



International QL Report

September/October 1991

Published by SeaCoast Services

Published 4 - 6 times per year

Volume I, Number 3

\$3.00

EDITORIAL

NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND, USA - THE EDITORIAL STAFF

As Fall approaches, many QLer's are returning from vacations, others are stowing away the garden tools and lawn furniture, while others return to school. September ushers in the beginning of the computing season, and an exciting one it promises to be. So much is going on, you'd never know the QL is out of production. See the QLAW, UPDATE, and CONTINUING RUMORS columns, for a shot of adrenaline.

In celebration of people returning to their QLs, we have produced a larger than normal issue. In the last few months, the outpouring of support and encouragement has come from many individuals and user groups/clubs worldwide. Many have endorsed the IQLR in their newsletters and magazines.

A special THANK YOU to Frank Davis and UPDATE MAGAZINE, who from the beginning, encouraged and supported IQLR.

Now that we have three issues of IQLR under our belt we would like to share our Editorial policy with you. It is our intention to concentrate on spotlighting those products or group efforts that we feel will significantly enhance the QL and/or extend it's life expectancy. You may feel that a new product is too expensive or in excess of your needs and some group projects won't be successful, however the energy generated by these efforts, creates interest, frequently results in spinoff products and generally results in benefiting the QL community as a whole and therefore is worth supporting.

The first disk of German Public Domain software is being translated into English, with more to follow. Manuel Quintero did a fantastic job of providing the Spanish equivalents for the approximately 200 words listed in IQLR-2 that will form the basis of a multi-lingual International QL Computer Glossary. We still need translators. Please let us know if you would like to help.

PUBLIC DOMAIN SOFTWARE LIBRARY

We have recently acquired the public domain "C-68 COMPILER" from Dave Walker of the UK. It comes on seven disks which include not only the executable compiler, linker, library and tutorial, but also the the source code and extensive documentation. The tutorial is excellent, requires no prior knowledge of "C" and covers C programming as well as the operation of the compiler. Many example programs are included. We can supply the C-68 Compiler on 720K (1440 sector) disks, in 3 1/2" or 5 1/4" format. The price is \$15.00 (including the price of disks and a small copying fee) plus \$3.00 shipping and handling.

Order direct from IQLR. This is the first of what we hope will be many offerings of high quality public domain software.

Dave included with the documentation, a history of the C-68 Compiler. This started as a product offered by PDQL as PDQ C. Although listed in PDQL ads appearing in "QL World", it was never ready for distribution. Jeremy Allison the author, was unconvinced that PDQL had obtained the distribution rights for Lattice C, which is copyrighted and so, rightly refused to turn over the code. Jeremy then decided to strip all the Lattice C dependencies from his work, find existing alternatives that could be included or modified for the QL and place it all in the public domain. In this he succeeded admirably and as most of the C-68 system is UNIX based it is very transportable.

IQLR BUYER'S REGISTRY

Since our last issue Rob Martin of Gainesville, Florida organized and spearheaded a group buy of Miracle System's Gold Card. A discount of 27% was agreed to by Miracle for a purchase of five or more units. Even though the response was overwhelming, it took a lot of work on Rob's part as well as a considerable number of long-distance calls, not only to potential buyers but also to Miracle Systems in the U.K. Fourteen people took advantage of this tremendous opportunity and have expressed a desire to participate in future purchases.

During this process it became evident that a better way was needed to bring interested buyers together quickly in order to take advantage of these opportunities while at the same time reduce to a minimum the out of pocket expenses of the person coordinating the buy.

To this end, we have decided to establish a "IQLR BUYER'S REGISTRY" for those of you that would like to be notified of impending group buys. The fee for this service will be \$3.00 per year which will cover the administrative cost of notification of registered members by post card.

If you feel this service would interest you, then please provide the following information:

- (1) Your name, address, and telephone numbers (day/evening).
- (2) Indicate whether you would accept a Collect Call from IQLR.
- (3) If item (2) above is no, then a postcard will be sent to you with a brief description of the buy, plus the telephone number of the organizer.

There are currently two group buys in the planning stages. The first is for the KEYBOARD-90 Interface and a second for the new MINERVA ROM board. At the current pace of development throughout the QL world we anticipate there will be other buys in progress before our next issue. Why not join today ???

JOCHEN MERZ SOFTWARE

DUISBERG, GERMANY

Jochen Merz now accepts the following credit cards: ACCESS, EUROCARD, and MASTERCARD.

He is also offering a new 170 page, A5 book entitled "QDOS REFERENCE MANUAL" which is said to be a must for all machine-code programmers. The price is 85 DM plus 12 DM postage & packing.

FILE MANAGEMENT TIPS

TIVERTON, RHODE ISLAND, U.S.A. - DICK TAYLOR

1. COPYING FILES - If you have Toolkit II and use the WCOPY command to copy a disk, you can enter **WCOPY FLP1_,FLP2_** rather than the longer **WCOPY FLP1_ to FLP2_**.

2. STRIPPING FILE NAMES - Frequently User Group software libraries and collections of public domain programs have an administrative organizational prefix added as part of the filenames. For example: **QLCF6_Mandelbrot_bin** or **Lib23_Maze_3D_obj**. This allows libraries to be organized into groups of similar topics but can create problems in that with the exception of basic programs, you normally can't run these programs until you strip off the prefixes. This can be accomplished by renaming each individual file, or doing a **Copy Flp1_QLCF6_Mandelbrot_bin** to **Flp2_Mandelbrot_bin**, a formidable task for a disk with dozens of files. A much easier way is to use one of the Toolkit II wildcard commands. For example, your disk has the following files and you want to strip off the prefix **Lib1_**:

```
Lib1_Fractal_Boot
Lib1_Fractal_Bin
Lib1_Fractal_pic
Lib2_Corewar_Demo
```

Enter the command **WCOPY FLP1_Lib1_,FLP2_** (note the double underscore after Lib1). Do not enter the rest of the filename. This procedure will act the same as any WCOPY except the filenames on the destination device will not have the prefix "Lib1". A directory listing of FLP2_ after copying this disk would show:

```
Fractal_Boot
Fractal_Bin
Fractal_pic
```

You would next add a separator if desired (see below) and do the same thing for the Lib2 files.

Prior to stripping prefixes, inspect the directory listing to ensure you don't end up with identical filenames that will overwrite one another. This frequently occurs with boot files that start out as **Lib1_boot**, **Lib2_boot**, **Lib3_boot** which all end up being named boot after the prefixes are stripped. This can be avoided by renaming these to **Lib1_boot1**, **Lib2_boot2** and **Lib3_boot3** prior to stripping.

3. ADDING SEPARATORS TO YOUR DIRECTORIES - If you store multiple programs on a single disk or cartridge you may find it helpful to group the associated files belonging to a single program with the addition of a separator in your directory listing. Without separators you can easily lose track of which files go with each program. A separator can be created by **SAVING** the device name and the separator enclosed in quotes. For example:

```
SAVE "FLP1_***** QDESIGN *****"
      or
SAVE "MDV1_-----"
```

Notice that normal rules pertaining to filenames don't apply. The first character does not have to be a letter and you can use spaces, astericks, backslashes, foreslashes or just about anything in the QL character set. These separators show up as files with a length of zero bytes. Saving multiple programs on a single disk is a great way to conserve on disks and cartridges. Even though the device name was included between the quotation marks, the device name will not show up in the directory listing as part of the separator.

If you intend to use separators in your directories, I recommend you take a formatted disk or cartridge and save the first separator onto it. Then copy the files for the first program. Then save the next separator followed by the next group of files and so on.

NORWEGIAN CONNECTION

OLEN, NORWAY - PAL MONSTAD

It was good to hear that the QL continues on in the USA. Here in Norway we have a group of 40 members, and most have at least one QL. We publish "SINCLAIR MAGAZINE" 6-7 times a year. It's 28 A5 (roughly 5 1/4" by 8 3/4" paper) pages filled with reviews. Our group also has a freeware library consisting of 28 disks of software.

The Norwegian All Sinclair Association is the only group supporting QL owners in Norway. We help our members with all kinds of problems, from repairs to the development of programs.

We've just finished a commercial grade game called "FOOTBALL MANAGER /DIRECTOR" (not U.S. football). I'll send you a copy for review in IQLR. As this product will be offered to the computing public as a commercial program, we can offer your readers a special price of \$25.00.

(Ed. Note: We need a volunteer familiar with Soccer to review this program).

THE QL HACKER'S JOURNAL

ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA, USA - TIM SWENSON

The QL Hacker's Journal (QHJ) is a relatively new publication for the QL (first issue: Jan. 1991). As editor of the CATS Newsletter, I felt that many of the programming articles I'd written, or wanted to write, would not interest the majority of the CATS readership. I realized the need of a forum where QL programmers could exchange ideas and programs. The QHJ supports all programmers and all languages. So far, programs have been published in SuperBasic, C, and Pascal, and I'm looking forward to those in Forth, Lisp, etc. The original mailing was to QLer's that I knew to be programmers.

There is NO charge for a subscription. I only ask to receive programs and/or articles in return. All articles and programs published in the QHJ are free to be copied and used, as long as the original author is credited. Most QL programmers write programs for the fun of it, or to fill a particular need. With all the effort expended, it's nice to see other people use the fruits of your labor. I hate to see my programs sitting on the shelf when someone could be using them.

To keep costs low, I print a limited number of copies, but all issues are available as Quill files (soon to be text files). Since all source code is included, you don't have to re-type the programs. Plus, these files can be uploaded to BBS's and distributed even further. If you think the QHJ is a newsletter that suits you, please write me:

QL Hacker's Journal
c/o Timothy Swenson
4773 W. Braddock Rd. #3
Alexandria, VA 22311
tswenson@dgis.dtic.dla.mil

Here are a few samples of articles in past issues of QHJ:

STRUCTURED SUPERBASIC: A filter program that allows programmers to write SuperBasc code with blank lines, ## for comments, and no line numbers. Makes SuperBasic easier to read.

RATCLIFF/OBERSHEL PATTERN MATCHING: Taken from Dr. Dobb's Journal. Fuzzy matching of strings.

Find_c: A "C" program to find occurrences of a string in a text or binary file.

C BEAUTIFIER: A "C" program taken from the C User's Group. Makes C programs more readable, even with the most unreadable code.

DISKINFO: A SuperBasic program that does a lot of disk exploration. Almost everything you've ever wanted to know about QL disks.

REAL WINDOWS FOR SUPERBASIC: Creating non-destructive windows in SuperBasic. Slow, but designed to demonstrate the algorithm.

RAND_c: Random numbers in Small-C.

TOOLKIT II TUTORIAL PART 2

ADAPTED FROM; QL TECHNICAL REVIEW (C.G.H. SERVICES)

5. FILE MAINTENANCE

TKII improves file maintenance procedures in two ways. First, the existing commands COPY, DELETE, and DIR now use the default directories and secondly, the addition of wild card and overwrite operations significantly ease file handling.

5.1 WILD CARD NAMES

The manual says that wild card characters are not used, rather any missing section of a name is treated as a wild card. However, in part one of this tutorial I stated that an underscore is a wild card character. In fact, these two views are essentially the same, but considering the underscore to be a wild card is easier to understand. The use of wild cards in this section is the same as used for default directories explained in the first part (section 4.2). However for the notes to be correct a stricter definition of what the underscore can represent must be defined:

AN UNDERSCORE CAN REPRESENT A NULL STRING OR ANY SERIES OF CHARACTERS THAT DO NOT START WITH A DELIMINATING UNDERSCORE AND END WITH EITHER AN UNDERSCORE OR THE END OF THE NAME.

This is consistent in many cases with saying that the missing section is treated as a wild card. The following example explains the definition. Suppose you have a disk in FLP1_ with the following files:

```
BASIC_MANDELBROT_BAS
BASIC_GAMES_BAS
BASIC_JOBS_BAS
BASICPROGRAM_BAS
```

If the data default is set to FLP1 (DATA_USE FLP1) then DIR BASIC_BAS would show: BASICPROGRAM_BAS. The underscore is representing PROGRAM_. The other files do not match since the underscore following BASIC is a delimitator, and the wild card cannot represent a string that starts with an underscore. However, DIR BASIC__BAS would show all the files. The first three file names the first underscore in the wild card name is the delimitator, while the second represents: MANDELBROT, GAMES, and JOBS_ respectively. For the last file name, the first underscore is set to a null string, and the second matches PROGRAM_ as before.

Thus, a wild card name of FLP1_BASIC__BAS could match a file name of: FLP1_BASIC_MANDELBROT_BAS, and it may be considered that either MANDELBROT is the missing section of the filename, or that the second underscore in the wild card name matches MANDELBROT in the file name.

If a disk contains a file with the name letter on it, then the command DIR 1_ will result in the file letter being listed. Yet an underscore does not appear in the filename, suggesting that the underscore is a wild card matching a series of characters ending with the end of the file name. In section 4.2 of the manual it explains that if a default directory is set that doesn't end with an underscore, then an underscore is automatically appended. This may be considered the case for wild card name too. Thus in this example DIR 1, would also result in the file name letter being displayed.

It doesn't really matter how wild cards are defined, the important thing is to realize that they are very useful. Practice in the use of wild card names will hopefully bring understanding.

5.2 DIRECTORY LISTING

As well as the standard DIR command TKII also makes available WDIR, and WSTAT. All use the default data directory and may be passed wild card names. The output of the commands may be redirected using implicit channels as shown in part 1. If you have a disk in drive one with a name TKII NOTES and the following files:

```
TKIIa_DOC
TKIIb_DOC
TKIIjob_DOC
```

Then a DIR FLP1_ would give you the following display:


```
TKII NOTES
1347/1440 sectors
TKIIa_DOC
TKIIb_DOC
TKIIJob_DOC
```

WDIR FLP1_ would give you:

```
TKIIa_DOC
TKIIb_DOC
TKIIJob_DOC
```

WSTAT FLP1_ would give you:

```
TKIIa_DOC
16590 1990 Jul 06 20:25:30
TKIIb_DOC
17065 1990 Jul 10 15:53:29
TKIIJobDOC
8412 1990 Jun 23 17:16:57
```

Notice the amount of space on the disk is shown in sectors (blocks of 512 bytes). The file sizes are shown in bytes, however the space for a file is allocated in groups of three sectors, thus TKIIa_DOC would use 33 sectors, TKIIb_DOC would use 36, and TKIIjob_DOC would use 18 sectors. That is 87 sectors in all, the other 6 sectors that have been used are for the directory and map (a directory of a blank disk will show 1434/1440 sectors). WSTAT is very slow on MICKODRIVE.

5.3 DRIVE STATISTICS

The command STAT, shows Just the name and space available on a disk. In the above example the display would be:

```
TKII NOTES
1347/1440 sectors
```

To get full information on a disks contents type:

```
STAT FLP1_ : WSTAT FLP1_
```

Note in the contents section of the TKII manual a command ASTAT is mentioned. This command, which should produce an alphabetic list of files, is not described elsewhere in the manual, and is in fact, not implemented in the versions of TKII that I own (versions 2.12 and 2.13)

5.4 FILE DELETION

THE DELETE command has been modified to use the data default directory. Thus, for a machine with floppy disks attached Just after booting, the command: DELETE BOOT would delete your boot file contained on FLP1_ For a microdrive only system the same command would try to delete a file named boot on MDV2_

A new command has been introduced, WDEL, this command will accept wild card names as a parameter. Suppose you are using the same disk as above containing the files:

TKIIa_DOC
TKIIb_DOC
TKIIjob_DOC

Typing the command DELETE TKII would result in the disk spinning and no error message would be produced, yet nothing would be done: the file TkII doesn't exist. Whereas the command, WDEL TKII would produce the following response:
FLP1_TKIIa_DOC..Y/N/A/Q meaning, is this file to be deleted (YES or NO), are ALL files that fit this wild card to be deleted, or is the operation to be QUIT. So, to delete all except the first of the files that fits the wild card, first respond with N then A.

It's suggested that the option of deleting all matching files is not used until familiar with this command and wild cards. On a machine running MS-DOS a prompt similar to the one described above, is not given, DEL TKII would go ahead and delete all files that match.

5.5 FILE COPYING

The standard COPY command has been modified to use the DATA and DEST default directories. Thus, the command; COPY BOOT, will copy FLP1_BOOT to SER1. That is, assuming the defaults have not been altered. So, if a printer is attached, the file will be printed

A further alteration to the COPY command is that if the destination file already exists, permission to overwrite is asked for. Thus typing: COPY TKIIa_DOC to TKIIb_DOC, the following prompt would result: FLP1_TKIIb_DOC exists, OK to overwrite..Y or N This is very much like the QUILL SAVE operation.

The COPY command has become more "intelligent". The file header is automatically either copied (making a copy of an executable file) or not (printing a file) depending on the file and devices concerned. I haven't used COPY_N or COPY_H since having TKII.

5.5.1 SINGLE FILE COPIES

This includes the standard COPY command as described above, COPY_N and COPY_H which have also been modified to use default directories, and COPY_O. In my copy of the TKII manual, a misprint has lead to COPY_O appearing as COPY_

The COPY_O command will copy a file without asking what to do if the destination file already exists. This is useful when copying is performed within a SuperBasic program and one does not wish to give the user the choice of whether to overwrite a file or not.

5.5.2. WILD CARD COPIES

The command WCOPY allows you to copy a number of files as a single operation. As with the commands for single file copying, WCOPY uses the default directories. The form of the command is:

WCOPY #channel, source TO destination.

As with standard QDOS commands the channel is optional but if supplied it is where the prompts will be sent. If a channel is not specified, then prompts will be sent to #0.

The following examples illustrate the use of the command. Assume the data default directory is set to FLP1 _ and the destination default directory is set to FLP2_ and that the disk in drive one contains the following files:

TKIIa_DOC
TKIIb_DOC
TKIIJobs_DOC
LETTER_RICHARDALEXANDER_TXT
ADDRESS_ALEXANDER_TXT

for all of the examples.

i) WCOPY

This is the equivalent to WCOPY #0, FLP1_ TO FLP2_ That is, copy all files from FLP1_ to FLP2_ However, as with the WDEL command a prompt is given:

FLP1_TKIIa_DOC TO FLP2_TKIIa_DOC..Y/N/A/Q

Responding with A would lead to all files being copied from the first to second disk drive Individual files may be selected for coping by responding YES or NO as each filename is presented. The operation may be QUIT at any time.

ii) WCOPY #1, TKII_ TO NOTES_

This is the equivalent to WCOPY #1, FLP1_TKII_ TO FLP2_NOTES_ Thus a selective copy of only files that are notes on TKII is performed, and would therefore produce the prompt:

FLP1_TKIIa_DOC TO FLP2_NOTESa_DOC..Y/N/A/Q?

The part of the name represented by the wild card is appended to the destination wild card name. For the files that match this specification on the disk in FLP1_ the wild card will have in turn the values a_DOC b_DOC, and Jobs_DOC. The prompt will appear in #1 unless the windows have been changed, at the top of the screen.

iii) WCOPY TO FLP1 _BACKUP_

This is the equivalent to WCOPY #0, FLP1_ TO FLP1_BACKUP_ and allows copies of all files to be made on the same disk but with a prefix added to the file name ie copy files to a subdirectory.

iv) WCOPY TO SER1

This is equivalent to WCOPY #0, FLP1_ TO SER1, and will result in an error: BAD NAME, because SER1_TKIIa_DOC is not a valid name. If at any time the resulting destination file exists already, a prompt asking if the file should be overwritten is produced.

5.5.3 BACKGROUND COPYING

The command SPL is provided to allow background copying in the same manner as COPY_0. The copying is performed by a spooler which is an independent Job. The primary use for the spooler is to print files. SPL uses the data and destination defaults and so if the QL has Just been booted then you can print a file as follows:

```
SPL TKIIa_DOC
```

The command doesn't accept wild card names. So that a file, FLP1_PRINT_CMD (the extension_cmd shows that the file contains a series of commands rather than a numbered SuperBasic program - the use of sensible and consistent extensions can greatly assist with file management. The extension_bat may be chosen as with MS-DOS) could be created containing the following lines;

```
SPL TKIIa_DOC
SPL TKIIb_DOC
SPL TKIIJobs_DOC
```

The command LRUN PRINT_CMD would then allow the three files to be printed without intervention while the machine can be used for other things. Three separate Jobs would be created all named SPL and all running at priority 0. At the default priority the background printing will have little effect on ones main Job whether it be editing or playing a game. However, if the destination is a file rather than the serial port, this will not be the case. When spooling to a file, keyboard response will fluctuate considerably no matter at what priority the spooler is running. Spooling to a file will obviously be much quicker than spooling to a printer, but offers no real benefits over copying to a file.

The output for the spooler is selected using the command SPL_USE. This is in fact, the same as DEST_USE except that an underscore is not appended to the name - an underscore at the end would indicate a wild card name and SPL doesn't accept wild cards.

SPL_USE FLPI_DUMP would set the destination default to FLP1_DUMP and all subsequent uses of SPL would write to that file automatically overwriting the previous version. A variant of SPL, SPLF will spool a file and place a form feed at the end. This will ensure that individual files are printed on separate sheets of paper. Both of these commands may be supplied with channel numbers rather than filenames as explained in the TKII manual.

At this point it is worth mentioning one of the many wonderful features of TKII that I don't think appears explicitly in the manual. Although not directly connected with spooler it is to do with printing. If, on a QL without TKII fitted, there are two (or more) Jobs running, both of which are trying to access the printer, the result will be a printout which is a mess the output of the two Jobs interleaved. With TKII fitted, your Job's output will be sent to the printer while the other's is buffered in memory. Once the printer is free, the buffered output is copied from memory to the printer.

5.5.4 RENAMING FILES

As explained in the TKII manual the remaining commands follow the same form as the equivalent copying commands, but merely alter the filename ie RENAME has similar syntax to COPY and WREN has similar syntax to WCOPY.

END OF PART II

AUTHOR: Stephen Bedford

CONTINUING RUMORS!!

The rumors concerning MIRACLE SYSTEMS and their secret GRAPHICS CARD project continue to grow. A reliable source has reported to IQLR, that the proposed Graphics Card will be compatible with current hardware and software, and will support 1024 x 512 pixels in four colors (equal to four QL screens), and 512 x 256 pixels in 256 colors, from a large palette. It's also reported that the Graphics Card will be produced using Miracle's specially designed ULA chips. We haven't been able to determine when the Graphics Card will be available, and have heard wildly conflicting completion dates, from as early as this Christmas selling season to as late as a year from now.

QLAW UPDATE

PARK VIEW, BLACKBURN, UK - Dr. SOHAIL S. BHATTI

SUPER QL PROJECT: Up until now, we've been deliberately vague about future plans, so as not to raise expectations and then dash hopes. I now wish to share some thoughts and perhaps generate some comments from you as well.

An obvious solution would be to retain all our current software and hardware, encourage new items to be developed, while plugging into other machines' products. The way I envisage this will be done is to recruit teams of individuals with expertise in hardware and/or machine-code. Working under the direction of a team leader, each task would be split into smaller modules and thus individual burdens would be minimal. The process of recruitment is already underway, using the questionnaire. I see two main tasks ahead: SOFTWARE and HARDWARE.

HARDWARE TASK: Ultimately any design will age. The QL is now three silicon chip generations old (75 - 90 years in human terms). This is why attention should be directed at the BUS. Not much thought was given to its design and it is indeed non-standard. It is limited in the speed with which the main processor (68008 CPU), can talk to or address the cards. Until recently this hasn't been a real problem because the cards had only 8-bit chips on them. What we really need is the ability to address 16-bit, or better still, 32-bit chips which would be much faster and have more capabilities. A BUS to handle this would be quite a complicated one, but on the other hand, if we desire a machine for the future, one of the first priorities ought to be the definition of as "FUTURE-PROOF" a BUS as we can find or develop. Once this is completed all kinds of powerful cards can be attached to the QL.

Recently, Dr. Carlow of Southampton pointed out coincidentally that QL users ought to adopt the VME BUS SYSTEM, a future-proofed Bus which is fast becoming the standard for industrial computers using the Motorola 68xxx family of processors. A great deal of

development work is being done by hundreds of engineers using OS9. This is potentially a huge market, imagine my delight when I saw the catalogs of products already available using the VME Bus. If we choose to settle on the VME Bus design, the one thing that we would need is a decent operating system and Basic.

SOFTWARE TASK: Although our hardware is aged, our operating system is still state of the art. We now have two versions of QDOS which are free of copyright (SMS2 and MINERVA). SMS2 is Tony Tebby's own development of QDOS and is in fact the QL emulator for the Atari ST. Tony has offered it to Miracle Systems for any product they might wish to create. MINERVA is a stunning creation, and with the appropriate guidance, the core of an enormously exciting QDOS system. If we add in all the toolkits now available together with the inherent extendibility of QDOS, we have a world-beater.

We require individuals to work on both these tasks, and is why recruitment is in progress. A Congress will be held in the future so that a clear statement of direction, plus the election of office holders, and the hammering out of a constitution can take place.

THOR XVI SUPPORT

We've recently been reminded of the many unanswered complaints Thor owners have expressed, as well as their inability to get a response to their inquiries from Thor International. This is a world-wide problem, and there is some question as to whether Thor is still in business. Our telephone calls and letters have gone unanswered as well. The next step might be to call the Danish Embassy or Trade Commission and see if they can shed any light on the subject.

We have however, located two sources of possible support. The first, is the "Unofficial Thor User's Magazine", printed in English (we believe):

MJOLNER (Malcolm Smith)
Statsrad Ihlensvei 66B
N-2010 Strommen
Norway

The second, is a well known supplier who advertises memory and ROM upgrades for the Thor XVI, and may be of help with repairs as well. You might have better luck reaching him on the weekend, as the gentleman that usually answers the telephone during the week does not speak English:

COWO ELECTRONIC (Urs Konig)
Munsterstrasse 4
CH-6210 Sursee
Switzerland Telephone: 045 21 14 78

If you try either of these sources, please let us know the result.

QL TIDBITS (Based upon the responses to our questionnaire)

The average IQLR reader and we assume it holds true for the general QL population has 2.4 QLs

The most widely used software application is Quill, with over 96% of our readers listing it as their most used program. You should see the speed of this program when used with the Gold Card, truly amazing (I tested it with a 50 page document and saw no apparent speed decrease throughout).

The Trump Card is the most important hardware addition (94%), an RGB monitor was second (78%) and third was the combination of Expander Ram (512k) and Disk Drives (53%).

The biggest surprise was the high number of readers who listed communications as their primary use of their QL (41%). It would be great if one of you shared his/her experiences with us. Send in an article and we'll print it in the next issue.

Over 50% indicated they do programming on their QLs. There must be a lot of home grown software out there. Why not send some of it to IQLR for addition to the Public Domain Library for distribution to others.

TOWER CASED SUPER QL

DINSLAKEN, GERMANY - Martin Florichs

Olympic Computer Systems of Germany, and COWO Electronics of Switzerland, have announced a SuperQL. The machine will consist of a standard QL motherboard, switching power supply, Gold Card, and Disk Drives, all packaged in a custom Tower Case. The production run is limited to 50 units world-wide, at a price of 900 Pounds Sterling. If you are interested, contact:

Olympic Computer Systems
Quellenweg 18
4220 Dinslaken
Germany Tel: 02134 47852

COWO Electronics
Munsterstr. 4
CH-6210 Sursee
Switzerland Tel: 045 211478

Another piece of information for your readers is that we are looking for quality hardware and software to distribute in Europe. If you have such an items, please write me at the Qlympic address above.

Thank you once again for your interest, and please give our best regards to your readers. We'll keep you informed.

FOR SALE

Trump Card with disk adapter to handle 4 disk drives	\$ 170.00
2 - 3.5" bare disk drives (low power consumption) comes with 5.25" 1/2 height kits.	\$ 80.00
1 - QIMI Mouse Interface with clock (does not include the mouse)	\$ 60.00

For any of the above call Bob at: 401-849-3805

CLOCKS, CLOCKS, CLOCKS !!

As the title suggests, this article is about clocks. When I initially plugged in my Gold Card, and Minerva ROM version 1.89 (which I had received at the same time), I suddenly had three external clocks (the third being the QIMI Mouse Interface with clock), all trying to work at once. This created an immediate problem with spectacular crashes.

I then decided to cut off the battery to the QIMI Interface, should work right? Wrong, everytime I placed a disk in drive one, the computer went crazy resetting itself.

Dick Taylor heard my cries of anguish, and suggested that I twist the two leads that had previously gone to the battery together and cover them with electrical tape. It worked, the moral of this little article is if you don't know what you are doing, don't do it.

3.2 MEG DISK DRIVES

We've located two suppliers in North America selling these drives. They are advertised as 2.8 or 2.88 meg drives, as this is all the PC will format to. Don't buy a special controller, the Gold Card does not require it, the PC does. It is a straight forward hookup, using the same cable you presently use. Boy, it is strange formatting a disk to 6400 sectors.

The two suppliers are:

DIRT CHEAP DRIVES

1-800-872-6007

2.8 meg TEAC 3.5" Disk Drive *

Advertised price: \$149.00

MICRO SENSE

1-800-544-4252

2.88 meg TEAC 3.5" Disk Drive *

Advertised price: \$159.00

* They are the same drive. The Gold Card will format these drives to 3.2 megs.

NETWORK FLUSH

PENCADER, DYFED, CYMRU, UK - RICHARD ALEXANDER

Robin Barker of Di-Ren has sent in the following program which allows a QL Network Flush without using Toolkit II.

Two New Basic Keywords: `FLUSH_NET` `PROCedure`
 `TEST_INPUT` `FUNction`

`FLUSH_NET` as a procedure, requires a channel #, i.e. `FLUSH_NET #10`.

This will send the data in the network buffer over the QL-QL Network. Unfortunately it has to send a full buffer of 255 bytes. If you put less than 255 bytes into the network, the remainder of the buffer on the receiving end will be filled with zeros. All 255 bytes in the receiving machine buffer have to be "READ" before transmission of the next data block. If Turbo Toolkit is installed, the ideal routine is to read the buffer in one move by: `x$=INPUT$(#10,255)`. This ensures the buffer is clear. The problem which this is that if any bytes have been 'READ' from the buffer previously, the program will lockup until the next transmission takes place. Then total confusion reigns.



Reading the buffer contents in BYTES (single CHR\$) is probably the best idea. For instance: A=CODE(INKEY\$(#10,0)). No wait is necessary, a return will be immediate if there is anything to be READ. Unfortunately, using the CODE(INKEY\$) command will return '0' if it has 'READ' '0' or '0' if it has not 'READ' anything at all. There is no way of telling from this whether there is anything remaining in the buffer.

To solve the problem I have included a FUNCTION called TEST_INPUT, that will return '1' if there is any input waiting, or '0' if not.

IF TEST_INPUT(#10)=1: THEN a byte or bytes are awaiting input.
IF TEST_INPUT(#10)=0: THEN nothing is waiting.

TEST_INPUT calls IO.PEND, TRAP#3, and can be used to test any channel for awaiting input. The basic loader follows for the new routines, and is 292 bytes long.

PLACE=RESPR(292):LBYTES FLP1_filename, PLACE:CALL PLACE will load the extensions.

```

100 RESTORE
110 CLS: INPUT 'SAVE FILE NAME ? 'DEV$
120 PLACE=RESPR(292):START=PLACE
130 FOR A = 230 to 430 STEP 10
140 COUNT = 0
150 FOR B = 1 TO 7
160 READ X:COUNT = COUNT+X
170 POKE_W PLACE,X:PLACE=PLACE+2
180 END FOR B
190 READ C
200 IF COUNT<>C: PRINT 'LINE';A; 'INCORRECT' :STOP
210 END FOR A
220 SBYTES DEV$,START,292
230 DATA 17402,12,13432,272,20114,28672,20085,99989
240 DATA 1,150,2374,19541,21320,24398,17748,85532
250 DATA 0,1,86,2644,17747,21599,18766,60843
260 DATA 20565,21504,0,-17461,26368,198,2102,53276
270 DATA 7,-18431,26368,188,12045,10827,20621,51625
280 DATA 12045,13432,274,20114,9823,10847,15414,81949
290 DATA -26624,-13060,40,-9042,48,-17234,52,-65820
300 DATA 25088,146,19126,26624,27392,138,8310,106824
310 DATA 26624,17024,20085,25016,26362,17024,30209,162344
320 DATA 20035,19072,26116,29185,24586,29184,3200,151378
330 DATA -1,-10,26594,8814,88,21897,11593,68975
340 DATA 88,15745,-26624,30723,28672,20085,24968,93657
350 DATA 26314,17024,12040,20033,9320,120,8744,93595
360 DATA 124,9759,18499,8794,-18839,16,26156,44509
370 DATA 3217,0,288,26128,3113,255,28,33029
380 DATA 26120,9276,0,287,24614,3217,0,63514
390 DATA 336,26124,3113,255,68,26116,29765,85777
400 DATA 24594,-19830,28360,24580,28922,20085,28913,135624
410 DATA 20085,17024,20085,5052,255,10240,18499,91240
420 DATA 8259,18663,64,17024,30463,28677,20035,123185
430 DATA 8799, 19072,26332,16945,10240,24794,0,106182

```



FIRST CLASS MAIL

15 Kilburn Court, Newport, RI 02840 USA



SUBSCRIPTIONS / ADVERTISEMENTS

IQLR is published by:

SeaCoast Services
15 Kilburn Court
Newport, RI 02840
U.S.A.
Tel: 401 849 3805

All material published herein remains the property of SeaCoast Services, and is COPYRIGHTED. We will be happy to extend written permission for use of our material, to Sinclair orientated publications, offering reciprocal arrangements.

Subscription rates are: \$ 10.00 per year (U.S FUNDS) for the U.S. and Canada. The rest of the world: \$ 20.00 per year (U.S. FUNDS). Single issue rates are \$ 3.00 U.S. and Canada \$ 5.00 rest of the world (U.S. FUNDS).

We will publish 4 to 6 issues per year, dependent on the amount of material available. We need your HELP to be able to publish 6 issues. The subscription year is based upon our fiscal year ending 30 April. Mid-year subscribers will be sent back issues for the current year.

ADVERTISING RATES:

\$15.00 per QUARTER PAGE per issue
\$25.00 per HALF PAGE per issue.
\$50.00 per FULL PAGE per issue.

SPECIAL !!! Purchase advertising for two issues at the stated price, and we will run your ad in a third issue "FREE".

WE ARE WILLING TO RECEIVE COMMERCIAL SOFTWARE and HARDWARE for REVIEW. SUPPLIERS CAN DEPEND ON AN HONEST EVALUATION.