at 2 p.m. some Saturday afternoon when the shopping mall is really packed.

Please have your security committee go to work on getting a couple million of these things so that everyone can have several. It's more fun than going to the movies.

Dear Friends:

At this, the end of my first year getting TAP, please renew me and possibly help with a coupla questions.

I want to make someone believe their phone is working when I know it won't be. Is there a dial-tone generator? Does anybody have the circuit?

Secondly, you know the access keys those big copiers need when their use is to be limited? They're about 4x3x1 inches and have a counter. Does anybody have the circuit? Can I just jump the pins? I haven't been able to try unnoticeably. SEE ISSUE 39.

Regarding the money-drawer alarms described in one of the last issues (these are contact switches through which the bottom bill is passed): banks have them in no lower a drawer than the 20's. A way to heist a drive-in teller (even video-operated ones) is to have a friend pull up in a cab with you in back. Threaten to kill the cabby unless the teller sends out all the tens and twenties, period. Chances are they won't have a drawer alarm and it'll be fast.

You can scam a cheap rate in Asian hotels by asking for an Embassy discount when you make your reservation. This can be done from the airport when you arrive. You might even get a car sent. The Nana Hotel in Bangkok is a great one. When commuting around the Third World, lay Playboys in your suitcase where they'll be the first things Customs will see. They will accept them as "gifts" and promptly return to you your luggage and any sensitive material inside.

Want free SCUBA gear? Sign up for a class where the student must pick up the gear for the pool sessions. Never go back.

T A P
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"Middle East? Hell, no, I'm calling the Dial-a-Porn Hotline!"