

MAC Q & A

by Jonathan E. Hardis

Leftovers: Last month, we discussed how the choice of paper affects the quality of LaserWriter printing. David Rose recommends Hammerhill Laser Plus #10450-5. On another topic, Ward Meyer wrote to say that the Assimilation Process trackball is still being sold and serviced by its original manufacturer: Cambridge Automation, 20230 State Rd., Ceritos, CA 90701 (213) 402-5389. Also last month we discussed the mini-debugger on the Mac+. This is the subject of the new Tech Note 38, which offers a couple of hints. If you want to get back to the Finder from within the debugger, type: SM 0 A9F4, then G 0. Also, if you crash into the debugger and the system hangs, try turning off your modem.

Q: The Finder can keep track (somehow) of disks with the same volume name. So is it safe to keep different disks with the same name?

A: No! While I was watching the Cowboys/Giants game this afternoon, a caller (sorry, I didn't get your name, but I had other things on my mind at the time) wanted to contribute the observation that Finder can keep track of disks with the same name. I suspect that it also looks at the date/time the disk was formatted to keep them straight. But the file system in ROM isn't as clever. You run the risk of corrupting your disks if you mix disks with the same name while running an application.

Notes: When you copy a disk with a copying utility, the copy will have both the same name and the same "creation date". So, even the Finder can confuse these pairs of disks, corrupting both if used together. When you make such a copy, put one of the disks away in a safe place. Also, capitalization isn't significant in names. Upper case letters are treated the same as their lower case counterparts.

Q: How do we wire a PC to a Mac to transfer files (using communication programs on each machine)?

A: PC (DB-25) -> Mac (DE-9), or Mac+ (mini-DIN-8): 1 -> Shell, Shell; 2 -> 9, 5; 3 -> 5, 3; and 7 -> 3, 4. In addition, on the PC's DB-25, jumper pins 4 and 5 together, and 6 and 20 together. On the Mac end, also jumper pin 8 (Mac or Mac+) to pin 3 (Mac) or pin 4 (Mac+). Adaptation Electronics (ad in this issue) can make custom cables for you, such as this one.

Q: Help! When I copy system software (System, Finder, etc.) from the Startup drawer of my Hyperdrive to a floppy disk, the floppy disk won't boot on another Mac.

A: There were no "boot blocks" in the Startup drawer. The Hyperdrive doesn't need them, and so you never noticed their absence. To fix the problem, use FEdit (WAP Mac disk 21) to "Write Boot Blocks" to the floppy.

Q: I'm still not satisfied with the (recently updated) Microsoft Fortran (licensed from

Absoft). What is the best way to complain?

A: Chuck Bouldin discusses his complaints and suggestions with Absoft directly, and he is interested in passing on other people's suggestions, too. You can reach him at 564-1431 (evenings). Also, Greg Lobdell, Mac Languages Program Manager at Microsoft, is interested in hearing of "wish lists" for Mac Fortran or languages in general. You can write to him at Microsoft Corporation, 16011 NE 36th Way, Box 97017, Redmond, WA 98073-9717.

Q: What do I do about an Imagewriter II that grinds a bit?

A: At the Q&A, someone suggested spraying WD-40 (or a similar product) on the gear wheels on the left every few weeks. By the way, some else suggested that cheap paper with less rag content seemed to work better than the more expensive kind.

Q: Can you print in color, or put the Imagewriter I on an AppleTalk network?

A: No, only the Imagewriter II is designed for these things.

Q: Can you recommend good Imagewriter fonts?

A: The crowd at Q&A recommended the Boston II font (shareware, WAP Mac disk 44), and Bodoni (commercial, Fluent Fonts).

Q: Will the Cauzin SoftStrip printing program work on the Imagewriter I?

A: The answer from the audience was that it works *better* on the Imagewriter I.

Q: Why is the paper rolled backward at the beginning of printing on the Imagewriter II?

A: This question is answered in Tech Note 33, by Ginger Jernigan of Apple, which I reprint here because I think it is of general interest. "First, note that this only happens with pin-feed paper (i.e., not with hand-feed or the sheet-feeder) and only at the beginning of a job.

"It is not a bug, and it is not malicious programming. It is simply that users are told in the manual to load pin-feed paper with the top edge at the pinch-rollers, making it easy to rip off the printed page(s) without wrecking the paper that is still in the printer or having to roll the paper up and down manually. At the end of every {printing}, the software makes sure that the paper is left in this position, leaving the print-head roughly an inch from the top edge."

The Tech Note goes on to say that since the Macintosh printing standard calls for a 1/2" margin, to print in the topmost allowed 1/2" the paper has to be rolled backward. (Both the Imagewriter I and the LaserWriter naturally leave 1/2" top margins.) "There is no way to eliminate the reverse-feed action, because the user would have to load the paper a different way AND the software

contd.