

THE QL REPORT

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Fall is here and with it comes a lot of new software (and some hardware) for the QL. As we mentioned in the August issue, PC TALKER is now available for immediate shipment. This is probably the most interesting and exciting new piece of hardware to come along for the QL in quite awhile.

The TALKER plugs into serial two and is equipped with its own power supply. By opening a channel to serial 2 and then "printing" to that channel, TALKER will say anything you type. The speech quality is quite good and most words are easily understood. Some have to obviously be spelled phonetically.

We have been using it in conjunction with our Point of Sale System with some interesting results. By changing the printer_dat file so that all printing is directed to serial 2 rather than 1, and writing a few simple procedures using LPRINT statements, TALKER speaks to us from within our POS. For example, our stock file currently holds over 500 different items in inventory. Even with a disk based system, because we use the FIND command, it can take ten or fifteen seconds to find an item. This means waiting at the screen to see how many of a certain item we have.

With Talker, a procedure we have asks us, "Describe the item you are searching for." We type in, "Talker" for example, and walk away to do something else. When TALKER finds the item, it says, "You have __ (amt) Talker in stock.. You have sold __ this month, __ this year. The suggested retail of this item is \$64.95 . Do you require another search?"

The procedure to do the above is really nothing more than simple BASIC commands and LPRINT statements. For education, TALKER is superb. It holds a child's attention for a much longer time than most games or tutorials would. For games, the possibilities are endless.

We also will be marketing a speech recognition system that can be used with TALKER in early 1987- we will have more on that later. TALKER is available not only for the QL but we also have C64, ST, Apple, and IBM versions . Use our Toll-free line to order.

We have a few new QL books in stock and we also now have all ten titles in the HCP series so if there are any you would like, give us a call. We have three titles from Sunshine Publications in stock- Sinclair QL Adventures, by Tony Bridge and Richard Willaims, Inside The Sinclair QL, by Jeff Naylor and Diane Rogers, and The Sinclair QDOS Companion, by Andrew Pennell. The adventure book, 165 pages, teaches you as a programmer how to create adventures on the QL. A Generator program is included which can be used to create unique adventures of your own design. \$9.95

The QDOS book by Pennell teaches you how to program in machine code by helping you understand the operating system the QL uses. All the

features of QDOS are described and each system call is covered, not only in terms of function and its use but also the exact steps it takes when carrying out its tasks. Detailed coverage of how multi-tasking works is also explained. And, a look at the Intel 8049 co-processor is examined. 182 pages. \$12.95

Inside The Sinclair QL is a book for people who want to know how their QL "ticks." The book is in two sections- the first deals with the fundamental principals behind computer design. The second part takes a look at how the QL is structured and, in particular, at how the screen display, keyboard and sound facilities are used. 160 pgs. \$12.95

Our next three titles are published by Granada publishing in the U.K. The first of these is called QL Computing by Ian Sinclair (no relation) and is 176 pages in length. This is an introductory text and not only includes BASIC programs showing everything from graphics to sound, it is based on the daily practical use of the machine and not on second hand information. \$9.95

The second by this publisher is entitled QL SuperBasic by A.A. Berk and is 165 pages. The book introduces you to SuperBasic and includes many programs as examples, setting out the principles of structured programming and the applications which are possible with the QL. \$11.95

The third title is called QL Gamesmaster by Kay Ewbank, Mike James, and S.M. McGee. The book has many exciting games routines and also includes adaptions of some of the most popular arcade programs so that you can create your own favorite versions. Listings of procedures for the games will help you to understand how you can start writing your own original games by adapting the procedures to your own use. A lot of times, having a procedure in front of you is all you will need to be able to fully grasp the concept and understand it. \$12.95

Finally, from Prentice/Hall we have Basic Programming on the QL, by Neil and Pat Cryer. This book provides a comprehensive, illustrated course on the QL's SuperBasic and is full of activities to try out on your machine. Chapters include lessons on putting data into programs, repetition, making decisions, windows and channels, adding sound, introducing color, handling strings and files, structured programming, and more. 265 pgs. \$15.95

We also have received a lot of new software which we at least want to draw your attention to here. Two titles are from U.S. programmers. The first is THE MASTER TEACHER, by Mel MacKaron, a very comprehensive teacher utility program. The program is also available on the Timex 2068, Osborne, and Apple computers. Suggested retail is \$29.95 on cartridge, \$32.95 on 5 1/4" disk. The program collates all student grade information and automatically averages the nine weeks or the semester grade. It stores a maximum of 40 grades for up to 40 students per class. Output to a printer is provided and seating charts of classes can be generated.

Also by an American programmer is CROCKETT PAYROLL, by Steve Cermak of KAMREC Systems. This is a professional payroll program that has been adapted from a mainframe version.

You can maintain 27 fields which contain all personal information, department, employee status, hire date, and termination date for up to 100 employees. You can sort by any of these fields in either

ascending or descending order and list the employee file in this order.

Second, you can configure each employee's configuration file to contain up to 20 of the 99 cell types which can be designed to perform any of 200 types of calculations. Each employee's individual cells can be modified or deleted and you can view the personal configuration and YTD accumulations for each of their cells.

Next, you can enter, delete, and proof-list up to 400 payroll transactions. These and computer generated calculations such as salaried pay, deductions, and taxes can be taken into consideration for each payroll processing. Then, each employee's YTD accumulations are updated.

In addition, you are able to design the layout and size of the payroll checks to be printed. Each employee's pay stub will show the date as well as their name, social security number, department, and check number. It will also show, in detail, the individual cell computations that were performed to arrive at their net pay.

There are 5 types of reports that can be printed: Withholding, Payroll Distribution, YTD Distribution, Earnings Register, and YTD Earnings Register.

The Withholding Report has 6 columns which can be configured to contain individual or combined accumulations. This report shows individual payroll and YTD totals for each employee as well as totals for each column.

The Distribution Reports show the employees' hours, debits, and credits; whereas, the Earnings Registers show the employee's hours, earnings, and deductions. Both types of reports show the breakdown of cell totals for each employee's individual cells. Also, these reports show individual company cell accumulations. \$79.95

A nice new utility we just received is QFLASH from a West German software house. The program is a super fast ramdisk and the nicest feature about it is you do not have to format a ramdisk at all. It is done automatically when you boot up the program. If you have the memory and want to copy from mdv or flp1_ to ram1_, you just issue the copy or wcopy command. The program will automatically adjust ramdisk to accomodate the size of the file. Memory allocation is completely dynamic. No extra memory is reserved for files that do not yet exist. Up to 8 ramdisks can be used. \$15.95

We also want to mention that Tesseract Software, who do CONCEPT 3D are finishing up a columns program to be used in conjunction with QLWP. We hope to be writing the QLR using it in next month's issue. The program will take text from your QLWP document and print it in columns on your printer. Regardless of what the original file looked like, COLUMNS prints out the file in any number of vertical columns, in any width and margin combination. Bold, underline, superscript and subscript enhancements in the file remain. We will have more information next month.

And, Miracle Systems has informed us they are thinking of doing a 300 baud modem with modadapter built-in that draws its power from the phone line. Suggested retail would be under \$100. Let us know if you are interested in this item.

It has been brought to our attention that a company named Matrix Technologies is operating at the same address as Ramex/Foundation Systems had. They are selling cheap IBM clones. Any of you who had problems with Ramex/Foundation might call this company at 1-313-949-7912 to see if they know the whereabouts of the former QL company.

lfx_bas

-----by Marshall Stiles

I guess that if you enjoy programming like I do you produce a lot of programs. Unfortunately, many of them you almost never use and others you probably should use more often, but you just don't get around to it. Then there is that rare program that becomes a part of your regular routine when you have to perform certain operations. This program is one of those programs. Whenever I type something, using the Quill wordprocessing program, that I'm preparing for telecommunications transfer via QCODE and a telecommunications service such as MCI Mail I use the program in the listing.

There are several things about the program which I would like to point out. Lines 110 to 160 sense whether you pressed F1 or F2. F1 will give you a window for 80 characters across. F2 will give you 64 characters across. The mode command in line 130 can be removed if you need the larger characters. Whether you pressed F1 or F2 has no effect on the output to file, only the viewing on screen.

The program does several things for you. Before you quit Quill, print your document to device_filename_lis instead of printing it on your printer. This will create a file of your document. Now you can exit Quill in the usual manner and reset the computer. It is best to end your document with a lone "%" followed by the ENTER key on the very last line of your document. While the program checks for end of file in line 210, files produced in this manner seem to give an end of file error message even when you check for it. Therefore, I also check for a "%" on a line by itself. The "%" is not output to the file. If the end of file error stops your program, all you have to do is type "close_files". This calls the procedure that does what it implies, and you should have your new file ready for use. Don't forget any file terminators used by the electronic mail service or bulletin board service (/, /EX, etc.) on the line just above the "%". Line 480 filters out character code 13 and 15. I don't use any special features in Quill for documents I'm sending, but if necessary this can be altered to filter out any characters you need to eliminate.

There are two more things that the program accomplishes. Anywhere in your document where there is more than 1 blank line will become one blank line. Last of all, page numbers are eliminated by the program.

Obviously, you wouldn't use this program for sending a document to be printed out exactly as it appears in Quill. It is intended for use with a service or an electronic bulletin board where the intended recipient will be retrieving your message electronically. In other words, you want to get rid of all the blank lines that are sent to the printer for the purpose of formfeeds and the like. Consider what can take place when you have a page which contains only a short paragraph and many blank lines. In some cases, money can be saved by not sending these extra lines.

This article is just one of a number of articles I have sent to the

QLR using this little program. I hope you find it just as useful as I have on a great computer like the QL.

Listing -

```
100 REMark lfx_bas, Marshall Stiles, 1986
110 TV_VALUE=PEEK(163890)
120 IF TV_VALUE=2
130     MODE 512:WINDOW #1,394,192,45,0
140 ELSE
150     WINDOW #1,486,252,1,1
160 END IF
170 BORDER #1,1,1,7:CLS
180 CSIZE#0,3,1:PRINT#0,"lfx_bas";:CSIZE#0,0,0:PRINT#0,"by Marshall
Stiles, 1986"
190 open_files
200 read_rec
210 IF EOF(#4) OR line$="(%" & CHR$(13)) THEN GO TO 290
220 scan
230 page_scan
240 check_for_null
250 IF null>1 THEN GO TO 270
260 write_rec
270 read_rec
280 GO TO 210
290 write_rec
300 close_files
310 PRINT"end"
320 STOP
330 REMark -----
340 DEFINE PROCEDURE open_files
350     line2$="":null=0:space$=""
360     PRINT"Enter the name of file to check for line feeds..."
370     INPUT "IN->drive_filename: ";in_file$
380     OPEN_IN #4, in_file$
390     INPUT "OUT->drive_filename: ";out_file$
400     OPEN_NEW #5, out_file$
410 END DEFINE open_files
420 DEFINE PROCEDURE read_rec
430     INPUT #4, line$
440 END DEFINE read_rec
450 DEFINE PROCEDURE scan
460     length=LEN(line$)
470     FOR i=1 TO length
480         IF line$(i)<>CHR$(13) AND line$(i)<>CHR$(15)
490             line2$=line2$&line$(i)
500         END IF
510     END FOR i
520     length2=LEN(line2$)
530     space$=space$&FILL$(" ",length2)
540 END DEFINE scan
550 DEFINE PROCEDURE page_scan
560     scan$="page"
570     len_scan=LEN(scan$)
580     FOR t=1 TO length2-len_scan+1
590         IF scan$=line2$(t TO t+len_scan-1)
600             IF line2$(1 TO t-1)=space$(1 TO t-1)
610                 line2$="":t=length2
620             END IF
630         END IF
```

```

640     END FOR t
650     space$=""
660 END DEFine page_scan
670 DEFine PROCedure close_files
680     CLOSE #4
690     CLOSE #5
700 END DEFine close_files
710 DEFine PROCedure write_rec
720     PRINT line2$
730     PRINT #5, line2$
740     line2$=""
750 END DEFine write_rec
760 DEFine PROCedure check_for_null
770     IF line2$(">") THEN null=0:GO TO 790
780     null=null+1
790 END DEFine check_for_null
//

```

In the helpful hints department, the following 2 line program will print the directory of your storage medium to your printer:

```

100 OPEN#3, ser1
110 DIR#3, mdv1_

```

Obviously, the port and the storage medium can be changed to suit your own specific needs.

For those of you who have WANDERER and are discouraged by being killed after the fourth or fifth levels, the following pokes allow the number of shields, energy level, number of cats and ability level to be set before the game starts. Load the Boot program and add the following lines:

80 a=RESPR(0)	87 REMark set energy 0-31000
82 POKE-L 882+a, 0	88 POKE-W 898+a, 31000
84 POKE-L 886+a, 0	89 REMark set cats 0-8000
85 REMark set shields 0-255	90 POKE-W 18474+a, 8000
86 POKE 893=a, 255	91 REMark set ability 0-10
	92 POKE 18476+a, 10

You can then RUN this or re-SAVE to your backup cartridge.

Don Thompson sent us this two line program which will return the amount of space available minus 512 for 1 slave block which should always be available to the system:

```

10 FREE_MEM=PEEK_L(163856)-PEEK_L(163852)-512
20 PRINT FREE_MEM

```

We are ending this month's issue with a Reader Survey Questionnaire which we hope many of you will fill out and return to us. We will publish the results in our Christmas issue of December 15th. We feel it should be interesting to see how QL's are being used.