

Point of



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Friday, July 31, 1992

Austin, TX

A Cast of Several

Strike Commander holds auditions for CD theater

When the CD version of Strike comes out, it's going to have full digitized speech for 16 characters, so **Chris "Coppola" Roberts** put out the casting call last week. 54 actors and actresses answered it.

This marks the first time ORIGIN's held open auditions. "I thought it was highly successful," said Sound Shark **Randy Buck**. "I feel like we've got *real* actors to

work with this time and it's going to make our product that much closer to an interactive movie."

Randy said the casting crew's been able to nail down most of the major roles, but there are still a few others to decide. If all goes according to schedule (and why wouldn't it?), the final cast will come back to do the actual recording for the game some time in September.



Called Strike...

Tonie Perensky reads for the role of Janet. 54 actors read for various speaking roles in the CD version of Strike Commander.

Raves and Rumors

Press going wild over new releases

Once again, ORIGIN's the talk of the press. Rumor of the week has to go to Shay Addams (from QuestBusters) who asked in earnest, "Is it true that Chris Roberts is buying a scrapped-out MIG-17 to put in the lobby?"

We finally have a date for Richard's People Magazine article. He'll be in the issue dated August 17, which actually hits the stands August 10. Word has it that it's a two-pager with four pictures. People's circulation is roughly 20,000,000.

We're starting to see some Special Ops 2 reviews. Computer Game Review says: "Great graphics as always," and "Wing 2 Ops 2 is great, but you'd better be in top fighting shape!"

CGR also writes about U7: "This

game breathes new life into the entire genre," and "From start to finish, Ultima VII is a quality production without much room for improvement." In PCM (the magazine for Tandy users), Editor Lonnie Falk recommends U7 and writes: "Plan to spend a long time solving Ultima VII and plan to enjoy every minute of it." A full U7 review will be coming soon in PCM. We got a glance at the advance copy, and it says: "From the opening screen, you are immersed in the game's environment," and "ORIGIN has uncanny insight into their customer's desires and expectations." Overall, a great looking review.

Moving on to Underworld, reviewer Ed Dille with Video Games and Computer Entertainment says

(See "Raves" on next page)

(1)

New SKU Review

The channel's about to feel a trickle of ORIGIN product. By November, it will (hopefully) have turned into a full-blown flood. The CD-ROM compilations of Wing Commander II/Ultima Underworld and Wing Commander II Deluxe Edition are just about out the door. Runes of Virtue (for Game Boy from FCI) has the go-ahead and should ship within the next two weeks.

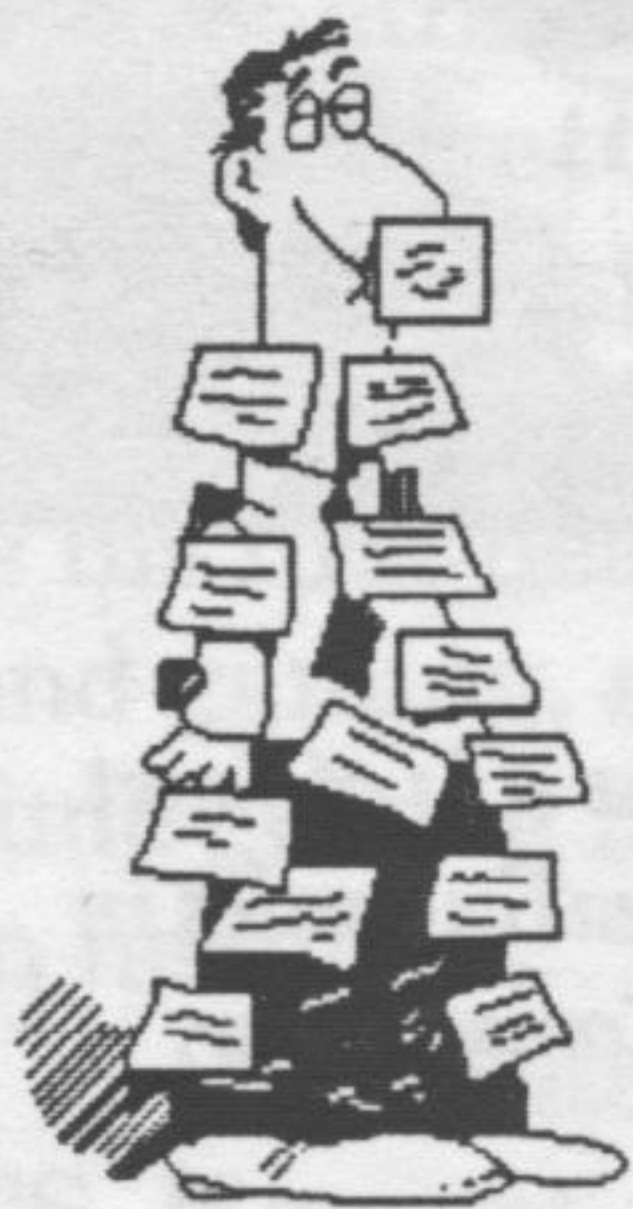
Also in August, the sales team launches a bold, new experiment by unleashing Wing Commander and Ultima VI at a suggested retail price of \$29.95 each (which will probably end up at around \$19.95 as a "street

(See "SKU" on back page)



On a Roll...

Exception 13, ORIGIN's soccer team, picked up its second win this week, pulling out a last-minute victory over the Miners. Next Tuesday, E-13 takes a 2-5 record into its final game of the season against...the Miners again! The Fall season starts September 7 and the team needs new players (especially females). See Soccer Sultan Richard Johnson for details.



Just a Note:

The nautical but nice ORIGIN raft crew will be "putting in" tomorrow morning at 7:00 for the Raft Race. According to Captain **Curtis Wood**, speed isn't the issue, showmanship is. The ramp is underneath the Mopac overpass. Good luck, gang.

Everything's still "go" for Blood Flood '92 next Friday, August 7. In case you haven't heard (or avoid the electronic bulletin boards like the plague), our first 18 credits are being donated in the name of Mary Paulik, the "Breakfast Lady" who makes the rounds every morning with croissants, danish and the like. She had heart surgery last year and needed to repay the credits by November. The remaining credits will go to Austin AIDS Service, unless You decide to credit yourself or ORIGIN's account. To sign up as a donor, see your fiends and mine, **Mr. Mike, Wayne Baker, or Donna Mehnert**.

In the Library:

Desert Strike/Sega (EA)
Bulls vs Lakers and the NBA Playoffs/Sega (EA)
PGA Tour Golf/Windows (EA)
Aces of the Pacific (Dynamix)
The Dagger of Amon Ra (Sierra)
Leather Goddesses of Phobos II (Activision)
The Lost Treasures of Infocom (Activision)
Darkseed (Cyberdreams)
Football (Microleague)
Baseball (Microleague)
Sim City (Maxis)

Foreign Trade

Here's a smattering of comments from Wing Commander registration cards in Britain:

"Keep making games like this and I will keep buying your products."

"If the dogfights don't leave you stunned, the sleepless nights will."

"Never have so many died by so few."

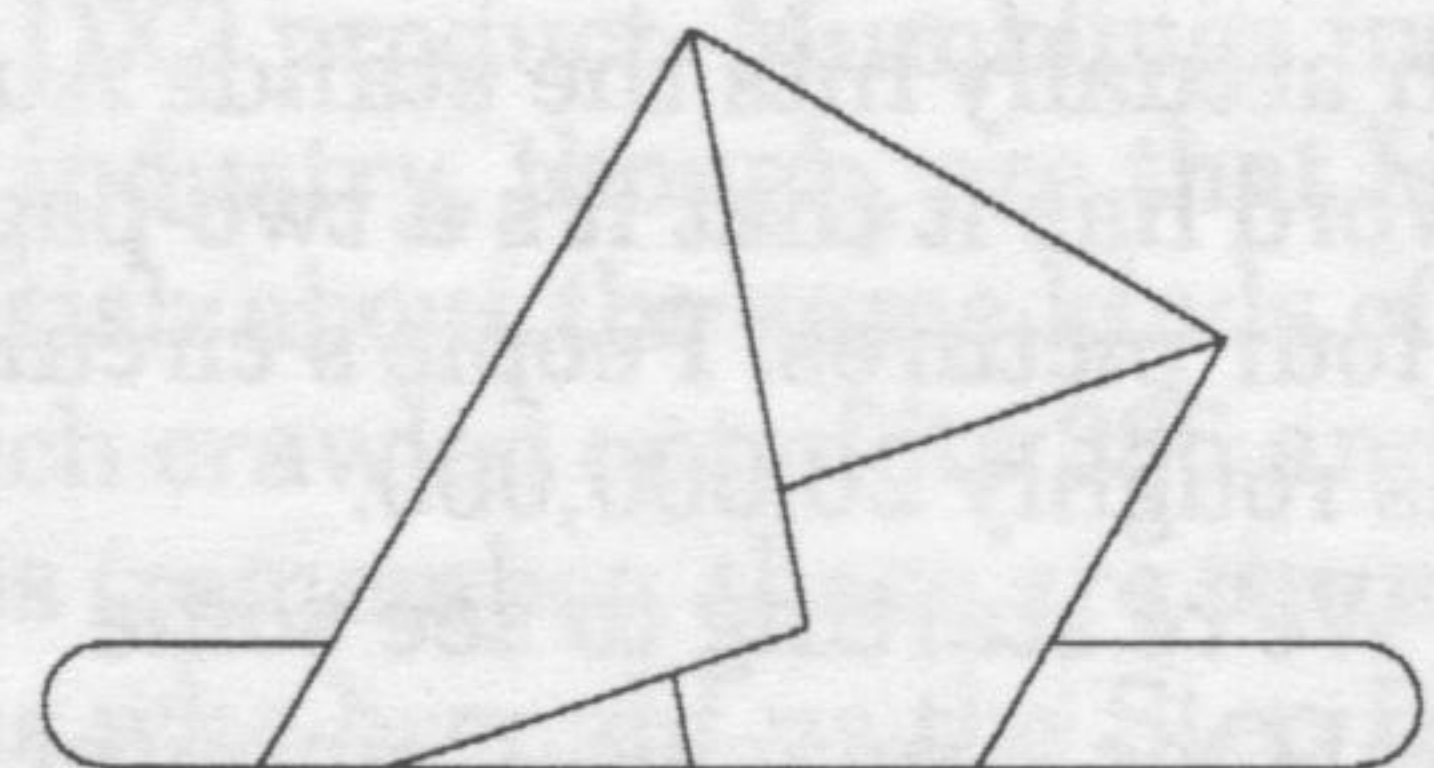
"The most incredible SF movie I have ever seen or starred in."

...Raves


UW "is this reviewer's candidate for 'Fantasy Game of the Year'." And talk about world-wide acclaim...Popcom (Japan): "I have seen the future of role-playing games, and it is Underworld." PC Review (England): "Role-playing will never be quite the same as a result of this innovative game engine." Power Play (Germany): "You can't compare this dungeon with any existing pattern. This is showing the competitors the way to go!" But the most-quotable quote has to be from Computing Now! (Canada): "Playing Ultima Underworld (or any Ultima game, for that matter) is like reading a good book—an experience far from merely disposing of your spare time, it actually leaves you spiritually enriched." Right.

The first official Serpent Isle quote was born in the Previews section of Computer Game Review: "This game looks and sounds like a true cinematic experience." Copies of all these reviews can be seen in Wayne Baker's office over at ORIGIN West. Just to be safe, give him a call at #128 before heading over.

Finally, pre-congrats are in order for the Wing 2 and U7 teams. Moles over at MPC World (soon to be called Multimedia World) report that those two games won all three of their categories in the Reader's Choice Awards. U7 beat out Kings Quest V and Might & Magic III for Best Role-Playing Game. Wing 2 took the Best Arcade/Action Game title from Stellar 7 and Commander Keen, and also snagged the Best Flight Simulator award from heavy-hitters Falcon 3.0 and Flight Sim v4. The "official" winners will be announced in the mag's October issue. Killer!



Keep those "Point Man" letters coming in!



Stork Watch

NEWS FLASH: Yesterday, **Dianne Muchow** (Steve's wife) went into what Steve called "hard labor." We held the presses and waited by the phone. The call finally came. **Donna Leigh** was born just before 11:00 am, weighing almost 7 lbs. A few hours later, Steve was back at ORIGIN, double-checking the insurance and changing his withholding forms. Dianne's doing fine and Steve says Donna's "wonderful."

Paul Steed and his wife, **Marion**, have a bouncing baby girl. **Brianna Nicole** made her debut appearance on Thursday, July 23, at 9:43 in the morning and weighed in at 8 lbs. 11 oz. Mom and baby came home last Sunday and the entire family's doing great. Paul gushes, "When my daughter was born, I gave her her first bath and put on her first diaper. I sit at home and stare at her for hours. She's really gorgeous!" Congrats to the proud, new dads.

There's still a healthy crop of babies on the way: **Kay Gilmore** and her husband, **Bruce** are expecting August 22; **Marie Williams** and her husband, **Jack**, on December 2. Watch this space for more blessed events.

Tumbleweeds in the sales department can only mean one thing: it's road time again.

Karl Kabler and **Carol Cippola** are now the Bonnie & Clyde of Bizmart after hitting that show in Dallas. On a recent laundry/e-mail stop, Karl said, "We got to spend quality time with each manager and buyer from almost 120 stores. They loved Strike. They're all carrying Ultima VII and Underworld right now. They're moving into the (entertainment software) business full steam." Bizmart is owned by the IE Group (Intelligent Electronics), which is expanding its

Bio: Sharon Miller

Thanks, and have a great day!

In computer jargon, you could say that **Sharon Miller** has a "486" personality—always moving at full speed. Maybe the energy comes from her grueling bodybuilding workouts, two to three hours a day, six days a week. "I want to compete before I'm 50," Sharon laughs. "I had just started competing a year and a half ago, but that's when I got heavily involved with ORIGIN. But someday..."

Sharon's found more than health at the gym. That's where she met her "significant other," **Jeff Main**, a little more than four years ago. Sharon says he's promised wedding bells before his 40th birthday, so she's marking the calendar. Sharon also has a 16 year-old daughter, **Jennifer**, who lives in Odessa and goes to Permian High School (*Texas' finest: Ed.*)

Joining ORIGIN was almost like coming home for Sharon. After all, she was responsible for placing 62 employees here when she was with Western Temporaries. "In fact," she says, "when I came in here as Operations Manager of Product Development, I had hired every one of the managers that was under me. So it was like I had a hand-picked staff." Her handle now is a little longer: Operations/Human Resources Personnel Manager. She describes the job as a liaison between **Fred, Robert,**



Dallas and the rest of the company. She's also working with the policies and procedure gang "both defining existing policies and procedures and creating new ones." She says her famous "Thanks, and have a great day" signature line is the result of 29 years of sales and marketing experience.

Of course, Sharon's made it a personal quest to make sure the new building has an exercise room. Who knows? If all of her efforts pay off, her title may end up changing yet once again—to *Ms. Olympia*.

Road Warriors

current locations into superstores to compete against places like Computer City.

Karl's just back from the National Association of College Stores (NACS) show in San Diego. It's an association of college bookstores, if you can believe it. At the same show last year, ORIGIN and Sierra were the only game companies represented, and the over-educated bookstore buyers turned up their noses. What a

difference a year makes! Now, the vast majority of them are looking to buy games. NASCORP, the main distributor for almost all

college bookstores and co-op's across the country, met with Karl and wants to ink a deal in the near future to carry ORIGIN products. That means another new and untapped market. Next on the world tour: **Anita Lockamy** hits the Walden Show in Myrtle Beach, NC in September, possibly with OSI President and aspiring golf pro, **Robert Garriott**, winging in for a few rounds with the Waldo's.

In, Up & Out

It might be a good idea to draw some sort of chart or use desk utensils for a visual aid as you read on, because there's been quite a bit of movement within the ranks.

IN: **Bart Hosier** joins us August 3 as the new Project Scheduler. Bart's been at Dell in a similar capacity, where he managed two software projects which came out *ahead* of schedule. Before that, he managed 17 tech support people at CompuADD. (Rodney, we hardly knew ye...)

The new face at the front desk and on the switchboard at OSI-West is **Araceli Gonzales**. She's aboard as the staff receptionist, backup to Consumer Sales and all-around Publishing helper-outer. She takes over for **Antoinette Newton**, who's done a super job holding down the fort as a Western temp for the last two months.

Garrett Blanton is just about online in Customer Service. He has customer service experience, but this is his first dealing with computers and gaming, so he's spending some time getting his feet wet before diving in headfirst.

Rik Packham is also new in CS. If we get any Autoduel calls, they'll go to Richard. He bought one of the original copies. Richard also is Tandy-literate and has done a little programming.

Marshal Andrews and **Charles Angel** will be two new faces in QA. They're coming on as temps to put Forge and Serpent through the testing wringer. Welcome aboard to all.

Finally, a belated welcome to **Brennan Priest**. Brennan quietly snuck into the Art Department without much fanfare and is now working alongside his dad, **Micael Priest**. Must be something genetic.

UP: **Jeff Everett** has been promoted from TDA to Programmer (with a capital "P"). Jeff will be working on Phoenix Force and the screen saver. Congrats, Jeff.

Meanwhile, all-around talent **Beth Miller** will be taking her skills back to the writing ranks after

serving equally admirably as a project administrative assistant to **Warren Spector**.

OUT: We must once again bid a couple of fond farewells. **Allan Davis** is trading one set of questions for another. He's leaving our Customer Service Department for the same position at Dell.

Jill McCorkle originally came on as a temporary to help in Consumer Sales and later picked up some telephone time in Customer Service. But now, Jill's heading back to school in the great state of Montana. Good luck to both of you.

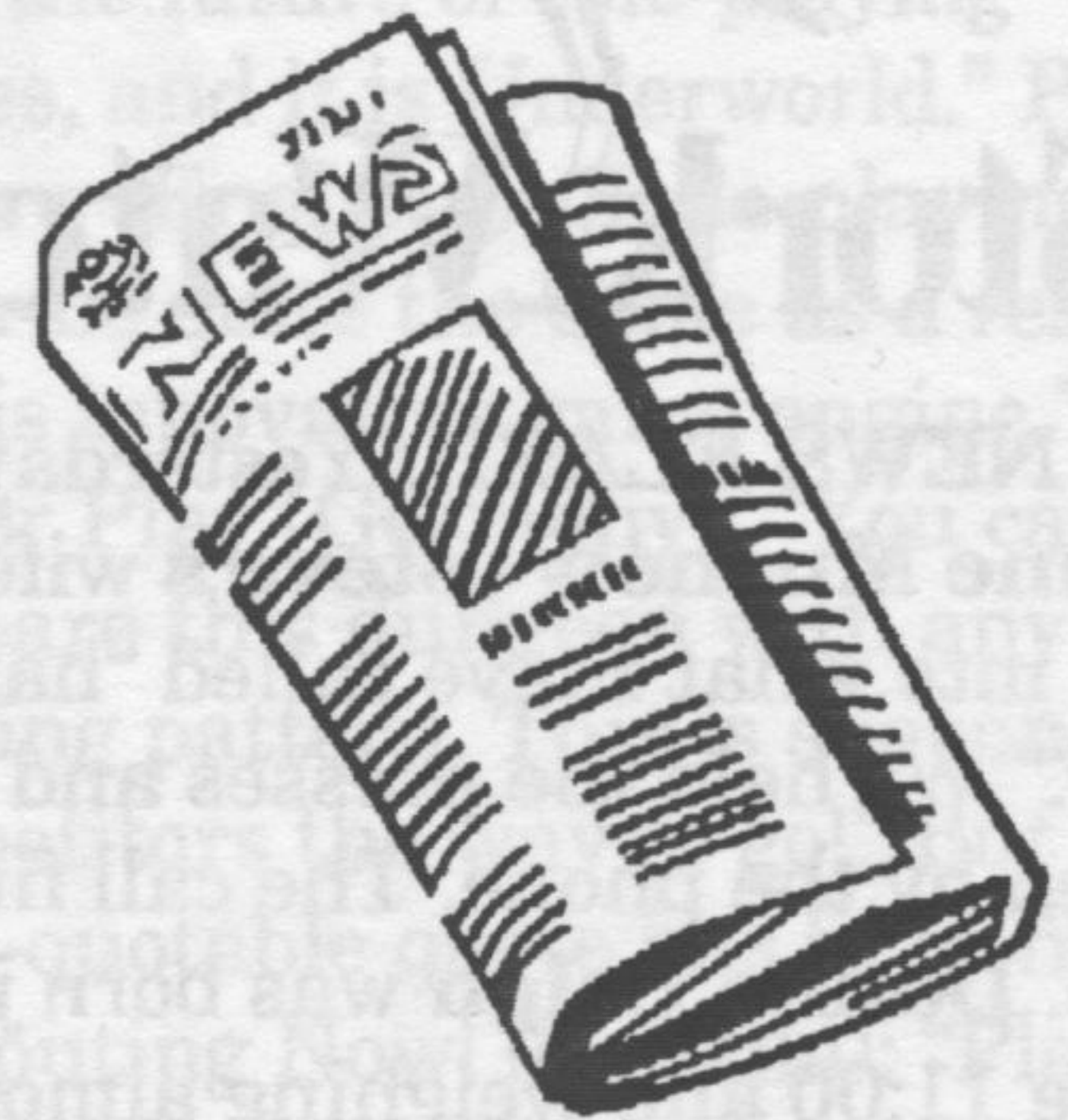
...SKU

price"). "The idea," according to The Big Bulldog, **Marten Davies**, "is to get those bargain-hunters who are picking up the low-priced 386 systems right now. They want to build a software library and build it fast. Since there's nothing out there that can really compare to our products in terms of technology, we want those buyers to pick up these games and think, 'Wow, now I know why ORIGIN's newest games cost \$50 to \$80.' Then we'll have them hooked." The special price point is for a limited time only (120 days through Christmas), but if sales really start cooking, the offer may be extended.

Forge of Virtue, FRP's first-ever add-in disk for Ultima VII, should make a splash right before the end of August, providing it clears QA's Timex/Samsonite tests without major hiccups. Current plans now call for the top-secret ORIGIN FX Screen Saver to ship by mid-October, rather than the originally-scheduled Aug.-Sept. period, due to additional design modifications suggested by internal test-site staffers. The Bulldogs have big hopes for this one.

Then, everything breaks loose in November. Ultima VII, Part 2: The Serpent Isle (make sure you use the entire title), Strike Commander, Underworld 2 (maybe), and Trade Commander/Privateer (one of those names) will all be fighting to get out of QA at about the same time. Add duplication and build time, and you're looking at a holiday season beat-the-

clock. If all of these products make it, you'll be able to celebrate by taking your computer home for Christmas. You'll have to bring it back, of course, but to the brand new building out on 183.



NEWS.TXT

(Hunt Valley, MD)—MicroProse has bought Paragon Software Corp., an independent computer game development group in Greensburg, PA. MicroProse has been marketing Paragon's titles since 1988. MP officials say Paragon's development tools will help them beef up their production of fantasy role-playing games, a category the company is getting into with the recently-delayed *Darklands*. Paragon, which employs 19 people, has some other products in development which MicroProse will release this year, including *Mantis*, a game designed specifically for CD-ROM.

(Santa Clara, CA)—Intel has pushed back the release of its next-generation "P5" processor that was scheduled to ship at the end of this year. New plans call for a hold until the first quarter of 1993. Intel officials say an earlier release would mean that they "wouldn't be able to ship in volume." The officials also claim they don't want to draw wafer starts from the DX2 product. Mumbblings inside the industry, though, are that Intel's skittish about the same kinds of bugs which crawled out of its 386 and 486 lines (remember, these are the same folks who brought us the Step B1 bomber). Intel's also said to be reluctant to call the "P5" a "586" because of the trademark protection headaches the company's had in the past.