A CURSORY GLANCE

Well, here is CURSOR #3, and somehow it is late (again). We are working hard to get to the point where it will be on time. Next month, maybe? But even though we are "tardy", it is a great issue. I think you will appreciate the bar graphing programs, the two games (sound effects for QUIX!), and the very good programs for creating and using flash cards.

Nope! We are not affiliated with Commodore Business machines, Inc. They make the excellent Pet personal computer, and in fact, Pet is their trademark (or so I am told). CURSOR, incidentally, is our trademark.

Rumor: Commodore is finally shipping the long-awaited tape with the demo programs and the machine language monitor. The tape goes out with each new machine, then the earliest Pet owners, and so forth. So, if you recently got your machine, you may have to wait a little while.

WARNING: Some people are selling programs that don't belong to them. If you know of people who are selling our programs, I'd appreciate knowing about them. A related problem is the fact that people try to sell programs to us that they have copied (with minor changes), from other peoples published work. If software publishing is to survive, we've got to find a solution to this mess.

Thank you for your support of CURSOR. We are growing fast, but still try to be responsive to your needs. Our most effective advertising is the "word of mouth" that you have been giving us. If you are a member of a computer club, please be sure and let other Pet owners know about us.

WHAT ARE THESE LITTLE MACHINES GOOD FOR???

Recently, Robert Pursor (PO Box 466, El Dorado, CA 95623) sent me a copy of his Reference List of Pet, TRS-80, and APPLE Computer Cassettes. The Reference List is full of info on Pet software. (Although he somehow missed CURSOR. Tsk. Tsk.)

What caught my eye was this quote: "Looking for a complete business for inventory, accounts receivable, and other business headaches? As a general rule, FORGET IT!" Basically, I think Bob is right, although it won't be too long before there are decent systems available. If you are using your Pet in "serious" applications, I'd like to hear from you. In any case, I'd like to know what you are using your Pet for, or what you would like to be using it for...

P.S. I think the eventual winner is the small-but-serious part of this market will be: IBM. Laugh if you like, but anywhere there is a large market, IBM will not be far behind. And when you buy their machine, you will know where to get it fixed. It may be less of a leap from making a giant machines to making little machines than it is from making calculators to producing Pets.

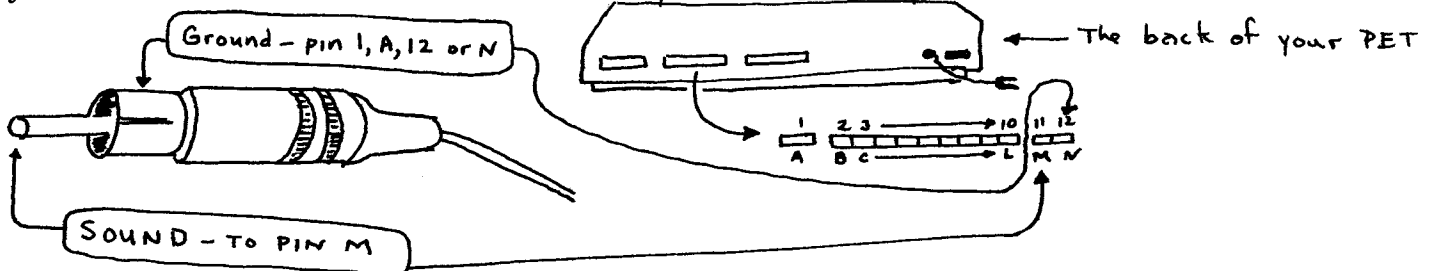| CURSOR 3 HAS THESE PROGRAMS: (Programs that end with '!' use CB2 sound)	
BAR	A vertical bar graphing program.
DOTS	The game of Dots – you against the computer.
QUIX	A memory game with great sound effects.
FLASH	Review "flash cards" in random order.
CARDS	Produces the tapes for the FLASH program.

MORE ABOUT THE PROGRAMS

BAR... This program provides an excellent bar graphing facility. We use every bit of space, yet allow you to have long, meaningful labels for each bar. If you use the "Headings" option, you provide a label for each number that you want to graph. Then, when the graph is displayed, press the letter code for any bar, and Bingo! - the 36 character label appears. You can select either a single graphing character, or - if you give it several character, it will use them one after another. You get to select the width of the bars: there are 34 columns available, so with bars that are 2 columns wide you can get 17 on the screen, 3 columns gives you 11 bars, etc. You can leave a "blank" bar between bars by hitting [RETURN] instead of entering a number. (I like to leave a blank bar as the last thing on the graph - it looks better that way to me.) To stop entering numbers, type a minus sign on a line all by itself and hit [RETURN]. Your graph will be plotted, and a question mark will flash in the lower right corner. If you want to enter numbers for another graph, press [RETURN]. It will ask "More Graphs?". At this point, you can change your mind and look at the last graph again by typing a "left arrow" (<-). Author Glen Fisher.

DOTS... You play the game of Dots against your Pet on a six by six board. The numeric keys are used to control the movement of the cursor: [8]=up, [2]=down, [4]=left, [6]=right. The "diagonal" keys ([1],[3],[7], and [9]) are used to move from vertical to horizontal and vice versa. Once the cursor is where you want to draw a line, press [RETURN]. While the Pet is "thinking", it displays a wave-like pattern. (See line size of the board at line 130. A bigger board gives slower play... Author Glen Fisher.

QUIX!... What a game! The Pet flashes a pattern on the screen that you try to repeat. The pattern gradually gets longer, and it flashes more quickly. If you follow our directions, it will have super sound effects with each flashing pattern. WARNING: If you zorch your Pet by hooking it up to an amplifier, that is _your_ responsibility. We think that the method shown here is safe, since we have used it, but we don't want to pay for your Pet. Please be careful!

Most hi-fi sets have an RCA style jack where you can feed in an external signal. The trick is to get the correct output from the Pet to your hi-fi. Here is a simple drawing of the pins on the back of your Pet:

The best way to hook everything together is to use a "keyed" edge connector at the back of the Pet, and solder the correct lead from the cable that goes to the RCA jack to the correct pin. You can use other, rather flaky methods (alligator clips have been known to work), but the danger of accidentally shorting two pins together is nontrivial. Since pin 12 and N are directly opposite, a clip there gets you ground. If you insulate pin 11, (a piece of cardboard maybe?), you can put the other clip on pin M. Again: be careful, please.

CARDS... With this program you can create a tape that contains computerized flash cards, which the FLASH programs uses. CARDS is flexible, and quite easy to use. Since the directions on the tape are very comprehensive, we won't repeat them here. One comment, those dots that appear when you actually create the tape indicates that the Pet has written a block of data. Note: to change the maximum number of flash cards, change the variable MX in line 500.

FLASH... This program reads the tape that CARDS creates, and lets you review flash cards. You can "drill" yourself with either "side" of the cards, and of course it is a different order each time through. Both CARDS and FLASH make a distinction between upper and lower case: Ag is NOT the same as AG, okay?

ABOUT YOUR CURSOR TAPE

There is one copy of each program on the front side of the tape. As always, your tape head should be clean and demagnetized. Should you have trouble loading our programs, please return the tape to us Enclose a note explaining what the problem is and we will gladly send a replacement cassette.