

Creative Services Manager Carl Genatossio slaved over a hot drafting table for over two years before completing the cover art for *Bureaucracy*.

Douglas Adams' Bureaucracy

Not very long ago, Douglas Adams (who is, as everyone knows, the best-selling author of that zany interactive story *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy™*) moved from one apartment in London to another. He dutifully notified everyone of his new address, including his bank. In fact, he personally went to the bank and filled out a change-of-address form.

Soon after, Douglas found that he was unable to use his credit card. He discovered that the card had been invalidated by the bank. Apparently, the bank had sent a new card to his old address.

For weeks, Douglas tried to get the bank to acknowledge his change-of-address form. He talked to bank officials, and filled out new forms, and applied for another credit card, but nothing worked. He had no credit, and the bank behaved like... well, like a bank.

It's a sad story, one that's replayed every day for millions of people worldwide. Of course, it's not always a bank at fault. Sometimes it's the postal service, or the telephone company, or an airline, or the government. All of us, at one time or another, feel persecuted by a bureaucracy. What can be done?

Only Douglas Adams would exact such sweet revenge. He retaliated by writing *Bureaucracy™*, a hilarious interactive journey through masses of red tape.

You begin *Bureaucracy* in your spiffy new apartment. You're going to Paris this very afternoon for a combination training seminar and vacation, so you'll need to leave as soon as you get the money order your boss has mailed you. Unless, of course, there's some problem with the mail...

Please turn to page 3

Genuine Zorkmid coin minted for the Zork Trilogy

Together again for the first time; Zork I, Zork II and Zork III in the same package

In the beginning, three little *Zorks* lived happily together in one big mainframe computer. They flourished under the loving care of Marc Blank, Dave Lebling, and a lot of other nurturing computer types, and grew up to be humorous, challenging, and full of riveting puzzles.

Finally, it was time for *Zork® I*, *Zork II*, and *Zork III* to venture out into the world of personal computers. As everybody knows, they made their parents proud. One million people welcomed the little *Zorks* into their homes. They were called "remarkable," "fascinating," "beautifully written," "masterpieces of logic." Countless awards and accolades were won, including "Best All-Time Computer Game" from *Playboy Magazine* in 1986.

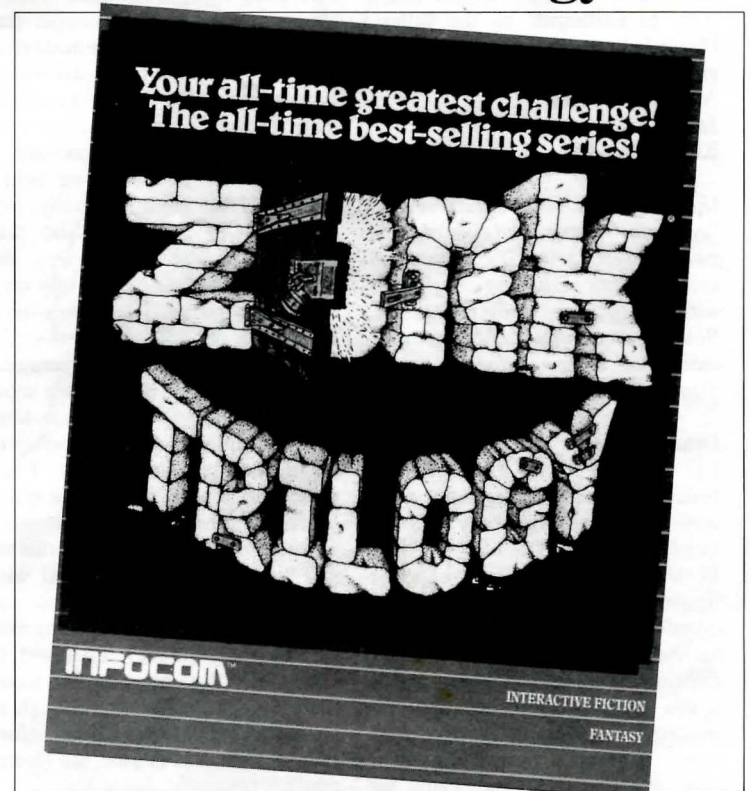
Now, five years later, *Zork I*, *Zork II*, and *Zork III* are together again, happily reunited in one incredible *Zork Trilogy* package.

To commemorate this momentous occasion, the staff of the Frobozz Mint struck a special Zorkmid coin.

The coin, which bears the handsome visage of Belwit the Flat, is included in *The Zork Trilogy* package, along with the complete games of *Zork I*, *Zork II*, and *Zork III* on disk; a history of the Great Underground Empire; a Frobozzco International stock certificate; resort brochures from Bozbarland and Grayslopes; a letter from John D. Flathead IX; and a strange old map.

Just imagine... *Zork I*, *Zork II*, *Zork III*, a heap of fascinating documents, and a not-available-anywhere-else Zorkmid coin. And it's all yours at a savings of 50% off the original combined cost of the three *Zork* packages. Commodore 64/128 and Atari XL/XE versions cost just \$59.95. Apple II series, Macintosh, Atari ST, Amiga, and IBM versions carry a suggested retail price of \$69.95.

If you haven't yet welcomed the three little *Zorks* into your home, now is the time to do so... now that they're all together in the extra special *Zork Trilogy*.



Here's the suprisingly original cover of the new *Zork Trilogy*, chosen from literally thousands of entries from across the globe.

Mail Bag

Dear Infocom:

I eagerly ripped open the envelope with the Infocom logo and quickly pulled out the latest edition of *The New Zork* ... wait! A little change threw me off balance -- but it was quickly regained. I opened the edition and turned to page 6. Ah, yes, page 6, home of puzzle number 11. I thought -- no, I prayed -- that I would be able to complete the program puzzle and win! Yes, me! Winner! Winner of the Infocom game of my choosing! I read about *Leather Goddesses of Phobos* and I wanted it. That would be the game of my choosing. Plenty of sex, action, sex, puzzles, sex, zany humor, sex; why, it had my name all over it! The tension within me built!

I looked at the puzzle. Then I looked at it once again. Puzzlement befell my shattered hopes and dreams! You had to match quotes with games! This got me to thinking. I personally have only two games (*Leather Goddesses of Phobos* would've been my third) so I recognized very few quotes (four to be exact). To win your puzzle, I would have to know dialogue from 17 games. Fine; how much would this be? I calculated it out to be \$654.15 plus 4% sales tax; if I ordered them through you, it would have been \$688.15. Being a college student on a very strict budget, I cannot afford \$600 for games in order to compete in your puzzles. This is very disconcerting to me. I love your newspaper, with all its wit, and I want to participate to the fullest. Please help me in the future. Thank you for your cooperation.

Admirably yours,
James Tibbits
Kalamazoo, MI

[Editor's reply: We've run several "one game" puzzles and even one "no games" puzzle. And it's possible to solve even our multiple-game puzzles with knowledge of just a few games. Besides, what's more important: your tuition or a new Infocom game? Don't answer that.]

Dear Infocom:

I just wanted to say that I couldn't believe how easy puzzle number 11 was. Even though the only Infocom games I own are *Hitchhiker's*, *Zork III*, and *A Mind Forever Voyaging*, I figured out the puzzle in less than 20 minutes. I only filled out seven numbers before I figured out I was drawing the legs of something, and in a few minutes after drawing and erasing I had completed the "dead man." I grabbed a back issue of a computer magazine and found an Infocom ad showing all of your game's covers. There was the cover of *Deadline*.

I suppose you'll get a few billion entries for the puzzle, but remember: I sent mine in first.

Sincerely,
John Sadowski
Buffalo, MN

Dear Infocom:

The snow fell at an ever-increasing rate, obscuring my view of the tree line ahead. The wind whistled through my cloak, and my lantern squeaked in the cold. The miles had trudged by at an ever-slowning rate, until I finally couldn't go on any further. I entered the small grove of trees and gratefully collapsed beneath a large tree with low branches. Totally exhausted, I did the only thing I could think of to pass the time 'til the end came: I whistled. As I whistled, a beautiful little bird flew over me into the branches of the tree. The end must be close, I thought; this is too familiar to be true.

Then the little bird dropped something on my head that was nothing like a brass bauble and flew away. Coincidentally, I realized that I had been whistling the theme song to the TV series *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. I decided to figure the odds of these two events happening together, hoping that it would take my mind off of the increasing force of the wind. I came up with a seven-digit number that was the same as the phone number of a girl who told me to do just what I had done: get lost in a snow storm. This drove me even further into despair. In my deep depression, I didn't notice I was sweating until I took off my cloak (actually, my jacket). A Chinook wind was passing through! By the way, the *Hitchhiker's Guide* has no info on a Chinook wind, so I'll tell you what it is: a warm wind that blows over the Rockies and raises the temperature. It raised my hopes too. All the snow melted and the sun came out, making the day quite beautiful, however leaving me still just as lost. I felt rather rested now, so I left the grove of trees and began trudging across a field. The ground began to rumble and shake, and the sky filled with mist! I looked around in terror and what should I behold stampeding over the hill straight at me? YAKS!?! In Montana? No, no, cows! I stood there dumbfounded long enough to wish I had an izyuk memorized before running as fast as I could, but slower than the herd.

I thought I heard something in the air behind me so I looked over my shoulder to check. Lo and

behold! Be still my beating heart! Keep running my beating feet! A helicopter! I was really glad I had looked back at the helicopter until I turned back around to see where I was running. When I woke up on the helicopter, they were still picking tree bark out of my face. Never mind that, though, I was rescued! Free to watch more reruns of *Gilligan's Island* and *Hogan's Heroes*! Free to solve *Zork* a twelfth time! Of course the snow storm came back in force. Fortunately, we crashed on top of three cows. Not only did they soften the blow, but I ate steak for four days until the forest rangers rescued me again.

Finally, I spied the lovely little quaint abode with boarded windows and a front door intentionally left blank that I called home. I wondered what I could have possibly done to deserve what happened to me. I opened my big mailbox with the usual difficulty (it hates to give up posted mail) and realized what it was: my copy of *The Status Line* had been in my mailbox for six days unopened! I quickly remedied that fault as I stepped inside. Reaching into my cabinet for a cup, I found one of my china cups was inexplicably missing, so I grabbed another and poured myself a cup of tea. The stories and news items were wonderful, but the thing I wanted to see most was the new puzzle contest. I flipped to it eagerly, but just as I opened it up, my head started to feel as funny as the tea tasted. Before I knew it, the floor rushed up to greet me. The police came by and drew lines around me before the ambulance took me away, but as I was wheeled out of my library (kitchen, actually), I saw those lines on the floor. That's it! I realized, I knew it all along.

"Deadline!" I creaked from the stretcher, "Deadline is the answer!" The police sergeant named Duffy asked me, "That T-shirt you're wearing is a large, isn't it?" I told Duffy, "No, it's a medium."

Interactive-affectionately yours,
Jon Ramer
Great Falls, MT

Dear Infocom:

My newsletter came with a distinct perfume (perhaps *Moonmist*) permeating the paper. My guess is that the newsletters are stored near the scratch-and-sniff cards used in the *Leather Goddesses of Phobos* game. On the other hand, my wife is convinced that the Infocom letter was perfumed because in the mail box it was sitting next to a letter from my (non-existent) lover. The perfume makes me a prime *Suspect*, and of course I hid the incriminating letter (according to her) but she managed to sniff out my *Infidelity* by paying attention to *Invisible Clues*. Our mutual trust, the *Cornerstone* of our marriage, is missing. She thinks some *Enchanter* or *Sorcerer* placed a love spell on me and that she, my lover and I are a *Starcrossed Trinity*. Now she is looking for a good *Spellbreaker*. I need an honest *Witness* to tell my wife the truth. Without your help, my wife and I will become *Cutthroats*. Be my *Wishbringer*, and tell my wife that I'm inno-scent. Until we get an answer, she has me *Suspended* upside-down with a rope, twenty-five *Fooblitzkys* above the ground. The future of my marriage (not to mention my life) rests in your hands. Please answer as soon as possible; she has given me a strict *Deadline*, after which the rope will be cut and I will make *Planetfall* with my fragile skull.

Sincerely,
Phillip Gabbard
New York, NY

The Status Line

Susan Goldman
Chief

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For the desktop publishing cartel:
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Bureaucracy: Adams' wit in triplicate

Continued from page 1

You'll soon find yourself entangled in a series of bureaucratic mishaps as

you attempt the seemingly simple task of getting to Paris. Along the way, you'll wrangle with a very

bureaucratic bank. And a very bewildering airport. And an eccentric assortment of characters ranging from a greedy llama to the paranoid owner of a camouflaged house. When you find yourself hanging upside down from a tree deep in the Zalagasan jungle, you know you're experiencing the outer limits of bureaucracy.

To make sure you are prepared for any eventuality, the packaging includes an official letter from your boss; a credit card application form (in triplicate); a skinny pencil; a helpful brochure from your bank; and a charter membership flyer for *Popular Paranoia* magazine.

Douglas Adams was assisted in writing *Bureaucracy* by the staff of Infocom, primarily the mysterious hacker W.E.B. "Fred" Morgan. He (she?) has worked on most Infocom products at one time or another. Mr. Morgan refuses to reveal any personal information about himself (herself?) other than a mailing address for cash and bearer bonds.

Bureaucracy will be available in March for the IBM, Apple II series, Macintosh, Atari ST, Commodore 128, and Amiga. Retail price is \$34.95 for the Commodore 128, and \$39.95 for all other computer systems.

InfoNews Roundup

Hollywood Hijinx/Bureaucracy InvisiClues

Now, for only \$2 more, you can get double the hints. That's right! For only \$9.95 you get two complete sets of InvisiClues for two fantastic Infocom games, all in one booklet. InvisiClues Hint Booklets will give you only the help you need, when you need it. If you become stuck, all you have to do is find the question in your InvisiClues Hint Booklet that pertains to your problem, run your InvisiClues latent image marker (included in your InvisiClues kit) over the first answer and the answer appears before your very eyes. Be on the lookout for the Hollywood Hijinx™/Bureaucracy InvisiClues Hint Booklets and maps in mid-May.

Our circulation tops Dallas Times Herald

Hard to believe? We're a bit skeptical ourselves. The Status Line mailing list has topped a whopping 240,000. Just to make sure that there's not one avid fan out there who is receiving 100,000 copies of The Status Line, we've decided to undertake the massive task of updating our list. Those of you from whom we have not heard in the last 12 months will find a Renewal Card bound into your issue of The Status Line. If you do not return the card, we will assume that you are no longer interested in receiving The Status Line. Thanks for your help.

Mitch, it's only a game

On July 10, 1986, Infocom beat softball rival Lotus Development in a hard-fought game. The final score was 14 to 13.

On July 11, 1986, the news broke that Lotus founder and Chairman Mitch Kapor was resigning his active role in the company.

While none of the news stories revealed the REAL reason for Kapor's resignation, Infocom soft-ball fans were not fooled.

A blithering idiom

In its November issue, the German magazine "Happy Computer" reviewed Infocom's *Leather Goddesses of Phobos*™ (which, in German, is "Die Leder-Gottinnen von Phobos").

Immediately, Infocom's resident German semi-translators began struggling through the review, valiantly attempting to wrestle those thirty-seven syllable German words into submission.

The sentence which gave them the most trouble was one which read, "Programmierer Steve Meretzky ... holt vielmehr zum groben 'Durch den Kakao ziehen' aus." This apparently translated to "Programmer Steve Meretzky likes to drag people through cocoa." Naturally, this had everyone around here scratching their heads until someone discovered that "dragging someone through cocoa" is a German idiom for kidding someone.

All the news that's fit to print

Recently, an Infocom author was visiting the venerable newsroom of the venerable *New York Times* for an interview about the author's not-so-venerable latest work.

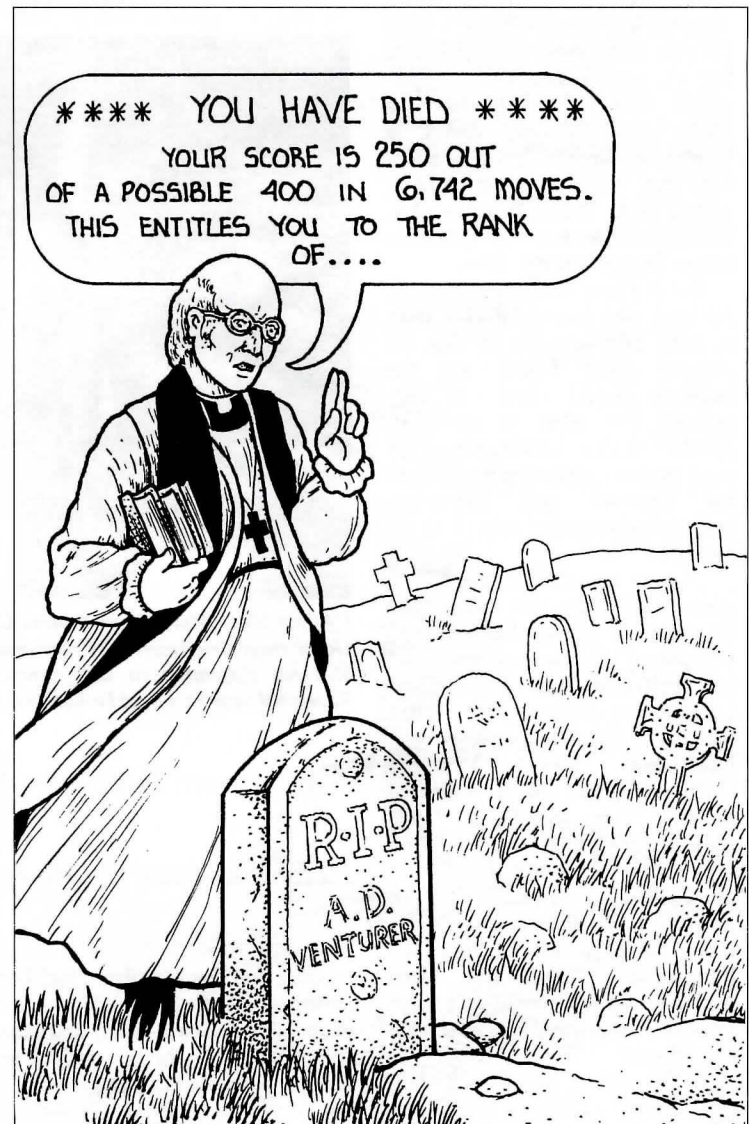
Naturally, the author took this occasion to vent his disgust at the legal staff of the *Times* (which recently bullied Infocom into changing the name of this newsletter from *The New York Times* to *The Status Line*). The *Times* reporter proceeded to lead our author to the newsroom bulletin board.

There, in the very center of that crowded board, was a copy of the article from *The Status Line* about the forced name change. The headline, "Times to Infocom: Drop Dead" was circled with a fat red editing pen. Apparently, the folks in the newsroom don't hold their legal department in much higher stead than we do.

These classics titles for just \$14.95

Starcross,[®] *Suspended*,[®] *Infidel*,[®] *Seastalker*,[®] and *Deadline*.[®] These award winning titles are now available only direct from Infocom - allowing us to pass on some extraordinary savings to you, our

faithful readers. Each of these games, ordinarily a \$35 - \$50 value, is an unbeatable \$14.95. At this price, they're a must addition to any software library. (See enclosed Order Form for further details.)



Lori Glickman and Bradley Schenck

Infocom pumpkin play a smash

The annual Infocom Halloween Party included many of the features one normally associates with Halloween parties: costumes, heavily spiked punch, bobbing for pumpkins, and so forth. It also included one feature not normally seen at a Halloween party: an interactive skit.

The skit, entitled Halloween Hijinx, told the story of a small town. Its cemetery is coveted by a huge condominium developer, and the deed to the cemetery, the last stumbling block between the developer and a hideous housing project, has mysteriously vanished.

As the action of the skit began, the main character (You) and his two friends (Zebulon and Jedediah) are heading out on Halloween for some trick-or-treating. They've decided to keep their eyes and ears open for any clues about the missing deed.

Characters in the skit included the church's forgetful pastor, Cyrus McGee; incredibly corrupt Mayor Slimebucket; a town bully named Chuggo; and elderly spinster Elmira Bat, the town gossip. Other townspeople were Doctor Goodbody, a kindly philanthropist; Abdul, a suspicious foreigner living in a tent near the cemetery; and Abdul's trained mule. The mule, named Mr. Zeke, could answer any questions whose answer was a number.

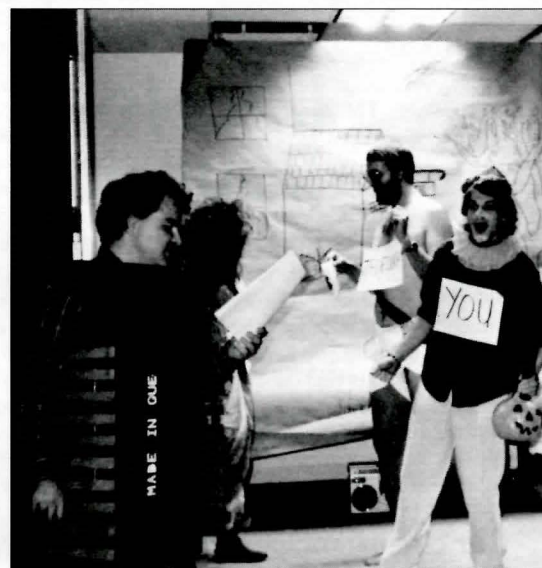
The skit was interactive in much the same way that an Infocom story is. After each action in the skit, the players would freeze, and the audience would shout out suggestions for what to do next. InfoAuthor Dave Lebling played the skit's "parser," screening inputs from the audience and forwarding appropriately-worded ones on to the players.

Players appeared in the skit in whatever costumes they had worn to the party. InfoTester Max Buxton, who played You, came as Punch, and his girlfriend was Judy. Dave Lebling was costumed as a giant computer chip; thus his parser role. InfoAuthor Steve Meretzky (Jedediah) and his wife were dressed as Baby Time and Father Time, respectively. InfoTester Tom Bok (Elmira Bat) was a nun, InfoAuthor Stu Galley (Abdul) was a beatnik, InfoEditor Jon Palace (Goodbody) was a basket of dirty laundry, and InfoAuthor "Hollywood" Dave Anderson was costumed as a huge *Leather Goddesses of Phobos* scratch 'n' sniff card.

As the story of the skit unfolded, the audience discovered that Slimebucket and Goodbody were in



Elderly spinster and town gossip, Elmira Bat, (played by InfoTester Tomas Bok, in the nun costume) perched in her window overlooking the town square, provides our adventurers with a much needed clue.



"You" (played by InfoTester Max Buxton, dressed as Punch, of Punch and Judy fame) waits for instructions from the Parser (played by InfoImp Dave Lebling in the computer chip costume).



InfoImp Steve Meretzky convinces Computer and Video Game magazine American Correspondent/Photographer Marshal Rosenthal to strip down and join the fun. Rosenthal said he would be back next year



Later at the cast party, InfoImp "Hollywood" Dave Anderson discovers the chainsaw was not a prop, but an actual working model. His handywork took first-place in the pumpkin toss.

"Halloween Hijinx brings new life to a dead holiday."

—Vincent Canby, New York Times

"The chainsaw finale raised the hair on my neck."

—Rex Reed, New York Daily News

cahoots, and that Goodbody had kept the absent-minded pastor occupied while the Mayor stole the deed from the church. The deed was discovered locked in a chest buried in the cemetery. As the skit reached its climax, Goodbody was overpowered through the use of Abdul's voodoo doll, but Slimebucket arrived at that moment with a gun. Suddenly, Slimebucket was jumped by Chuggo, who was

mad because the cemetery was the location of his secret clubhouse. But it wasn't over yet! Goodbody recovered and came after our heroes with an electric chainsaw, and the audience had one final puzzle to solve: PULL OUT THE PLUG!

Much later in the evening, the chainsaw was used for pumpkin carving.

How much you wanna bet?

Dinner in Paris or Tokyo: A history of InfoBets

Infocom might just be the Atlantic City of the software world. For some folks here, wagering is more than a diverting pastime; it's a way of life.

Perhaps the culprit is one-too-many trade shows in Las Vegas. Perhaps it's just a by-product of working in such an intense atmosphere of high-stakes high-tech entrepreneurship. But whatever the reason, whenever one Infocommie says "X," and another one says "Y," there's going to be a wager any minute. You can bet on it.

For example, take Info-Marketeer

Mike Dornbrook, a cheery optimist, and InfoAuthor Brian Moriarty, an industrial-strength pessimist. When Brian's *Wishbringer* was released in June of 1985, Mike bet him that it would sell at least 45,000 copies by the end of that year. By December, *Wishbringer* sales were nearly double that figure, so Mike ended up enjoying a fine dinner at the swank Parker House restaurant at Brian's expense. Seeking revenge, Brian made the same bet in 1986 for his second game, *Trinity*. As this issue was going to press, that bet was

going right down to the wire ...

InfoAuthor Steve Meretzky made the first in a series of bets with Dornbrook after Mike predicted that people would send the postcards from their *Planetfall* package to Infocom as fan mail. So Steve bet him that less than 100 postcards would be received during the first year after *Planetfall*'s release. When only 3 postcards arrived by September 1, 1984, Steve cheerfully ran up a sizable tab at The Ritz. Mike, by being off by a factor of 33, set an InfoBetting record that has never been equalled since.

Those same two were at it again a few months later. Mike bet that *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* would, some time before the end of 1985, hit the number-one spot on Softsel's Hot List, which was then the industry's bellwether bestseller list. When the game hit number one in early 1985 and stayed there for most of the year, Steve was obliged to pay off the terms of the wager: six hours of manual labor. Imagine all those people who bought *Hitchhiker's*, unaware that they were indirectly helping Mike Dornbrook get a new patio!

Steve swore revenge, and bet Mike

that "no way would *Leather Goddesses of Phobos* sell more than 87,500 copies" by the end of 1986. The stakes were raised: this one was for EIGHT hours of manual labor. At last report, Steve was rumored to be stocking up on shovels, pickaxes, and a good steady whip.

But the optimism of a Mike Dornbrook and the pessimism of a Brian Moriarty pale in comparison to that of Marc Blank, co-author of *Zork*, and Brian "Spike" Berkowitz, co-author of *Cornerstone*. In fact, it was Spike who coined such immortal InfoPhrases as "It'll never work" and "It's worse than that."

Marc's first bet with Spike was that Infocom's sales would top \$5 million in 1983, at a time when projections were for \$3 million. Sales passed \$6 million, doubling the forecast and quadrupling the 1982 figure. Spike paid off at The Ritz. The next year, Dornbrook took over for Marc and wagered that sales would break \$15 million. This time it was Brian's turn to sup for free, as sales "only" increased by 70%.

Marc returned next year, betting Spike that sales would more than

Please turn to page 9

California Academy of Sciences debuts 'Marathon of the Minds'

By Stu Galley

It's the middle of the night in a museum of science in a major North American city. The exhibits, drained of visitors, seem larger and darker than usual. A lone human guard strolls the empty corridors over and over, periodically joining the other guard at the museum entrance for a cup of coffee between rounds.

But wait! All is not quiet on this particular night. One exhibit hall is brightly lit, filled with teams of teenagers who are plotting strategies, trying experiments, tapping at keyboards, and occasionally breaking into cheers. Fortified with caffeinated soft drinks and vitamin-rich juice, these brave souls spend the whole night venturing through a fictional world, searching for a path to the end of a story, hoping to win a personal computer for their school.

It's true! I've seen it myself! It's Infocom's "Marathon of the Minds"! It's a sneak preview of an unreleased Infocom interactive fiction, with the author attending in person! It's a chance for high-school students to win fabulous prizes! And it may invade your city sooner than you think!

It came to the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park on November 8-9. In the Hall of Africa, the stuffed animals, still frozen in their tableaux of jungle and grassland, saw 20 teams of three people each dive into *Hollywood Hijinx* under the friendly eye of its author, "Hollywood" Dave Anderson. At a discreet distance, journalists from local newspapers got their own chance. While the "Space Nerds" team, composed of finalists in

NASA's Journalist in Space program, tackled standard-level *Hijinx*, more laid-back players tried their hand at introductory-level *Moonmist*, which was just appearing for sale in stores.

After a few hours, the adult teams threw in the towel and called it a fun night. After more than 12 hours, the contest concluded with not one but TWO winning teams: Corey Gates, Mike Greengard, and Greg Templeton from Contra Costa Christian, and Dan Connolly, Eric Hedstrom, and Craig McLaughlin from Amador Valley High School. (Why were there two winners instead of one? It's a long story, but basically the teams finished so close together that both deserved to win.)

The next Marathon of the Minds hit the Pacific Science Center in Seattle Center on November 21-22. This time the local electronic media hopped on the bandwagon, with three TV stations doing stories, including two live remote reports within minutes of each other on the nightly news. Three radio stations joined in with reports, interviews, and a series of give-aways for listeners. Several newspapers also covered this event.

This time 26 teams from high schools all over Washington state tackled *Hijinx* in a large two-story hall that was empty after an exhibit from India moved out and before an exhibit of model railroads moved in. After 16 hours, one team finished: Brian Lane, Mark Montague, and Cougar Van Eaton from Eatonville High School. And the Infocom Marathon team headed back to Boston to prepare for future events.



Michael McKenzie

Readers Poll #2

Hi, Paula the Pollster here! As you might recall, I conducted a Reader Poll in the Spring '86 issue of The Status Line. Your response to the survey was overwhelming. In fact, I was so overwhelmed that I suffered a nervous breakdown and spent the remainder of 1986 recovering. But now I'm better and I'm back and I've managed to compile some information from the mountains of surveys you all sent me. Here is a sampling of what I was able to conclude:

Of the people who responded to the survey, 82% were men and 18% were women. 46% of the respondents were age 20 or under and another 46% were between the ages of 20 and 41. The remaining 8% of the respondents were over the age of 40.

When asked what was your favorite game, *ZORK I* was the top choice. *HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY* came in second and *PLANETFALL* was third. This was really not so surprising because *Zork I* and *Hitchhiker's* are Infocom's biggest sellers and therefore are the two games with which most people are familiar.

But what about those games that haven't been played as widely? Maybe if you tried one of those you'd like it the best. So I looked at what the experts (people who have played 15 or more games) thought were the best games. These Infocom aficionados also voted for *ZORK I* as their favorite. But they rated *PLANETFALL* as the number two game and *ENCHANTER*® as their third choice! If you haven't already, maybe you should check out these two titles and see what you've been missing.

What are the most important aspects of an Infocom game? In order of importance, here's what aspects you felt contributed most to your enjoyment of an Infocom game:

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Attention to detail | 5. Character interaction |
| 2. Storyline | 6. Puzzles |
| 3. Descriptive prose | 7. Exploration and mapping |
| 4. Humor | 8. Packaging |

Your favorite categories of interactive fiction were FANTASY in first place, SCIENCE FICTION as the #2 favorite, followed by ADVENTURE in the third slot. This held true across all age groups. Although women preferred FANTASY, ADVENTURE, and COMEDY respectively, they represented too small a faction to influence the overall vote. Come on ladies! Get in there and let our voice be heard!

When asked what you thought was the most difficult Infocom game, you said *HITCHHIKER'S* was the toughest. *SPELLBREAKER*™ came in second and *ZORK II* was the third most difficult.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, *WISHBRINGER* was ranked the easiest. *ZORK I* was the second easiest and *THE WITNESS*® and *SEASTALKER* tied as the third. These votes, however, are somewhat misleading. Just as in the voting for the favorite Infocom game, some titles are named more often because they are the titles that more of you own. There might be some Infocom games that are easier or harder than the ones you've played, but you just don't know it. So once again I turned to the experts - the people who have played at least 15 different Infocom games. Here's what they said:

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Most difficult... | Easiest... |
| 1. <i>SPELLBREAKER</i> | 1. <i>WISHBRINGER</i> |
| 2. <i>SUSPENDED</i> | 2. <i>SEASTALKER</i> |
| 3. <i>HITCHHIKERS</i> | 3. <i>THE WITNESS</i> |

Now, in Reader Poll #2, I would like to find out what you think about The Status Line itself. Please take a few moments to fill out the following form. And pay no heed to my state of mental health - I feel stronger than ever and am eager to arise to the poll-taking challenges of 1987! So let the piles upon piles of polls pour in!

THE STATUS LINE READER POLL #2

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: () _____ Age: _____ Sex: _____

Computer brand and model: _____

How many Infocom interactive fiction games do you own? _____

How many Infocom InvisiClue booklets do you own? _____

Do you own Infocom's database, *Cornerstone*™? ____ yes ____ no

On the average, how many people in addition to you read YOUR copy of The Status Line? (check one)

____1 ____2 ____3 ____4 ____5 or more

Listed below are various aspects of a typical issue of The Status Line. By circling the appropriate number, please indicate how you feel about each aspect.

	Love It		Indifferent		Hate It
Articles about Infocom employees	1	2	3	4	5
New product information	1	2	3	4	5
Articles about the creation of Infocom games	1	2	3	4	5
Puzzles	1	2	3	4	5
Cartoons	1	2	3	4	5
Contests	1	2	3	4	5
Letters to the editor	1	2	3	4	5
Humor	1	2	3	4	5
Photo essays	1	2	3	4	5
Cornerstone articles	1	2	3	4	5
Hints to games	1	2	3	4	5
Technical support issues	1	2	3	4	5
Articles about fellow Infocom game players	1	2	3	4	5
Yak Facts	1	2	3	4	5

Have you ever tried to solve one of The Status Line (or NZT) puzzles?

____ yes ____ no

Have you ever sent in your Status Line puzzle solution to Infocom?

____ yes ____ no

If you are familiar with The Status Line Puzzles, please complete the three following sentences:

1. The Status Line puzzles are usually...

____ too easy ____ too hard ____ just right.

2. I prefer puzzles that require...

____ in depth... ____ general... ____ very little...
knowledge of Infocom games.

3. I like puzzles that involve... (check all that apply)

____ word problems (cryptogram, crossword puzzle, etc.)

____ math problems

____ a visual (maze, pictures, etc.)

____ trivia (science, sports, film, literature, etc.)

Please use the space below for suggestions for feature articles, regular columns, or any ideas that would improve The Status Line. Use additional pages if needed. Thanks!!

Please clip out or photocopy this form and mail to :

Infocom, Inc.

Attn: Paula's Poll #2

125 CambridgePark Drive

Cambridge, MA 02140


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Infocom interactive fiction titles for the Hewlett Packard 110/150, Tandy 1000, 1200 and 2000, and Royal Alphatronic personal computers are available through their

 NOTE: These games require 128K.

* NOTE: this game requires 512K.

¹ Available exclusively through respective machine manufacturer.

² NOTE: Requires IBM PC, XT, AT or 100% compatible; PC DOS 2.0, 2.1, 3.0, or 3.1; Minimum 384K; 2 floppy disk drives or 1 floppy & 1 hard disk drive.

³ NOTE: Requires graphics card; Composite monitor recommended; Not available for PCjr.

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through 7/31/87

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7	IM5-CO1 \$34.95	IS3-CO1 \$34.95	IS4-CO1 \$24.95	IS5-CO5 \$34.95	IA3-CO1 \$34.95	IC1-CO1 \$34.95	IA4-CO1 \$34.95	IC2-CO5 \$34.95	IZ0-CO1 \$14.95	IM1-CO1 \$14.95	IS1-CO1 \$14.95	IS2-CO1 \$14.95	IA1-CO1 \$14.95	IA2-CO1 \$14.95		ID2-CO1 \$4.95
8	IM5-CO4 \$39.95	IS3-CO4 \$39.95	IS4-CO4 \$29.95	IS5-CO4 \$39.95	IA3-CO4 \$39.95	IC1-CO4 \$39.95	IA4-CO4 \$39.95	IC2-CO4 \$39.95	IZ0-CO4 \$14.95	IM1-CO4 \$14.95	IS1-CO4 \$14.95	IS2-CO4 \$14.95	IA1-CO4 \$14.95	IA2-CO4 \$14.95		
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12			IS4-EP1 \$14.95		IA3-EP1 \$14.95											
13	IM5-IB2 \$39.95	IS3-IB2 \$39.95	IS4-IB2 \$29.95	IS5-IB1 \$39.95	IA3-IB1 \$39.95	IC1-IB2 \$39.95	IA4-IB2 \$39.95	IC2-IB1 \$39.95	IZ0-IB2 \$14.95	IM1-IB2 \$14.95	IS1-IB2 \$14.95	IS2-IB1 \$14.95	IA1-IB2 \$14.95	IA2-IB2 \$14.95	GS1-IB1 ³ \$39.95	ID2-IB2 \$4.95
14			IS4-KA1 \$14.95		IA3-KA1 \$14.95					IM1-KA1 \$14.95	IS1-KA1 \$14.95	IS2-KA1 \$14.95		IA2-KA1 \$14.95		ID2-KA1 \$4.95
15	IM5-IB2 \$39.95	IS3-MS1 \$39.95	IS4-IB2 \$29.95		IA3-IB2 \$39.95	IC1-IB2 \$39.95	IA4-IB2 \$39.95		IZ0-IB2 \$14.95	IM1-MS1 \$14.95	IS1-MS1 \$14.95	IS2-MS1 \$14.95	IA1-MS1 \$14.95	IA2-MS1 \$14.95		ID2-IB2 \$4.95
16		IS3-NE2 \$14.95								IM1-NE2 \$14.95	IS1-NE2 \$14.95	IS2-NE2 \$14.95	IA1-NE2 \$14.95			
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18		IS3-OS1 \$14.95	IS4-OS1 \$14.95		IA3-OS1 \$14.95							IS2-OS1 \$14.95	IA1-OS1 \$14.95			ID2-OS1 \$4.95
19		IS3-DE1 \$14.95								IM1-DE1 \$14.95	IS1-DE1 \$14.95	IS2-DE1 \$14.95	IA1-DE1 \$14.95			
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21	IM5-IB2 \$39.95	IS3-TI1 \$14.95	IS4-IB2 \$29.95		IA3-IB2 \$39.95	IC1-IB2 \$39.95	IA4-IB2 \$39.95		IZ0-IB2 \$14.95	IM1-TI1 \$14.95	IS1-TI1 \$14.95	IS2-TI1 \$14.95	IA1-TI1 \$14.95	IA2-IB2 \$14.95		ID2-IB2 \$4.95
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respective manufacturers.

WITNESS, STARCROSS, SUSPENDED, PLANETFALL, INFIDEL, SEASTALKER, CUTTHROATS, SUSPECT, and WISH-
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Starcross® by Dave Lebling (Expert, 1982). You play a down-at-the-heels asteroid miner who discovers a strange alien artifact which has entered the solar system. Once aboard the artifact, you'll meet a number of alien races, including the Rat-Ants, and you are drawn into a puzzle that could give mankind the stars.



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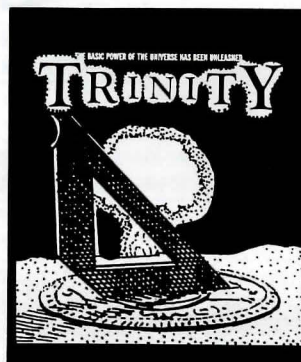
Seastalker® by Stuart Galley and Jim Lawrence (Introductory, 1984). From the videophone in your laboratory, you learn that the Aquadome—an underwater research lab—is being attacked by a "Snark," a giant sea monster. So you're off to the rescue in a special two-seater submarine. An easy game with plenty of hints, full of inventions and faithful helpers at your side.



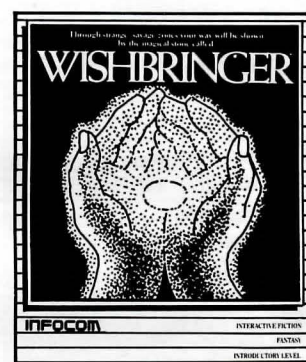
Deadline® by Marc Blank (Expert, 1982). Industrialist Marshall Robner is found dead in his Library, the door securely locked from the inside. An obvious suicide. Then why is everyone so defensive? The cast of suspects includes Marshall's charming wife Leslie; their petulant son George; and the family's friends, staff, and business acquaintances.

INFOCOM POSTERS

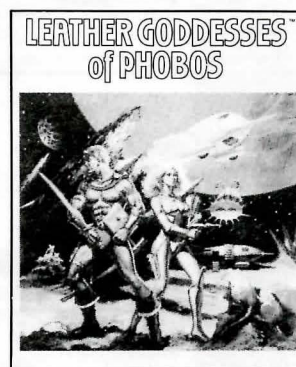
Product	Leather Goddesses Poster	Wishbringer Poster	Trinity Poster	Infocom Poster
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FRONT



BACK



FRONT



BACK

InfoDream Date: Meet Mrs. Right

After months of soul-wrenching deliberation, a winner has been selected in the InfoDream Date Contest. The judges have chosen Mary Ann Hallenborg of New York, New York.

When told of her good fortune Mary Ann began laughing and confessed she was married at which point we began laughing and said marital status meant nothing to Mike. Mary Ann was very excited and said she would visit Infocom in the near future. She only had one question, "Was I the only entry?"

Well Mary Ann, the samplings shown here should prove to you that you are not alone in your pursuit of an evening of interaction with Infocom's Director of Marketing, Mike Dornbrook. Here is Mary Ann's winning entry:

InfoDream Date,

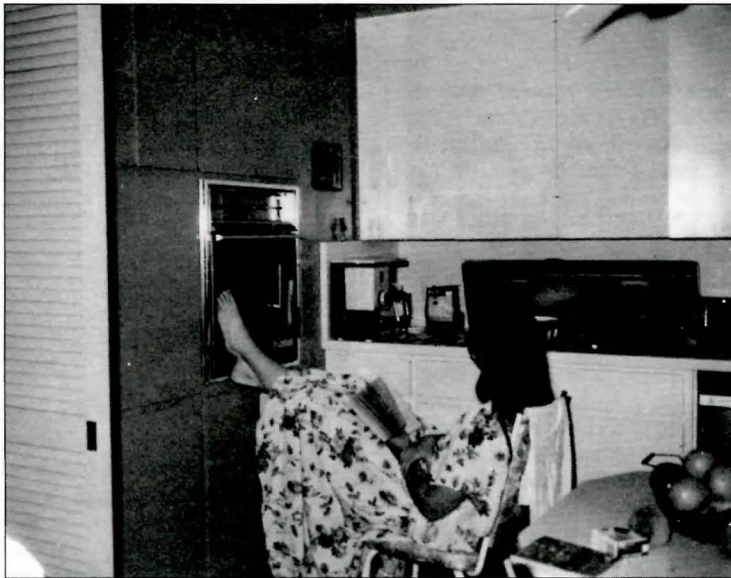
I've been crazy with desire since laying eyes upon that big slice of beefcake, Mike Dornbrook, on page 12 of the summer edition of "The Status Line". What a photo - arms posed seductively over his balding head; eyes beckoning "take me". And, he's got a job - what a MAN!!!! Well, enough about Mikey.

I am a kinky goddess who fills her brass bikini quite nicely and the closest thing you'll find to Lane Mastodon this side of Mars. Not only will I kiss your kneecaps, but I also can afford an air-shuttle ticket to Boston (round-trip if necessary). I don't enjoy but will eat Polynesian food and know all the words to "Tiny Bubbles" (a polynesian classic made popular by Don Ho).

If you care about Mikey, you'll choose me. We'll dine and dance, yak it up at Club Zork or even Joe's Bar. We'll scratch and sniff. It will be a night to remember.

Yours very truly,

Mary Ann Hallenborg



Marian Apgar—"I prefer to remain enigmatic!"

Marian promised psychological purge

Dear Jim,

I would like to have a date with Mike because I'm quite sure that he would find it both comfortably familiar and psychologically purging in spending the day with someone who has the same name as his mother.

Sincerely,

Marian Apgar

Napa, CA

"It's better than a poke in the eye"

Dear InfoDream Date Contest:

We would like to go on a date with Mikey because why not? As Bert in Mary Poppins asserts "It's better than a poke in the eye."

We are 2 slightly middle-aged housewives that are also computer nuts. We'd love to see where our Zorks and Witness got their start.

Sincerely,

Bobbe Anderson & Sue Arkuszewski

N. Easton, MA



Photo submitted by John Gerecht

Well, we had to run the photo

Mikey,

Because of my name and because this is NOT a real photo of me, I bet I don't win the contest! But I bet that this does go up on someone's wall or bulletin board! Love The Status Line and think your company has a great corporate sense of humor!

Good luck on your date,

John Gerecht

Olympia, Washington

If not Mikey, is anyone else available?

Attention: Jim Lange

I can see myself now, arriving at Infocom. The Vogon driver will open the door to our Mercury Lynx limo, and I'll sweep up the stairs in my new Norwegian blue fox (Spiegel's, \$995) and Addidas. Mikey will of course be respendent in a tasteful club tie and Swatch watch.

In adoration,

Naomi B. Orbeck

Odessa, TX

This cat wants to cut the small talk

Dear Mikey,

I've enclosed a photo, and I think it's a good likeness. Let's cut the small talk,
Please turn to page 9

Religious fringe has own ideas about Infocom

By Steve Meretzky

Pat Robertson isn't President yet, but that hasn't stopped a lot of religious fringe types from crawling out of the woodwork lately. At least Infocom's woodwork, anyway.

For years, we've been receiving occasional letters from ladies and gentlemen around the country who insist that our Zork and Enchanter

games are evil because they deal with magic. The use of magic, even in fiction, apparently promotes all sorts of nasty things, such as devil worship or forgetting to send money to Jimmy Swaggart.

The recent wave of activity began a bit more than a year ago, with a letter from a woman in California who wanted a full refund

for Zork I. "I had no idea when I bought it that it was dealing with demonistic realms ... I was appalled that my ten year old son was being influenced in this way ... What kind of perversions are you trying to promote in youngsters?"

Shortly after that, a Cape Cod woman, a self-described "kamikaze for Jesus," discovered the Zork

decision novel that her son had purchased at a school book fair. She immediately recognized the book for what it was, a dangerous promoter of violence and demonic worship, and attempted to have it banned from the school library. (See "Zork Banned," The New York Times, Volume IV, Number 4, Fall 1985, page 1. Also see "Zork book ban to be debated by Dennis-Yarmouth School Committee," The Register, Yarmouth Port, Mass., issue of 5/16/85, page 1.)

You MUST have seen our advertisement for The Enchanter Trilogy (which depicts a wizard stirring a bubbling cauldron of purple smoke). Because it was so eye-catching that a whole slew of religious zealots discovered that Infocom was actually the Great Satan. For example, one letter carrier dropped us a note to say that he was refusing to deliver any copies of Boy's Life which ran this ad.

Another person sent in a copy of the ad with all the offending phrases circled: "magic" and "spells" and "powers" and "sorcerer" and "Circle of Enchanters"—not to mention "thrilling proportions," which must surely have spilled directly from the mouth of Lucifer himself. Written in the corner of the ad: "No thanks! The world has got enough evil in it! We don't need made up evil from FOOLS like you!" The person also wrote "Jesus (heart's) [sic] you!" across the Sorcerer package, obviously mistaking it for a car bumper.

Most recently comes this letter from Ocean Grove, New Jersey, hardly the heart of the Bible Belt: "I was looking through a mag. [sic] I saw your ad. I hope you are with plain tricks and not magic. Just what infocom [sic] means I dont [sic] know - I hope the U.S. gets back to the faith of our Fathers. [sic] Amen." Enclosed with this note were several pamphlets and articles, most annotated with scribbles like "Never take no 666 it is the number of the antichrist -- it leads to everlasting fire." In a new twist, Infocom's godless magic was linked to godless Communism: "Deals with the Communist are woe woe woe woe" was scrawled on the pamphlet entitled "The Communist Plan for the Conquest of the U.S.A."

That brings you completely up-to-date on our contacts with the hardcore religious right. But then again, can you trust any information coming from well-known Satanic cultists like us?

Finally, if anyone who thinks
Please turn to page 9

A line of strange characters on my status line

Question: A line of strange characters -- arrows, brackets, and numbers -- appears on my status line when using the IBM PC-DOS/MS-DOS 2.0 diskette.

Answer: These are ASCII characters which appear if the DOS file, ANSI.SYS, hasn't been loaded. Go through the INSTALL program again. To load ANSI, be sure to reboot the system (by pressing CTL, ALT, and DEL simultaneously) after the installation is complete. If rebooting has no effect, be sure that the DOS file ANSI.SYS resides on your DOS disk (the root directory of hard disks). Also be sure that the CONFIG.SYS has the line which reads: device=ansi.sys. You may need to create a CONFIG.SYS file using the DOS EDLIN or COPY CON command to include a line: device=ansi.sys. (TI PRO and DEC users do not have the ANSI file on their DOS directories.)

Question: Why am I having problems loading Infocom games on my Commodore 128 with 1571 drives?

Answer: Some 1571 drives, when starting up, default to 1571 mode instead of 1541 mode. A one-line BASIC command found on page 5 of your 1571 Owner's Manual will put you in 1541 mode: OPEN 1,8,15,"U0>M0" (note that 0 is zero, not "oh").

Question: Are there any Cornerstone user groups which I can join?

Answer: Infocom does not sponsor any user groups, but individuals may certainly form their own groups. In particular, Mr. Michael Forrest wants to get together with other Cornerstone users in the Rockville, Maryland, area, and Mr. James Kelly is interested in starting a group in the Oak Parks, Illinois, area. Anyone interested may contact Mr. Forrest at (301) 443-6650. Mr. Kelly can be reached at (312) 848-9650.

Question: How can I change the order of the attributes in my file in DEFINE mode?

Answer: Cornerstone keeps the attributes in the file in the order in which you typed them. You cannot change the order. What you CAN do is create a report format which shows the attributes in the order you wish. Remember, by saving your report format under the name VIEW, UPDATE, or SELECT, your format will appear as the default format when you enter that mode.

Question: I put some headings and totals on my

report, but when I print the report, the headings and totals don't print. What's wrong?

Answer: If you formatted the headings and totals for the report by using REPORT FORMAT HEADER and REPORT FORMAT TOTAL, you must do a REPORT SHOW HEADER and REPORT SHOW TOTAL to get the headings and totals to appear on the screen. Whatever you see on the screen is what prints out when you enter PRINT mode.

Question: I entered my Zip Code attribute as a NUMBER, but now I want it to be a STRING so I can combine it with City and State for my mailing labels. How can I do it?

Answer: Create a new STRING attribute with an Initial Value of NUMBER_TO_STRING(Numeric Zip Code attribute name,0). Recompute this attribute to copy in all the Zip Codes. Delete the numeric Zip Code attribute. Take the Initial Value off the new STRING Zip Code attribute. And you're all set!

Question: How can I print wider than 80 columns?

Answer: We get this question quite a bit at Cornerstone Support, and the answer is really quite

simple. All you need to do is to get the information you want to print on the screen and enter REPORT FORMAT RECORDS from VIEW mode. Use the MOVE FIELD command to move the fields beyond the 80th position. You'll want to start with the field furthest to the right to make room for the others.

Question: My database crashed and now I find out that my only backup contains the same error. What can I do?

Answer: We cannot stress enough the need for keeping a series of backups of your database, especially if you do a lot of data entry. Many people simply keep backing up onto the same disk. However, if you have a separate backup after each data entry session, then you can minimize your losses by restoring a backup that is at most a few days old. For example, we have a database that keeps track of all the Cornerstone registration cards we receive. These cards are entered twice per week and a BACKUP ALL FILES is done after each data entry session. A series of 5 backups are kept and the most recent backup is done on the oldest backup disk in the series.

Also a reminder: Building Applications with Cornerstone is available through Infocom at 1-800-262-6868 for \$14.95. Don't miss out!

Customer Support
Q&A

More about InfoBets

Continued from page 5

double. The stakes were raised: dinner at Lutece in New York City, including transportation. Pessimism won for the second year in a row; sales "only" went up 20%.

Then came the granddaddy of InfoBets. The bettors: Marc and Spike. The bet: whether Infocom stock would be publicly traded at a price of at least \$20 a share by June 30, 1987. The stakes: dinner in Paris, including transportation and lodging. When Activision purchased Infocom during 1986, the sale price worked out to significantly less than \$20 per share of Infocom stock. (We can't reveal the actual price, but this is the only bet which rivals Mike Dornbrook's error factor.) Spike has not yet collected; as he and Marc are both now living on the west coast, an amendment to dinner in Tokyo has been discussed.

More recently, InfoBetting has taken some rather silly turns, with bets being waged over such odd points as the lyrics of "Puff the Magic Dragon" and the number of calories in a banana. The most interesting bet of the last year, however, involved Spike, InfoPrez Joel Berez, and InfoSales Manager Gabby Accardi. The winner, the first person to lose 15 pounds, would get an all-expenses paid trip to Bermuda! The bet ended in indecisive confusion, but Spike and Joel took Gabby to Bermuda anyway. The trio has since been known as "The Bermuda Triangle."

Religious fringe

Continued from page 666

that Wishbringer erodes the moral fabric of America is actually reading this, we have a message for you: Keep those letters coming! They're really entertaining! Write to:

Infocom Inc.
125 CambridgePark Drive
Cambridge, MA 02140
Attn: Frothing Nutcake Dept.

Advertise
in this space

Contact
Miss Love

617-492-6000

Hey Datemeisters, looking for the rest of those letters

Continued from page 7

o.k. Mikey? A cat's life is a short one, we only get one or two big thrills out of the whole deal. I think you could be one of those thrills.

Hopefully yours,
Whiskers, the wonder cat
Somewhere on Long Island

I don't.
Sincerely,
Rita Hao
Knoxville, TN

Dear Mr. Lange:

I want a date with Mikey because, frankly, I think Infocom owes me one. July 1984 marked both my husband's discovery of *Zork* and the end of our love life. Being awakened at three a.m. by a scraggle-faced, bleary-eyed man muttering something about a babel fish hardly makes me want

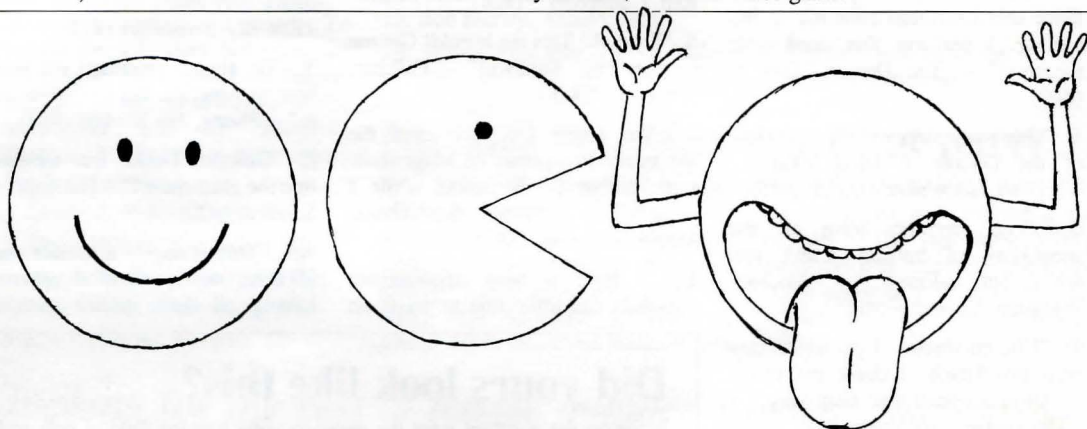
That's 50 words. I have to stop.
You know, Mikey is really kinda cute. Tell you what, I'll even

pay for dinner, and we can leave my husband back at the office playing *Leather Goddesses of Phobos*.

Yours truly,
Jacqueline M. Kiffe
Bryan, TX

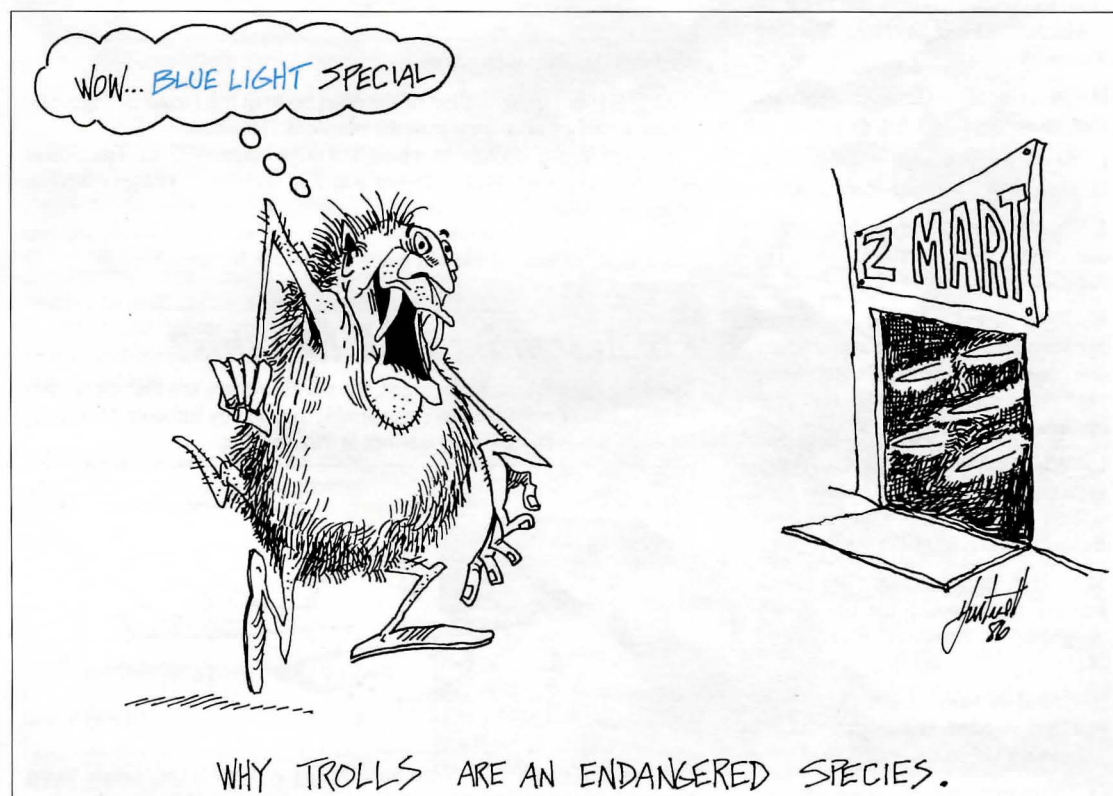
Do you have an idea for a contest?

Send it to us, attention Pat Sajak. If we use your idea, we'll send you a free game.



EVOLUTION of an ATTITUDE

D. Anthony Mayette



WHY TROLLS ARE AN ENDANGERED SPECIES.

E. Patrick Hartnett

Match the quotes: Answers to puzzle number 11

In Puzzle #11, we asked you to match some quotes from Infocom stories with the characters who said them. Then, you had to use that information to assign numbers to a series of dots. Finally, you had to connect the dots and use the resulting graphic to identify a game. To begin with, here are the answers to the matching section of the puzzle:

A. "This has been my desire e'er since this charlatan bent me to his service. I perform this deed with pleasure!" -- The Demon, *Zork II* (#40)

B. "One more step and the President of the Galaxy is fried meat!" -- Trillian, *Hitchhiker's Guide* (#35)

C. "You reporters have all the sensitivity of buffalo. Can't you leave me alone?" -- Michael Wellman, *Suspect* (#36)

D. "Uh, no thanks. I prefer to stay near my beach. I don't see much yummy seaweed out that way." -- The Turtle, *Enchanter* (#34)

E. "We have a position for an Ensign Ninth Class in the toilet-scrubbing division, you know." -- Blather, *Planetfall* (#37)

F. "I dinna give a hoot about you or your questions! Now, begone!" -- Angus McNabb, *Deadline* (#38)

G. "She spake against the Church; she tried to poison the mind of a child too young to know the Truth." -- Mitchell Simm, *A Mind Forever Voyaging* (#39)

H. "Ragweed!" -- Ogre, *Spellbreaker* (not on number list)

I. "My, I wonder what this fine rope is doing here." -- Thief, *Zork I* (#33)

J. "That's strange! Maybe you should use the Computestor." -- Tip Randall, *Seastalker* (#32)

K. "I've heard talk of a merger between Dad's company and another one, but I don't think it's happened yet." -- George Robner, *Deadline* (not on number list).

L. "When we began to approach your system, I got excited! A whole new culture to learn!" -- Gurthark-tun-Besnap, *Starcross* (#22)

M. "My court thanks you most humbly for rescuing the life of my daughter." -- Anatinus, *Wishbringer* (#21)

N. "Aha! A thief! Didn't I tell you that we needed more security!" -- Dimwit Flathead, *Zork III* (#31)

O. "You may not be aware of this, but I'm not working. I need to get

repaired." -- Iris, *Suspended* (#30)

P. "I thought I should come here on the streetcar, in case you needed help." -- Sergeant Duffy, *The Witness* (#29)

Q. "Frobizz! Frobozzle! Frobno!" -- The Wizard of Frobozz, *Zork II* (#23)

R. "If anyone tries anything stupid, you won't live to regret it." -- Johnny Red, *Cutthroats* (#24)

S. "Squawk! This tea is cold! Get me another cup. Squawk!" -- Pollibar, *Sorcerer* (#26)

T. "I'm gonna use it to find the legendary lost planet of Magrathea. Let's go sit in the sauna while I explain." -- Zaphod Beeblebrox, *Hitchhiker's Guide* (#25)

U. "I have a busy appointment schedule and little time to waste on

trespassers, but for a small fee I'll show you the way out." -- Volcano Gnome, *Zork II* (#27)

V. "Is this...is this a squash court?" -- Floyd, *Planetfall* (#28)

W. "Detested words! Even now it sticks in my soul to hear them uttered." -- The VI'Hurg Warrior, *Hitchhiker's Guide* (not on list)

X. "We could be in danger! The Snark may attack again any time!" -- Zoe Bly, *Seastalker* (#12)

Y. "He always promised me wealth here in America, but I've never seen it." -- Phong, *The Witness* (#13)

Z. "Guards! Throw this trespasser into the glass maze!" -- Duncanthrax, *Sorcerer* (#20)

AA. "This is surely a terrible waste of time, not to mention upsetting, having all these police marching

around the house." -- Leslie Robner, *Deadline* (#19)

BB. "You should not even be here. You will disturb our rest." -- Belboz, *Spellbreaker* (#11)

CC. "My sister was a fool to send the likes of you on such a quest!" -- The Evil One, *Wishbringer* (#2)

DD. "Here come da clone, here come da clone." -- Poet, *Suspended* (#10)

EE. "A courtly gentleman, isn't he? That black cape makes him look almost cuddly." -- Alicia Barron, *Suspect* (#14)

FF. "If he's going to read us his poetry, just pray he softens us up with some cudgels first..." -- Ford Prefect, *Hitchhiker's Guide* (not on number list)

GG. "Mmm. Just like Mom used to make 'em." -- Cyclops, *Zork I* (#15)

HH. "If you won't turn it off, I will. I can't take the noise any more." -- The Navigational Computer, *Starcross* (#18)

II. "The last vat, I swear it, tasted as if grues had been bathing in it." -- Hoobly, *Spellbreaker* (#1)

JJ. "You're going to be a hero, you know. You'd probably get a call from the President congratulating you..." -- Abraham Perelman, *A Mind Forever Voyaging* (#3)

KK. "Take the victim to the tower. I shall prepare for the sacrifice!" -- Krill, *Enchanter* (#9)

LL. "We will need that boat after all." -- McGinty, *Cutthroats* (#16)

MM. "Do this. Pick up that. Unjam the opening mechanism of the other." -- Marvin, *Hitchhiker's Guide* (#17)

NN. "Can't you talk this copper into letting me loose?" -- Monica Linder, *The Witness* (#4)

OO. "I am not permitted to enter the prison cell." -- The Dungeon Master, *Zork III* (#5)

PP. "Daydreaming again, eh? I've been looking everywhere for you!" -- Corky Crisp, *Wishbringer* (#6)

QQ. "Bleem miserable venchit! Bleem forever mestinglish asunder frapt." -- The Vagon Captain, *Hitchhiker's Guide* (#7)

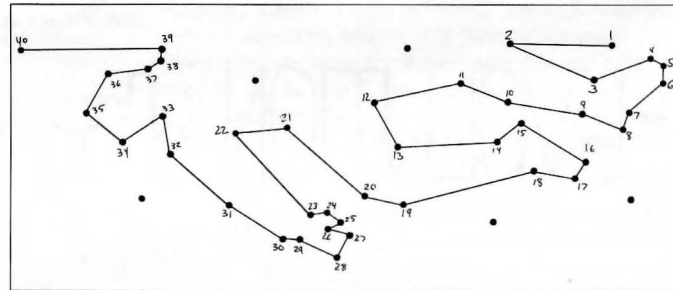
RR. "Just because he's a boor doesn't make him guilty." -- The Detective, *Suspect* (#8)

SS. "I have waited three ages for someone to say those words..." -- The Sailor, *Zork III* (not on number list)

(See next page for winners.)

Did yours look like this?

Plugging the numbers from the quote answers into the field of dots and connecting them in numerical order creates the following graphic:



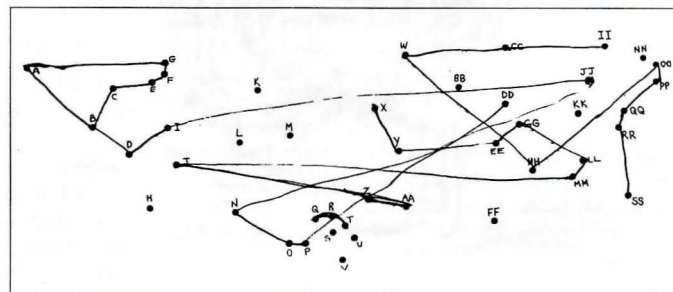
Deadline logo from Deadline.

This graphic is the outline of the dead body in the *Deadline* logo, and therefore the correct answer to the puzzle is "Deadline."

There were 343 entries, of which 319 were correct (93%). The closest thing to a common wrong answer was *The Witness* (5 entries). Several entrants misread the directions and supplied answers like "Mr. Robner's body." One person gave a non-Infocom game as their answer, and one particularly deranged entrant guessed "Puzzle Number Eleven" as the answer.

Or did yours look like this?

Speaking of particularly deranged, the puzzle editors felt that the readers of *The Status Line* would be considerably amused by Infocom Marketing Director Mike Dornbrook's attempt at Puzzle #11:



"Wiring diagram for the Improbability Drive--Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy." Submitted by Infocom Marketing Director Mike Dornbrook.

Puzzle winners: Sorry Mark, Bob, Bill, Buzz, Steve, Joe...

Puzzle Number 11 generated an unusually high number of comments, most of them claiming that the puzzle was too easy. While the percentage of entries that were correct was very high, that wasn't unexpected, since it's the sort of puzzle where you usually know whether you're right or not. Furthermore, the total number of entries wasn't unusually high; less than the number for either of the two previous puzzles, and far less than the record number of entries. (This record was 697 for Puzzle Number Two, and our mailing list was considerably smaller back then!) Oh, well, puzzling is still far from being an exact science.

Now, from the can-you-believe-what-people-will-go-through-to-win-a-stupid-T-shirt department comes the amazing story of 21 brothers living together in Wellesley, MA. Not only did all 21 of these brothers

enter Puzzle #11, but all 21 have virtually indistinguishable handwriting! To top it off, all 21 had a different answer to Puzzle #11, encompassing every single Infocom title! Mark, Bob, Bill, Buzz, Steve, Joe, John, Louis, Ed, Richard, Sam, Mike, Fred, Pat, Neal, Brian, Greg, Chris, Matt, Josh, and Tom -- that must be one heck of a household!

Since there were more than 25 correct entries, we had to have a drawing to determine the winners. To uphold the legendary Solomon-like integrity of The Status Line Puzzle, the drawing was presided over by the prestigious firm of Flathead, Flathead, Flathead, and Beeblebrox. The lucky winners:

1. Dennis L. Perkins, APO, NY
2. Travis Wilson, San Diego, CA
3. Bonnie Kachen, Boardman, OH
4. Robert Cook, Snohomish, WA
5. Eric Przybylko, Colonia, NJ

6. Jill Bayeux, Clifton, NJ
7. Hollie Vizier, Galliano, LA
8. Allen Salisbury, Lorton, VA
9. Lee Williamson, Claremont, CA
10. Charles Guarino, Troy, NY
11. Jaime Gathercole, Miami, FL
12. Craig Hemenway, Gray, ME
13. Stan Piechocinski, Mississauga, Ontario
14. Doug Dorst, Chappaqua, NY
15. Bob Hurley, Arnold, MO
16. James Fujimoto, Los Angeles, CA

17. Judie Eatough, Provo, UT
18. Ken Crosby, Jackson, MI
19. Bonnie Packert, Escondido, CA
20. Matthew LaMotte, Birmingham, MI
21. Chet LaBarr, Brooksville, FL
22. Wayne Preisman, Herndon, VA
23. David English, Mundelein, IL
24. Bruce Stedwell, Lake Havasu City, AZ
25. John Dickson, Jacksonville, FL

Congratulations to all the winners of The Status Line Puzzle.

No Null Set, Max cracks at party

Max Yaks was hospitalized the day after the company holiday party suffering from an acute hangover. Doctors were optimistic about recovery. Upon awakening from his coma Max recounted a dream in which Steve Meretzky walked into

the men's room, lifted the cover to the toilet tank and removed a bottle of rum. The last thing Max remembers was Meretzky opening the bottle and asking "Wanna shot?"

Max Yak's Null Set will return in our next issue.

Hey Puzzlemeisters, looking for the rest of puzzle number 13, well, here it is

Continued from page 12

with its massive teeth. Slowly, it dawns on the hellhound that you are not dying. It stops attacking and begins circling you warily.

> _____ THE HELLHOUND

The hellhound snarls, "Me eat you!"

> _____ THE VIAL

You discover some potion inside the vial.

The hellhound continues to circle around you, probably wondering why you are still alive.

>DRINK THE _____ POTION

The potion tasted like lime jelly, and sent vibrations through your muscles.

The hellhound decides that thinking hurts too much, and leaps upon you. Displaying amazing speed and agility, you wrestle the hellhound to the sand, clamping its powerful jaws safely shut. In the process, you seem to have levelled the sand castle again. Belboz raises his hands as though to hurl some fireballs, but instead he merely counts to ten, takes some deep breaths, and incants another restoration spell on the sand castle.

> _____

You have a few superficial scratches, apparently incurred

during your recent struggle.

The hellhound squirms in your grip.

You can feel yourself tiring.

>CAST THE _____ SPELL ON THE HELLHOUND

The monster closes its eyes and curls up. Its lips slowly curl into a smile, and it begins drooling profusely. You decide that you're rather glad you don't know what it's dreaming about.

> _____

The sea breeze increases to hurricane levels, and a huge wave batters the beach, washing the whale back to sea and completely destroying the sand castle. Belboz shouts some words you'd never have even guessed he knew, and hurls a powerful spell in your direction...

Grotto

You are in a tiny cave of rock, about ten miles underground. There are no exits.

On the ground is a small white cube.

> _____ THE CUBE

Your surroundings suddenly shift.

Slime Room

You are in a small location whose walls are dripping with sticky goo. There are openings to the east,

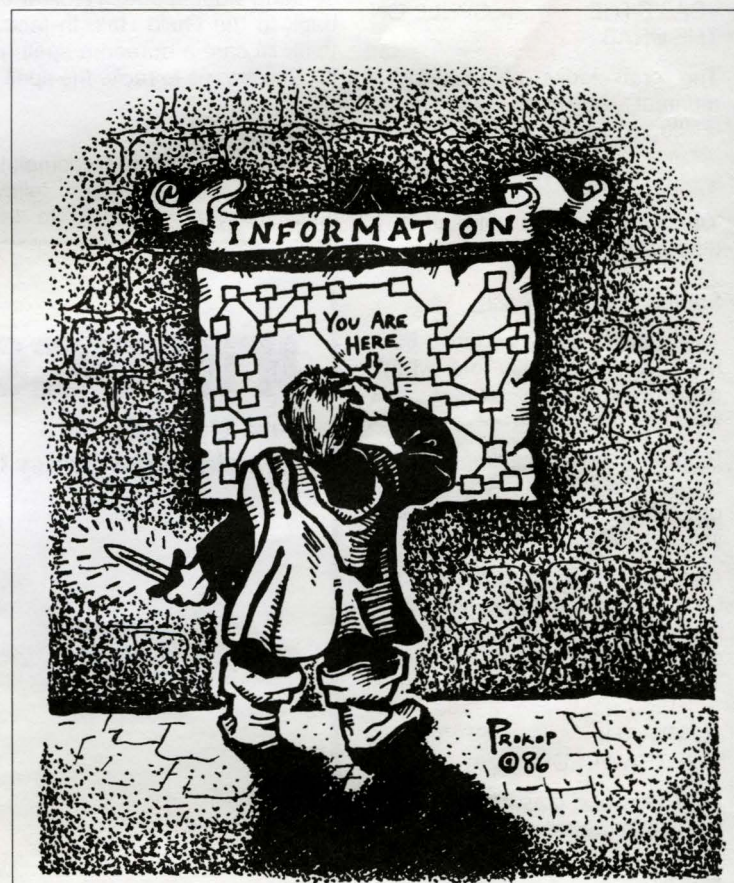
west, and south. There is a box here.

> _____ THE BOX

You can't. It seems to be protected by a spell.

> _____ THE BOX

The box springs open, revealing a copy of the bestselling book, "47 Tips for Building a Better Sand Castle" by Belboz the Necromancer.



Robert Prokop

THE STATUS LINE PUZZLE

#13

Puzzle #13 is based on *The Enchanter Trilogy* (*Enchanter*, *Sorcerer*, and *Spellbreaker*). The trilogy was recently released as a set for the first time (see the previous issue of *The Status Line*). To solve this puzzle, you will need to be familiar with the games as well as the game packages.

Notice that in the transcript below, there is a blank space in every input. The first step toward solving this puzzle is to figure out the correct word for each blank. By correct, we mean the word which would cause each input to produce the response that follows that input.

The second step is to look at the first letter of every word you've filled into a blank. These first letters will form a sentence with the final instructions to the puzzle.

For example, let's say the first input was >THROW THE _____ AT THE CLOWN and the response was "It bounces off the clown's rubbery nose and lands on your own head, cracking open. I guess the yolk's on you!" The word that belongs in the blank space is "EGG" and the first letter of the sentence you're trying to form would be "E."

The sun is getting low in the sky, and you decide that you've gotten enough of a tan. Shaking the sand off your wizardly robe, you slip it over your bathing suit and scramble down off the dune.

On The Beach

The blue waters and white sands make Accardi beach the finest in the province. The beach stretches north and south, and a path leads west, away from the ocean. A dune is low enough to climb.

There is a sand crab here.

>CAST THE _____ SPELL ON THE CRAB

The crab looks at you for a moment, and you look at it. "Hello," it says.

>_____ BELBOZ

You suddenly find yourself in a different part of the beach.

Southern End of Beach

The beach curves north from here, and a creaky old wharf, overgrown with seaweed, juts west into the ocean.

Belboz is here, building a sand castle. It looks like a scale model of Entharion's castle, Largoneth, in loving detail.

Another fellow member of the Circle of Enchanters is lying on a blanket. Her scowling face is completely hidden by sun cream. There is a beached whale here.

>CAST THE _____ SPELL ON THE SEAWEED

The seaweed dies instantly, and the ocean breezes blow it away.

>CAST _____ ON BELBOZ

Moving in a blur, Belboz

completes twenty-eight turrets, the main tower, and the entire north wing of the castle.

>CAST _____ ON THE OCEAN

Unsurprisingly, this has no effect on such a huge body of water.

The ocean breeze now seems a bit cooler. Then again, it might just be your imagination.

>_____, TELL ME ABOUT THE WHALE

The old enchanter looks disapprovingly at the mammal. "I think it's a friend of Belboz. I certainly hope it doesn't follow us back to the Guild Hall. In fact, I think I'll cast a boredom spell on it." She begins to recite the spell.

>_____ HER

Just as she is about to complete the enchantment, your fellow guild member crumples to the

sand, snoring loudly.

>_____ THE WHALE

A blow hole forms on the back of your neck and your body bloats to tremendous proportions. As you grow, you accidentally crush the sand castle beneath your belly. Belboz utters an oath, casts a spell to return you to your normal form, and uses some simple

magic to restore the ruined castle.

You suddenly notice a hellhound slinking down the beach.

>CAST _____ ON ME

A huge puff of orange smoke envelopes you.

The hellhound pounces, tearing out huge chunks of your flesh

Please turn to page 11

ANSWER: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

T-Shirt size (S, M, L, XL): _____

Puzzle Rules:

1. All entries must be submitted on this form or on a photocopy of this form.
2. Entries must be received by May 1, 1987.
3. Limit of one entry per person.
4. All entries must be mailed separately.
5. Up to 25 prizes will be awarded. If more than 25 correct entries are received, a drawing will be held to determine the winners.
6. Winners who are residents of the Andromeda Galaxy must pay shipping costs to receive their prize.
7. Void where prohibited by law.

Prize:

The New York Times Puzzle Winner T-Shirt, or perhaps The Status Line Puzzle Winner T-Shirt if some of the sizes begin to run out and we have to reprint the T-shirts with our new name.

Send to:

Infocom, Inc.
The Status Line Puzzle
125 CambridgePark Drive
Cambridge, MA 02140

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