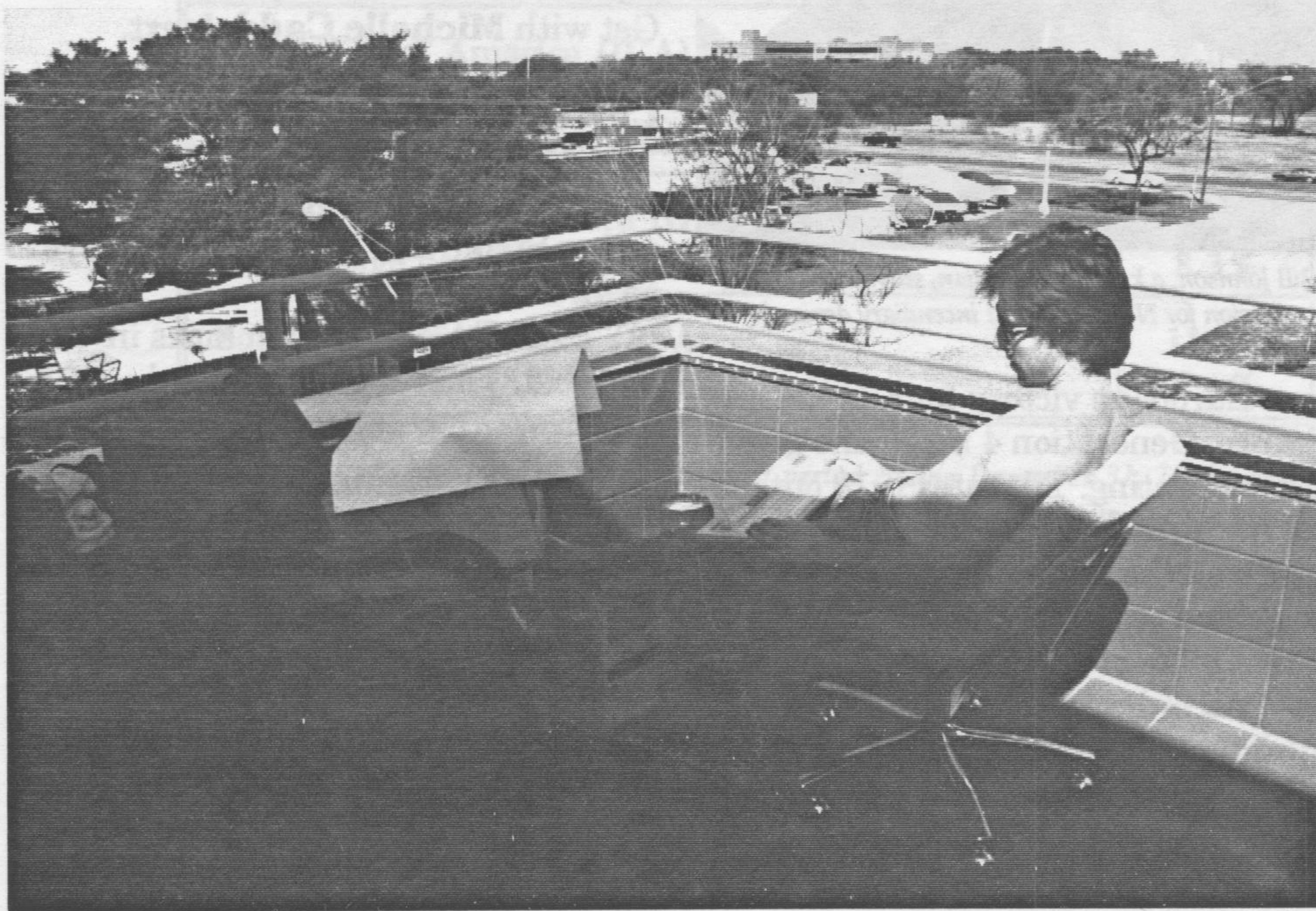


Point of ORIGIN

Volume III, No. 32

Friday, February 12, 1993

Austin, TX



Room with a view...

Zack Simpson packed up and moved out onto a balcony so he could catch a few rays while working.

Here Today, On Tomorrow

If Jennifer Stearns' visit last week was any indication, ORIGIN—namely Serpent Isle—should get some colossal coverage on the Today Show in March. Jennifer is the reporter who started out putting together a piece on computer gaming. When that proved too immense a subject, she decided to narrow it to fantasy role-playing. Even that was daunting in scope. So computer cohorts at NBC told her about the Ultima line and she booked tickets for Austin.

When the security guard buzzed her in late Thursday evening, she asked him, "Which suite is ORIGIN in?" He replied, "Lady, this entire *building* is ORIGIN." Within 10 minutes, she was asking if we could shoot through Saturday; there was just too much of a good story.

Jennifer talked with **Richard Warren**, writers, TDAs, artists, playtesters—just about everybody involved in the game production process. While we're on the subject, thanks to everybody who gave a lot of time to do

(See "Today" on next page)

(1)

Off to Market

ORIGIN's online effort is expanding worldwide. While Customer Serice has been handling player problems and hints on GENie, America Online and CompuServe (where Underworld 2 is the featured game of the month), **Wayne "Baud" Baker** has been slinging marketing hype into those and even more televistas like Internet and FidoNet, (the latter being very popular in Germany and France). He says everybody's clamoring for demos, asking about Strike Commander and wondering about ports to the Mac and Amiga. He adds that the ORIGIN FX "teaser" version is working wonders online. About 3 out of 5 people who downloaded it say they went out and bought the full version, even though some reported already having After Dark.

ORIGIN and Intel

Intel Corporation will showcase their 486 chips at the Software Publishers Association (SPA) conference in March and the Comdex trade show in May by running Strike Commander. Strike will be the only entertainment product used by Intel to show off the speed of their chips. ORIGIN has also granted permission for Intel to use some of the game play sequences and screen shots from Wing Commander II and Strike Commander in upcoming TV spots and print ads.

ORIGIN/MediaVision

ORIGIN FX and Ultima Underworld II will be featured in a related

(See "Market" on page 3)

...Today

the interviews and even more thanks to those who were lined up but didn't get the chance to talk.

On Saturday, the Serpent team did an outstanding job of getting gameplay onto videotape after both of Galen's hard drives fried. (Another special thanks here to MIS for attempts to resuscitate.) **Jeff Wilson** even re-enacted the famous Lord British death scene with the falling plaque. All in all, Jennifer was not only bowled over with ORIGIN, but promised to spread the word about what a great story it would be for other media outlets in New York City. As things stand, the piece should air sometime during the first week of March. The Today Show is on Channel 36 from 7-9 AM. If we get a firm air date, we'll pass it along.

Meanwhile, plans are still on for the Music Poster Artists' Reception here on February 25, between 5:30-7:00 PM. Our own **Bob Frye, Micael Priest, Danny Garrett, Dicko Mather, Bill Narum** and **Jim Franklin** are among the honorees who will receive a proclamation from the Austin City Council. We're hoping the Governor will be able to make the reception, not to mention press from Dallas, Houston, Austin, San Antonio, and who knows—maybe even Rolling Stone. We're trying.

Moving on to other press and kudos: Dennis Lynch with the Chicago Tribune named Underworld as Best Game of the Year, calling it "the creme de la creme of dungeon epics. Ultima Underworld is an amazing triumph of the imagination."

If you didn't see it on the BBS, ORIGIN won Software House of the Year at the Generation 4 awards in France. That's especially rewarding, since European companies usually haul home the trophies. Underworld also took Best Fantasy Role-Playing Game.

You don't have to be able to read Finnish to know that UW snagged Fantasy Role-Playing Game of the Year from Pelit magazine (but if you do read Finnish or know somebody who does, we need some reviews translated).

Meanwhile, UW2 is starting its



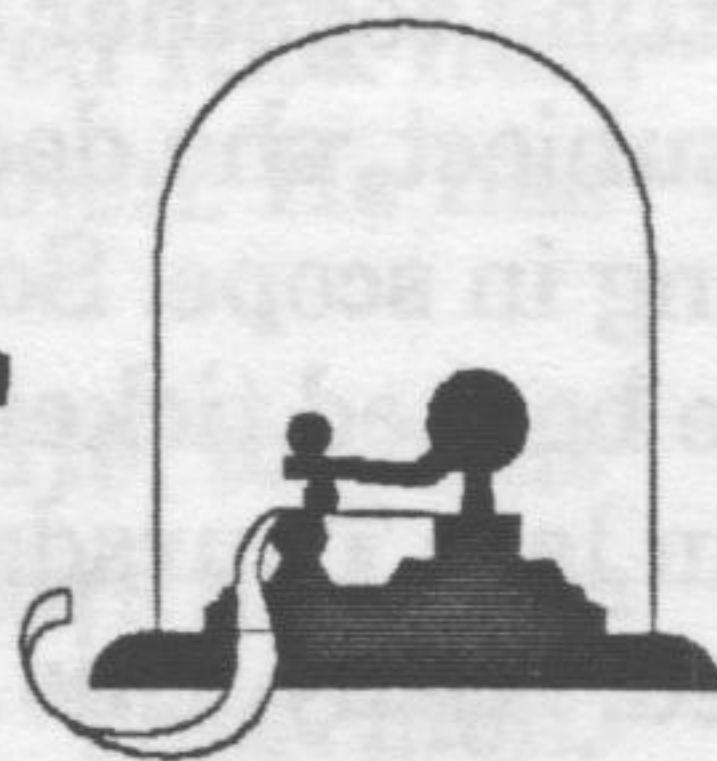
Bill Johnson, a.k.a. The Guardian, stages a recording session for NBC (without incendiary devices).

own European victory tour. In France, Generation 4 magazine gives it a 94% rating. Tilt rates it 18 out of 20. In Germany, PC Player also slaps a 94% on the review, while ASM magazine puts it in the "hit" category with a score of 11 out of 12.

According to ORIGIN's European subsidiary, **Jetlag Jennie Evans**, "Underworld 2 is consistently getting the highest ratings of all games in each and every magazine where it's reviewed."

Finally, the quote of the week has to be from the current issue of England's PC Review. Paul Presley was one of the Euro-journos who came to Austin on Halloween for a trek through the Haunted House and an update on ORIGIN antics. Looking at the option screens for Privateer, he writes: "They show what a computer game is capable of and the shape of things to come. Things to come from ORIGIN, at any rate."

Ticker



Stock prices at press time (noon).

ERTS	44.25	-1.5
BROD	42.25	-.25
SIER	13.25	+.625
MPRS	9.125	-.125

Misc.

The Serpent Isle gang has been wrestling with a mutated version of the Michelangelo virus. A virus Lpscan will delete the offending files, so it's a good idea to scan your drives regularly. Anyone not familiar with the procedure should contact Steve Morris.

Another quick reminder: if you have a problem with one of the copiers, don't crack it open yourself. Get with **Michelle Caddel** (ext. 655), **Miles Lewis** (ext. 642) or **Curtis Wood** (ext. 577) in that order.

QA's working around the clock now. Some playtesting temps are giving Strike and Serpent a fresh eye on 12-hour shifts.

The EA dental plan kicks in on March 1. There will no longer be a 6-month waiting period. For employees hired after that date, dental will start at the same time as medical coverage (after 30 days of employment).

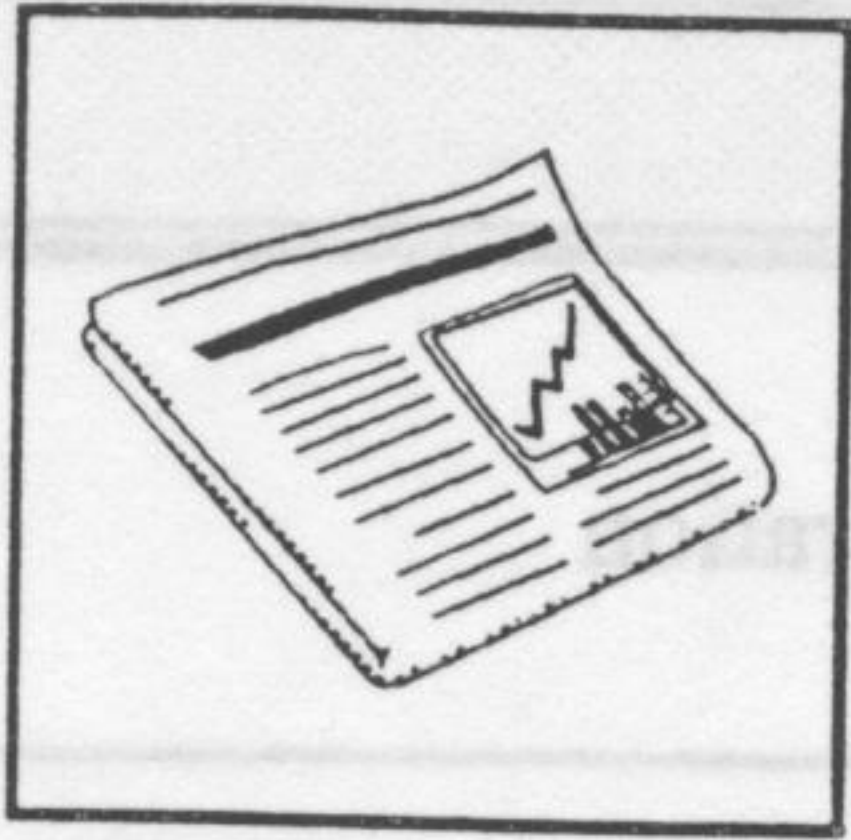
If you need to contact the security desk after hours, there's a separate phone line there now. Just dial 777 from within the building, or dial it as an extension if you're calling the 335-5200 number. In the plans: a phone outside the back door which will call inside to individual extensions only.

Comings and Goings

The cavalry has finally come for Steve and Kathie in MIS. Check out the "Flash: MIS" update on the next page.

Upstairs in Administration, **Lori Wiley** is aboard as executive assistant to Robert and Fred and she's taking on the duties of Office Manager. PO (Pre-ORIGIN), Lori was executive assistant to the president of Cablemax, and has held similar positions at several Austin-area banks and ad agencies for more years than ORIGIN has been in business.

Heading for the proverbial greener pastures: **Allison Campbell** (this is her last day), as well as **Keith Robinette**, **Pat Shelton** and **Richard Haley**—already gone, but not forgotten.



ELECTRONIC ARTS / ORIGIN SYSTEMS

YOUR RETIREMENT PLAN NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 31, 1992

INVESTMENT	1 YEAR	3 YEAR	5 YEAR	10 YEAR
Invest Co. of America (ICA)	7.0%	10.8%	14.8%	15.8%
Average of 219 Growth & Income Funds	9.6%	9.3%	12.8%	13.4%
S&P 500 Composite Index	7.6%	10.8%	15.8%	16.1%
Growth Fund of America (GFA)	7.4%	11.6%	16.4%	15.0%
Average of 358 Growth Funds	8.3%	11.3%	14.6%	13.5%
Bond Fund of America (BFA)	11.3%	11.7%	11.1%	11.9%
Average of 123 Bond Funds	7.6%	10.1%	9.9%	11.0%

The annualized rate of return for the indicated period ending December 31, 1992, assuming all income and capital gains distributions were reinvested and all dollars were invested at the beginning of the period. Source: CDA Mutual Fund Report. These figures reflect past returns and are not a guarantee of future results.

The Interest Contract (IC) interest rate is 6.5%.

REVISITING THE PAST 40 YEARS

Investors are accustomed to evaluating their results over conventional periods of time like one year, five years, or ten years. One way that we, as Americans, often mark time is by the comings and goings of the leaders who reside on Pennsylvania Avenue. With a new fellow in residence in Washington, I thought it might be interesting to look back at the past four decades, representing 10 separate four-year presidential periods, to see what investors were worrying about then.

You'll notice that while a few of these events may have been predictable, most were not. There were numerous tragedies, wrenching social and political changes, and global crises. There were also stunning triumphs. As you look through the roll call of history in the latter half of the 20th century, you might ask yourself this question: If, somehow, you had known in advance what was going to happen, would you have invested in the U.S. economy?

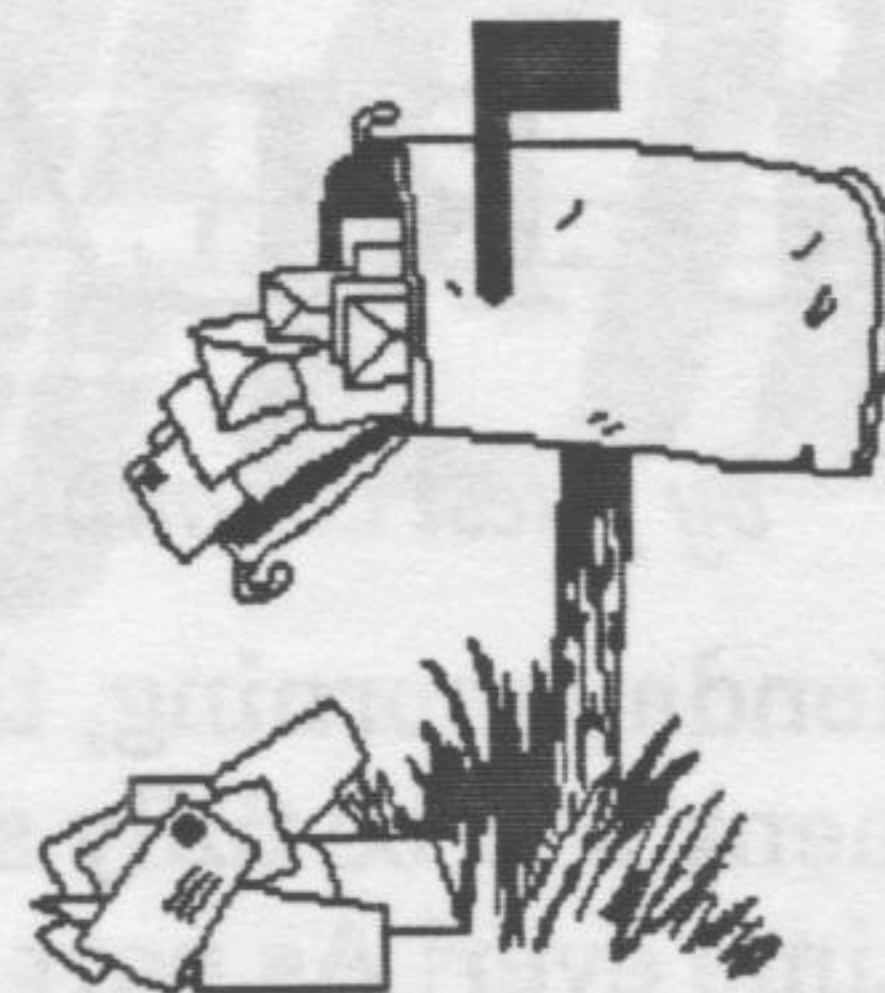
Human nature being what it is, I think many investors would have been tempted to wait for a "better" time to invest. At some point during every period, the stock market experienced a sizable decline. Yet the average annual compound return for the Standard & Poor's 500 Composite Index over the past 40 years has been approximately 11.6%. For the investor saving for retirement, its not so much *when* you invest, but that *do* invest and hold for the longer-term rate of return.

over

Time Period	President	Event
Nov 1952-Oct 1956	Dwight D. Eisenhower	Korean War ends Senator Joe McCarthy claims communist infiltration Egypt seizes the Suez Canal
Nov 1956-Oct 1960	Dwight D. Eisenhower	A U.S. U-2 reconnaissance plane is shot down over the USSR European Common Market is created Castro takes power in Cuba after a bloody civil war
Nov 1960-Oct 1964	John F. Kennedy	Yuri Gagarin becomes the first man in space The Berlin Wall is erected Martin Luther King, Jr. is arrested in Alabama President Kennedy is assassinated
Nov 1964-Oct 1968	Lyndon B. Johnson	Civil rights marches provoke riots, Malcolm X is assassinated World's first heart transplant Martin Luther King is assassinated Vietnam War is at its peak
Nov 1968-Oct 1972	Richard M. Nixon	Vietnam War protest marches continue Nixon orders wage and price controls to combat inflation Nixon visits China
Nov 1972-Oct 1976	Richard M. Nixon	Vietnam War formally ends The stock market declines due to an Arab oil embargo Vice President Spiro Agnew resigns for income tax evasion President Nixon resigns/Vice President Ford steps in
Nov 1976-Oct 1980	James E. Carter	First space shuttle flight Energy crisis deepens 100 Americans are taken hostage by Iran Carter and Brezhnev sign SALT-2 arm reduction treaty
Nov 1980-Oct 1984	Ronald W. Reagan	Iranian hostages, held more than 400 days, are released Sandra Day O'Connor is named to the Supreme Court Attacks on the US on Lebanon leave 390 dead A toxic leak in Bhopal, India kill 2,500
Nov 1984-Oct 1988	Ronald W. Reagan	A nuclear reactor explodes at Chernobyl in the USSR The shuttle Challenger explodes after takeoff Ivan Boesky pleads guilty to insider trading The stock market crashes, exacerbated by program trading
Nov 1988-Oct 1992	George H. Bush	Bush authorizes \$300 billion to prevent collapse of S&L industry Communism is ousted in Poland, Czech, Hungary and Romania Berlin Wall is demolished Iraq invades Kuwait/Allied forces are at war for six months

Of course, the future always interests investors more than the past -- and presidential elections, in particular, cause us to look ahead. This election had been no different, especially since it marks a change in national leadership. No one can ever tell what such a change will bring, but it's comforting when you revisit some of the momentous events of the past 40 years, to see just how well the nation and the stock market has fared. One conclusion that could be drawn, I believe, is that it never pays to underestimate the durability and resiliency of the American economy.

Dear Point Man



Dear Point Man,

Okay, what is the deal with parking? It seems that some people are allowed to park out in front of the building, while the rest of us are shuttled to the back. The place usually looks deserted from the street. What gives?

Signed,
General Motorhead

Dear Motorhead,

This is one of those policies that's made a few trips through the rumor mill. Employees are asked to park in the back of the building for a few reasons:

1. Security—Part of security is controlled access. Having employees use the card reader in back logs who goes in and out and when—through a single entrance. The camera on the back door automatically switches on whenever that door's open and stays switched until the door closes, so we also have visual confirmation. (Note: Jeff Hillhouse is working on the back door so that it will close faster.) Both of those are lost if the receptionist or security guard buzzes you in through the visitors' entrance. Richard's remarks about pirate copies of Serpent Isle should serve as a reminder that we still have some room for improvement when it comes to security.

2. Space—The back lot just plain has more parking spaces. When 183 is widened to 12 lanes (before too long), we're going to lose half of our front lot. Plus, we're looking at relocating the handicapped spaces to the front to provide more accessible parking in the larger lot.

3. Traffic and dirt—As alluded to in earlier issues of Point, the front lobby (in its current state) is a terrible echo chamber which makes it next to impossible for the person answering the phones. And since cleaning resources are limited, it only makes sense to minimize the grime tracked in from the parking lot.

The parking situation is not intended to make employees feel like second-class citizens. In fact, anybody who wants to make a political statement should feel free to park out front (contrary to other rumors, it's not reserved for Rich and Chris). But if you do park out front—which clearly would also make us look like "someone is home"—you'll still have to hike around back to the security entrance.

Dear Man o' Points,

Where, oh where, are the flags that should be gracing the naked poles in front of our building? I had heard that we would be posting a Texas and an ORIGIN flag, but so far, nothing. Without flags, I am constantly driving right past our building in the morning, because I don't notice it; without flags, there is nothing to salute as I leave at midnight.

Signed,
Concerned Citizen for Flagpole Decency

Dear Citizen:

Flags are on the way. We're going to start with a Texas and U.S. flag while we work on an official ORIGIN flag. The security guards will be responsible for the raising/lowering and care during inclement weather. In any case,

(See "Point" on last page)

(3)

In the Library

Hong Kong Mahjong Pro
Renaissance Masters I: The
Electronic Library of Art (CD)
Sherlock Holmes: (CD)
Car and Driver
Dune 2
Legend of Kyrandia
Comanche: Maximum Overkill

...Market

products catalog to be included in the next 300,000 MediaVision products to ship. The new catalog will be packaged with their ProAudio Spectrum 16 sound cards, CD-ROM Upgrade kits and video cards.

ORIGIN POP

"Creating worlds is hard work. Playing in them is just plain fun. New from ORIGIN." That's the theme of a new point-of-purchase display and promotion that's being offered to the retail channel. The countertop display includes 4-ORIGIN FX, 2-Underworld II and 2-Wing Commander promotional editions. Purchasers of the display receive a free promotional copy of ORIGIN FX.

NEWS.TXT

Kyoto-based Nintendo and Nomura Research Institute plan to jointly develop and sell a device which will allow novice users to create game software.

The design of this new game development device is still on the drawing boards, and both firms have yet to work out the technical details. However, what is known is that it will have a 32-bit processor and a special operating system. The device will be connected to a television set. Both firms are also thinking of developing a device capable of being connected to a personal computer. The price of the standard device will be around 90,000 yen (\$720). The operating system will be produced by Nintendo.

Source: Newsbytes Network

FLASH: M.I.S. FULLY STAFFED AND READY

by guest columnist Kathie Lambdin



By Monday morning, the MIS Department will be fully staffed, for the first time ever! As part of the Big Move, the department successfully uprooted a full blown Network and 168 users, transferred them to our new home with minimal down time, and created a whole new LANSCAPE which individualizes the Development servers, the ADMIN server, and a new main server, ORIGIN.

Along with a brand new LANSCAPE comes a whole new support staff. OSI veteran **Steve Morris** has been with the Origin the last six years. He single-handedly managed the OSI Network and Technical Support for two of those years. With Origin growing rapidly and expanding into worldwide connections, it was time to beef up the staff. The department has been divided into two main sections, Network Systems and Technical Support, under the broad umbrella of Origin Information Systems.

I, **Kathie Lambdin**, came to Origin four and a half months ago, to assume the position of Network Systems Manager. I have five years' experience as a LAN Manager on various other Novell Networks throughout Austin. I will be responsible for all Network operations that Origin employees depend on.

Mark Holley came to Origin four and a half months ago to assume the position of Technical Support. Through this department, he showed promise of becoming a skillful Network Administrator. Mark has been performing both Technical Support and Network Coordination since he came to Origin. He accepted the position of Network Coordinator officially this month. He will assist Kathie in keeping the LANSCAPE fully documented and operational.

On Monday, there will be a new face in the Technical Support area. **Orette Brodrick** is coming to Origin from EA-San Mateo. She has accepted the position of Technical Support Supervisor. Orette comes to Origin with several years experience in Technical Support Management and Purchasing. So give her a big welcome!!!

There are now three, yes count them, *three* Technical Support Field Engineers under Orette's supervision.

Rick Demyen came to Origin two weeks ago from NetServ. He has several years experience with technical support and data cabling knowledge. He is a great addition to the department. When we hired Rick from NetServ, they stated that we were taking one of their "best" men. He has proven that point already!

Dennis Beyers came to Origin a week and a half ago. He, too, was from NetServ. Dennis has several years in system board repairs and data cabling. Again, NetServ said that we got another one of their "best" men.

Steven Schlueter is our third addition to the Technical Support Department. He came from MaxServe this past week. Steven is very knowledgeable in the area of PCs and system board analysis. His knowledge will be widely spread through Origin very quickly.

This is the NEW AND IMPROVED MIS DEPARTMENT—designed so that we may support you all more efficiently and effectively than ever!

...Point Man

we hope to have them by next week.

Dear Point Man,

I just received my paycheck (God, it's low!). Anyway, I was wondering why we don't receive 401K pay deduction info on it. Do we and I just don't notice? Is it only once a month? And what about the *new* Stock Purchase Payroll Deduction, when/if ever will we see this on paycheck stubs? Or is this a separate piece of info we receive?

Signed,
Damned Curious

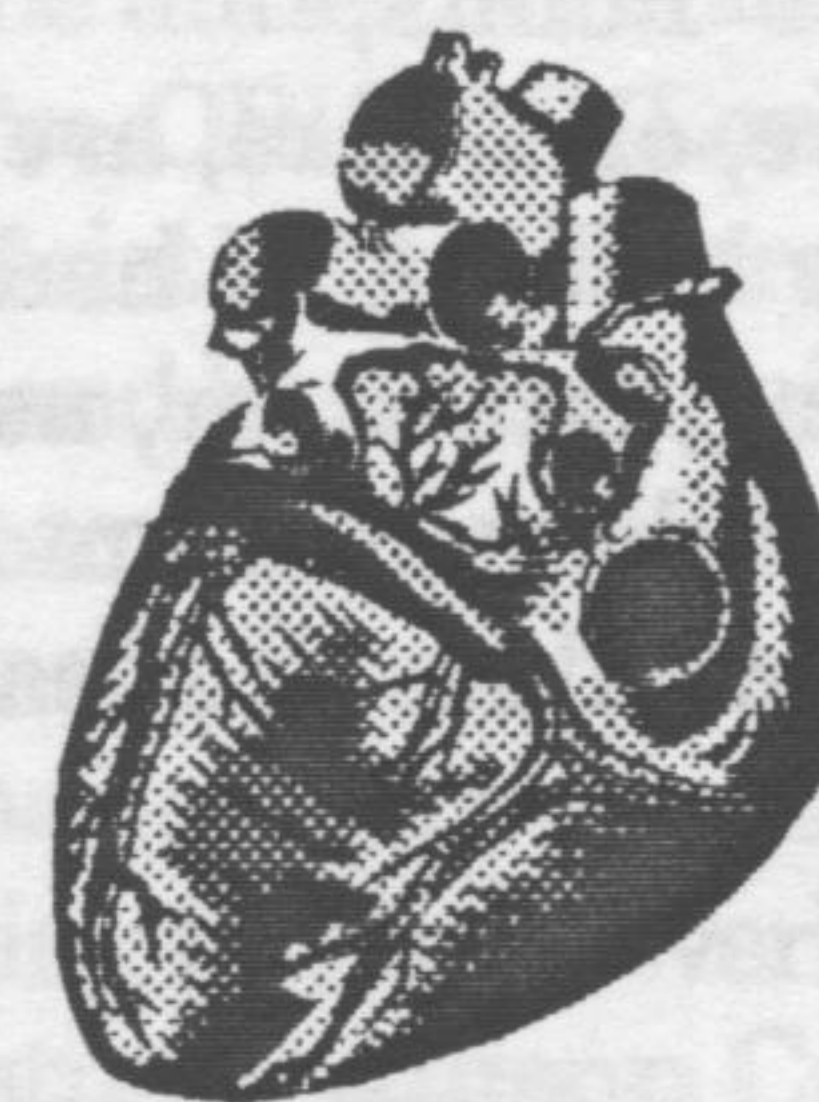
Dear Curious,

Actually, there should be a code that says "401" next to the amount deducted from your check. Likewise, in March, when the stock purchase plan kicks in, there will be an "ESPP" code. In addition, the third party 401K vendor will be sending quarterly reports to each employee about his/her plan in the next few months. We're also hoping to extract a final statement out of the QUADS people for those folks who have been in our 401K plan previously.

Dear Point Man,

Some dumb doo-doo head keeps unscrewing all the little brackets off the walls in the elevator that are used to hang the pads during furniture moving. Each day, a few more are gone, and many of the bolts have now fallen off into the shaft. The damage is not reparable, in many cases. Let's ask them to please STOP. And if they have the peg—PUT THEM BACK!

Signed,
Lord British



Don't forget Valentine's Day on Sunday!