

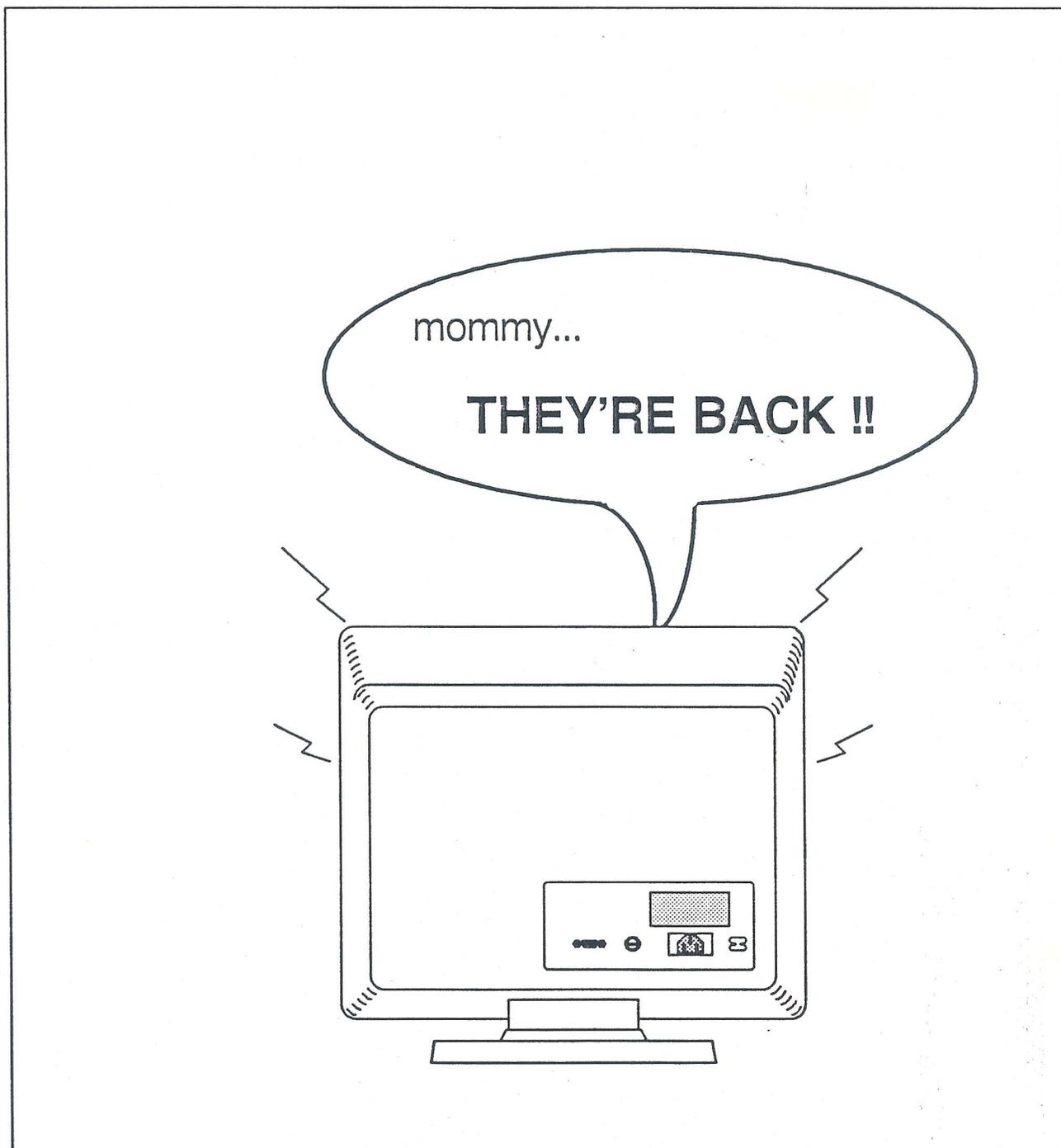
CONNIPTION

Volume 2 Number 4

chief, Editor in Chief
*"Oh, don't be such a
BORK!"*

October 1987

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Wall \$treet Weak

by Sharky DeBullion

2

They're at it again. Sharky has learned that Data General will sponsor a splashy show a la DecWorld down at Boston Harbor. The centerpiece of the show will be a giant slave ship. Rumor has it that DeCastro himself will pound out the rowing rythmn. DeCastro quote of the week: "What, they've raised the minimum wage! This will cost us millions!" The hottest hi-tech buzz concerns Apollo Inc. Someone over there lost \$5.7 million. Sharky suggests that the loser try to figure out what he was wearing that day and then search those pockets very carefully because it's bound to be there. (Sharky is such a kiddo.) Actually, Sharky's remoras have learned the truth. It seems that our trader friend converted Apollo's available dollars, yen, marks, and franks into Fijian seashells. Better find a harder currency next time pal. **Whatever happened to Iran-gate?** Wasn't it there a minute ago? Who won? Sharky's glad we've put that whole nasty business behind us so that we can concentrate on Judge Bork and Vanna White.

The business of America is busywork. Why don't we lease Alaska? Perhaps some wealthy

country like Japan needs a little more space. We get them to sign a lease, and then bammo, 99 years later we raise the rent to the sky. What! They won't pay. Sorry pal, clean up the mess you've made or you can forget about that security deposit. **Au Canada.** Sharky notices with great anger that our so-called *neighbors* have been complaining about us again. These people are actually angry with us because we've destroyed a few hundred of their lakes with acid-rain. Do you believe these Canadians? Sharky challenges Canadians to come up with one significant cultural contribution Canada has made to the world (and punting on third down does not count). Send your answers by email to this newspaper.

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if (you_can_read_this)
{
    you = programmer;
    your_pay *= 2;
}
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YO Fritz!

Hey Fritz:

What the heck do you guys do every day? I call in a problem, and you don't show up for hours. Your slow response time adversely affects my productivity!

Annoyed

Dear Annoyed:

You're an engineer, right? I can always tell engineers: you guys think, just because you can design an OR gate or shift and rotate, the rest of us got to peel Twinkies for you and kiss your bare feet. I'd like to see you guys do a little specialized shifting and rotating sometime, if you know what I mean. "Adversely affect your productivity" my arsenic.

You're annoyed, huh? Well, I got news for you, bub: I'm pretty annoyed at all these complaints that we in Facilities are lazy. We do more in ten minutes than you guys do in a month of SR10 meetings. And we don't need to leave empty pizza boxes lying around to prove we've been working.

(cont)

I keep a log of everything I do each day. Here's my log for one morning last week to show you what my job's like.

7:35 am Get to my office. Pour myself a cup of coffee.

7:38 am Answer call from woman in office 2134. Says she sees giant spiders in her office. Judging from the amount of glue in the office, I'm surprised that's all she sees.

7:45 am Get back to my office., and The coffee and cremora have started to separate. Drink coffee quickly.

7:50 am Start to remove ceiling tiles from second floor ceiling. Find a football in the ceiling.

8:10 am Answer call from guy in office 1056. He says it's too cold in his office. Jack the thermostat up to 84°.

8:15 am Continue removing ceiling tiles.

8:27 am Someone complains that we're stirring up too much dust removing ceiling tiles.

8:33 am Accidentally drop large quantity of dust on person who complained about the dust.

8:52 am Answer call from office 1057. Says it's too hot. Turn thermostat down to 55°.

9:26 am Finish removing ceiling tiles. Take a coffee break.

9:27 am Person in office 2623 complains that the ceiling tiles are blocking the hall.

9:48 am Move ceiling tiles out of middle of hallway. Stack them in front of door of office 2623.

10:12 am Start banging on pipes directly overhead office 2623.

10:24 am Hide dead rat next to overhead vent of office 2623.

10:37 am Answer call from office 1056. He says it's too cold. Turn thermostat up to 98°.

10:43 am Answer call from office 2623 complaining about bad smell in vent. Accidentally drop rat on person while removing it.

11:04 am Realize I took out wrong ceiling tiles. Start replacing ceiling tiles.

11:19 am Person in office 1057 says it's too hot again. Turn thermostat down to 32°.

11:48 am Frozen pipes burst on first floor. Quit for lunch.

Apollo Employees Brave Construction Gauntlet

CHELMSFORD, Mass. (*Connip-tion Press*) -- Despite the fact that car mines have been discovered along the Route 129 construction site, Apollo employees are courageously running the gauntlet between the Route 3 bridge and the safe haven of Apollo buildings.

New company Big Guy Rolls o' Pampers said that he was bursting with pride over the way Apollo employees have responded to the recent Travel Turmoil. "Once more Apollo people have shown that they will respond to any challenge," he said. "They took the 18 months of construction on the Route 3 bridge like troopers, and we're finding that this setback hasn't slowed them down (much) either."

Security officials strongly suspect that roving bands of Chelmsford hooligans are responsible for the mines that have been encountered along the construction path. Officials have been forced to maneuver through the area each morning with sophisticated mine-sweeping machinery attached to the front of their 4x4 pickups. They say without such measures, the broken-axel and flat-tire rate would have been much higher.

Despite their efforts, however, Security is still concerned about employees' safety. Head Agent Bronson Charles recently made the following alert available to the *Connption*:

"The Vice Presidents' Security Council (VPSC) has recently received reports of stepped-up terrorist activity along the Route 129 travel corridor. Employees who will be travelling that way should be aware of the heightened security risk and take the appropriate precautions. Spare tires and a paid-up AAA membership are considered the minimum precautionary measures."

Security also advises that employees allow extra time when travelling between buildings Up the Hill and Down in the Valley. "It seems like they ought to be able to keep two lanes open at all times -- after all, they are adding two lanes to the road," said Charles. "But, hey, they've probably got some fancy-schmanzy college graduate civil engineer running the show who doesn't know his earth-mover from his elbow.

That's the only reason we can think of to explain why they've only had one lane open at times. Unless, of course, those rumors that they want to run Apollo out of town are true..."

The VPSC reportedly is considering a program to re-flag employees' cars with Chelmsford Resident stickers, but the plan has not yet been approved. If such a plan were approved, the re-flagged cars would be escorted through the Straits of Chelmsford by Apollo minivans. "We're examining the long-range diplomatic consequences of such an action," said one Veep.

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LEFT
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Meeting Notes

The **Meeting Task Force** meets daily at 5:15 in the Building 330 Cafeteria. Tonight's speaker will discuss creative meeting scheduling techniques that can fill your schedule with meetings, allowing you to avoid all possibility of getting work done.

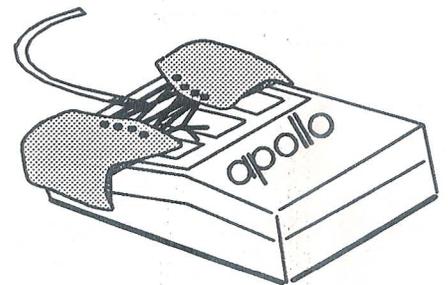
Parents Without Children meets Monday evenings in the Manufacturing and Planning Conference Room. Next meeting's discussion topic: how to deal with your smug coworkers who have children. We will also discuss plans for the upcoming Father-Son Day with the Children Without Parents group.

Future meetings of **Expectant Mothers Without Rides** have been cancelled because no members could get rides to the meetings.

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Apollo Announces SRn: The Next Generation in Software Releases

(Chelmsford) — Apollo Computer Inc. stunned the computing community today by announcing the upcoming release of "SRn", the latest in a series of operating system and layered product enhancements. According to Barbara Shellgame, Marketing Product Manager for SRn, "a lot of other companies are stuck with an outdated mode of thinking when it comes to releasing software. You see this all the time in their integer and real number naming schemes. Of course, Apollo used to do this, too, before we realized the potential of using variable names for release notation."

One of the primary benefits of this new software is that "SR-en can be all things to all people," says one prominent development engineer. "You want real Unix? You got real Unix! You want Aegis? It's right here, baby! How about native MS-DOS? Pop this puppy on your disk, and every application you've ever written will just work! Man, it's *bad*."

SRn is only the first salvo in the software release broadside fired by Apollo on this historic occasion. The workstation vendor also announced SRn++, a portable version of the OS that can boot any computer pulling less than 40 amperes. SRn++ will be available for shipment in July 1988. Bugfixes for both OS releases will be shipped in SRn+=2, "allowing us to leapfrog to normal trouble-reporting bottlenecks."

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Sure, any E-11 can park head-in, but only a trained VPSHPP graduate can take up two spaces. In fact, we're proud to announce that a recent graduate successfully "allocated" three prime spaces during a driving rainstorm.

Let's face it folks. Unlike some companies, Apollo does not offer reserved parking spaces to its higher-ups. So if you want the little folks to know that you've arrived, arrive in style with a course from the VPSHPP.

Full Meddle Jacket:

Three Days of Hell in Manage- ment Boot Camp

"As I look back on it now, it seems like ... just a dream. We were innocent then — maybe, I don't know; too innocent. Lots of us guys signed up because we thought it was *YOUR DUTY*. What a laugh. Some duty.

"Things started out simple enough. The recruiter ("HR wants *YOU* for the Apollo Army") said it would be a breeze. Three days in Gloucester, she said. Nice hotel; great food. Just sit in on a couple of seminars. Learn to be a leader. You start with a squad, then maybe, if you're good, you move up to a section. Who knows. If you get some breaks, maybe someday you'll be a vice president. It's happened to worse guys than me. How bad could that be?

"Bad enough. First, there was The Group. My God, you should have seen them. Starry-eyed middle managers just like me, all wrapped up in the flag of Excellence and swearin' that we could make a difference. You laugh, but it seemed like a good idea at the time. That was before we started the training. Sixteen good men and women faced with a flaming sea of Interpersonal Communicative Techniques. It hurts just to remember it.

(cont)

"We started with *Understanding Yourself as a Leader and Manager*. That should have tipped us off right there. The Big Lie. Nobody understands themselves as managers. That's the secret that you only hear about once you've crossed the minefield of Performance Evaluations. A lot of good people never come back from their annual review. You've seen it happen, too. The blank looks ... the one line mail messages saying "Arnold Hoppenheimer has decided to pursue alternative career opportunities." What a waste.

"Then there was *Apollo: A Business Overview*. We got the party line on corporate performance for sure. Talk about merciless visual aids. I still wake up nights, sweating, seeing growth charts and customer counts looming up, threatening to drown me. No matter how hard I struggle, I'm drowning. "Help! Somebody ... Hel... (gasp, gurgle)" Then darkness, and a smiling, mustachioed marketeer whispering "Time to make the numbers ..."

"There's more; so much more. *Managing Finance. Managing Performance. Managing the Problem Employee.* Managing to survive is more like it. When the shooting starts, it's every man for himself. So be warned. In my outfit, you do your job — pull your weight — or it's The Hook. No excuses. No second thoughts. And don't come crawling my way when the next round lands in your foxhole. I'm lookin' out for me. If I can manage.

A Letter From



Betty Ann's Olde Node Gyffte Shoppe

We at Betty Ann's are grieved to witness the current trend in project naming at Apollo. Engineers seem to relish in naming their projects after the less appealing members of the animal kingdom: unappetizing fish, vicious dogs, and nasty reptiles dominate the schedule. This is most disturbing. What kind of sicko, for instance, would wear with pride a t-shirt saying "Kiss me — I'm a Warthog"? What perverts would get kicks from being part of the Tick Project? And yet, this seems to be the inevitable future of the naming strategy.

We would like to recommend a return to project names that celebrate the more adorable of Nature's creatures. "Otter" was a splendid example of a nice, tasteful name for a project. Otters are playful, winsome animals. We believe that the appeal of the project's name contributed significantly to the product's success. The grass roots support was tremendous. Our t-shirts with pictures of cute, fuzzy otters on them sold like hot cakes. But just try moving a store room full of t-shirts with poisonous, spiny fish on them!

We at Betty Ann's have some recommendations for future project names. How about the Teddy Bear Project, or perhaps the Panda Project? Baby animals always have tremendous appeal: kittens, bunnies, puppies and chickies would all make lovely project mascots.

We can guarantee a large secondary market for project-related items such as lunch boxes, mugs, paper weights, and bed sheets if you would give your next project one of these adorable names. However, if you continue to display a warped taste for the bizarre, Betty Ann's might have to find a market for Sun-related items.

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