

Jimmy Cagney's Life on Tape

99 Wishes
For a Perfect VCR

video

37869
\$1.95

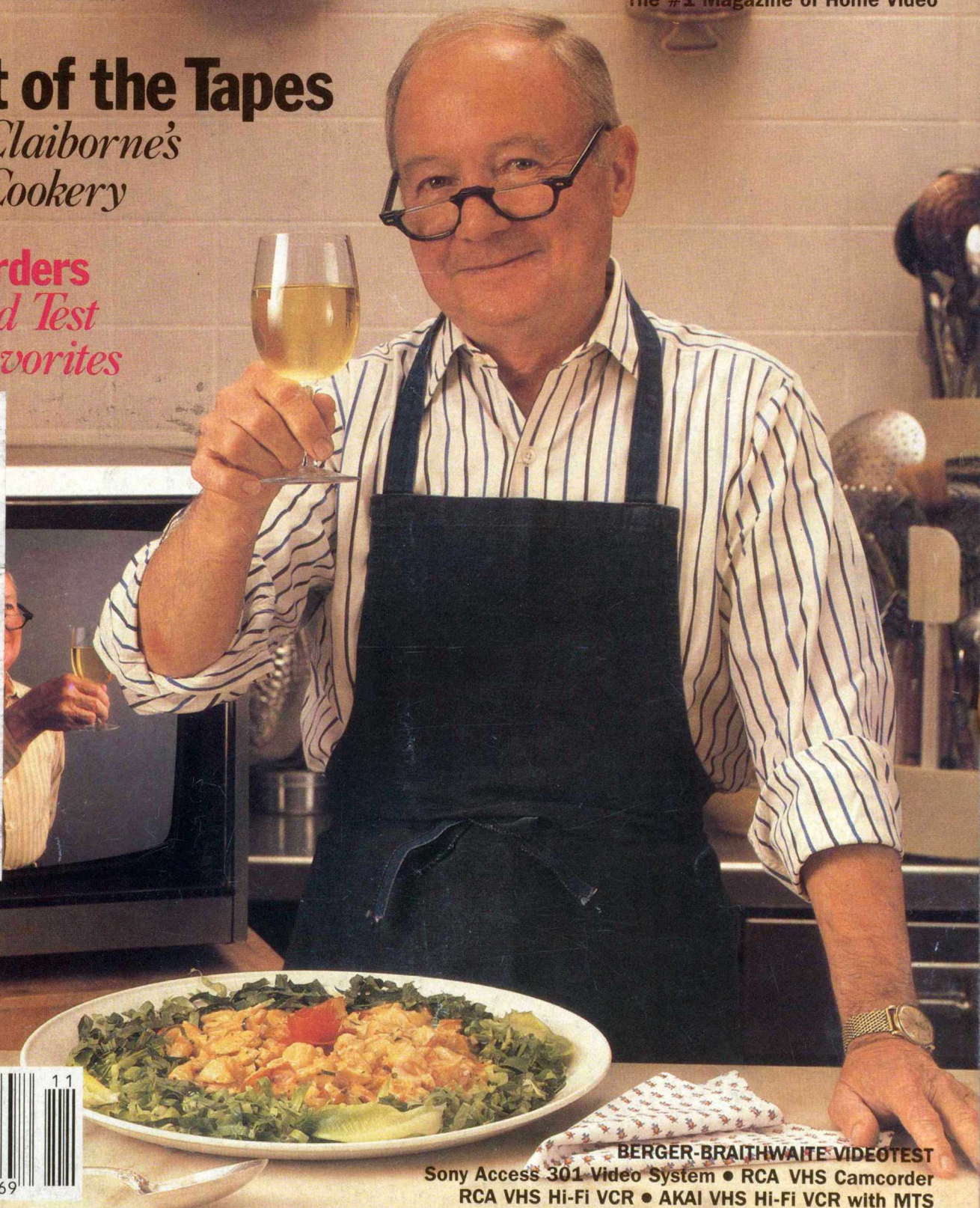
NOVEMBER 1985

The #1 Magazine of Home Video

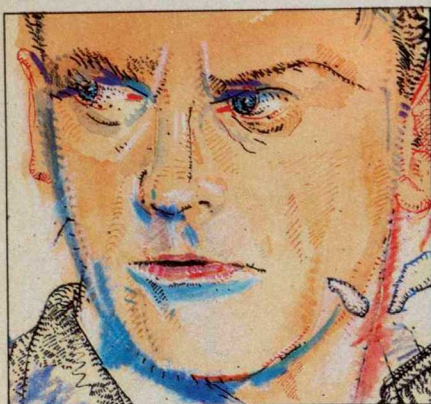
Toast of the Tapes

*Craig Claiborne's
Video Cookery*

Camcorders
*We Field Test
Five Favorites*



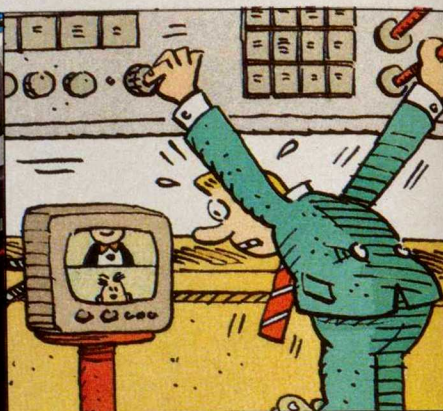
BERGER-BRAITHWAITE VIDEOTEST
Sony Access 301 Video System • RCA VHS Camcorder
RCA VHS Hi-Fi VCR • AKAI VHS Hi-Fi VCR with MTS



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90



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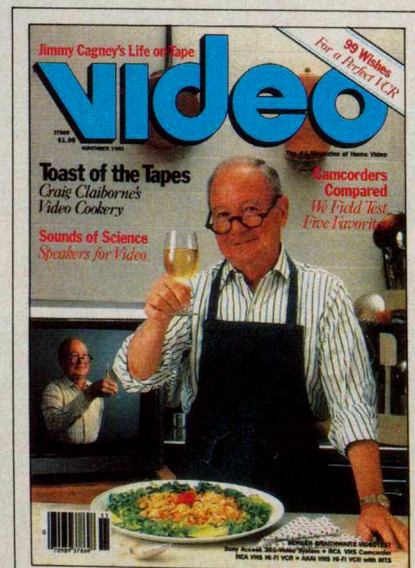
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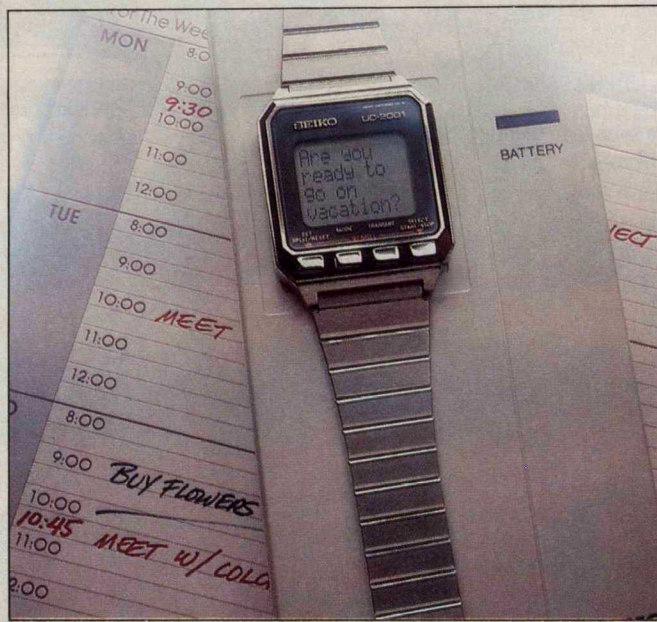
One-Way Wrist Computer

Okay, so it's not a two-way wrist radio *a la* Dick Tracy, but it's the next best thing. The Seiko Datagraph 2001, a.k.a. "Time-Trax," is an electronic toy that is sure to impress your friends, or at least be one of the world's most interesting conversation timepieces.

First, the bad news. It comes with a 72-page manual. Many of you will understandably refuse to buy a watch with instructions that are so intimidatingly lengthy. Second, it works with Apple II series computers. If you don't already own one, don't read any further.

Seiko is aiming this product at busy executives who like the idea of planning their day on a computer and then transferring the data (memos, notes, anniversaries, reminders) to the LCD screen on their wrists. Not surprisingly, the screen is hard to read in dim light. It's somewhat time-consuming to be this organized—even a little silly—to depend on your beeping watch to remind you that your cats must go to the vet for shots.

But we live in an age of beepers, so I plunged ahead and read the manual. The package consists of the ten-character-by-four-line display watch (the UC-2001),



Memos can be programmed into the Seiko Datagraph 2001 computer watch.

the program disk, and an interface module (the UC-2301) which plugs into the Apple's game port. To transfer data to the watch, you press the "transmit" button on the watch. The words "transmit" stand-by" flash, and you place it on the module. Your disk drive whirrs, and your monitor tells you the transmission (at a very fast 2048 bauds) was successful. You hit the "mode" button. When "schedule" appears, you can use the two outside buttons to scroll up and down and see the message you composed on your

monitor.

Very heady high tech.

The watch itself is nifty, and lighter than the quartz watches introduced in the early 1970s. You can set it with a little experimentation and nary a glance at the manual. In its four modes it will tell you the day-date-month-time (one), set an alarm (two), act as a stopwatch with split seconds (three), and display programmed data (four).

The program disk is more complex but the on-screen menu is easy to learn. A touch of the Apple's return

key will format your text (a must because the display is so limited) so your messages are readable. The month icon looks like a wall calendar, which lets you plan as much as a year in advance. (You'll never be forgiven if you forget a birthday with Time-Trax.) The two notepads hold up to 1000 characters each, and the schedule carries 1100 characters. I wish the fairly primitive text editor had word wrap and a less cumbersome command schedule to insert-delete-change.

There are a few features that make this package a class act. A print menu that allows you to take a neat printout of your nasty reminders. It even scrolls the paper exactly down to the page perforation. The three AAA batteries *are* included, and Seiko adds a tiny Philips head screwdriver to install them. The price is a hefty \$189.

Why would anyone want a gadget like this? Because it's there.

—Doug Garr

Hippo Almanac

Remember those science-fiction films from the 1950s in which a scientist (invariably attired in a spiffy white lab coat and usually played by the immortal Whit Bissell) walks up to a computer keyboard in front of a room full of blinking lights. He could ask the machine just about any question—from "What time is it in Berlin?" to "How many calories are there in a slice of pizza?"—and get an answer. Today, of course, we know better. Computers can't answer questions like that. If they could, they'd demand we ask in COBOL or some other exotic tongue.

Well, science fiction often

You Oughta Be In Pictures

The Jetsons generation has grown up and taken its tube fantasies into the office with them. A video telephone system that links up to an IBM PC has been developed by the Datapoint Corporation. The Minx system has a high-resolution camera built into a color computer monitor for face-to-face personal

teleconferencing.

Switching between the computer and video communications takes a press of the mode button. Any screens, like a spreadsheet, that you're working on can be switched to the video system by translating the image through a color graphics adapter to make it NTSC-compatible.

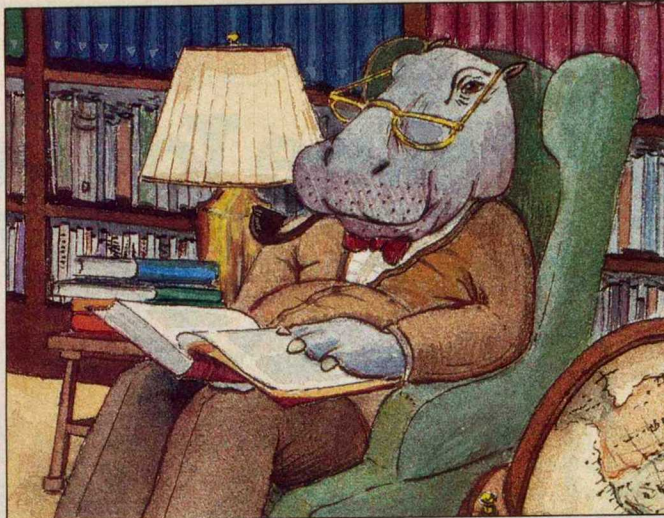
In multi-station calls, the

current speaker is put up on the screen by voice activation. VCRs and additional cameras (for reading documents off the desk or getting a large number of people into the picture) can also be added. However with high tech comes a high price tag—something in the neighborhood of \$10,000. I think I'll wait. Just send me a Polaroid.

—Ben Templin

becomes science fact sooner than we think. Witness the *Hippo Computer Almanac* (\$34.95 from Hippopotamus Software, 985 University Ave., Los Gatos, Calif. 95030). Designer Wendell Brown and a team of researchers claim they have crammed over 35,000 useful facts onto one of those tiny Macintosh floppies. Included in the database is the kind of information you would expect to find in the *World Almanac* or other general reference text, like currency exchange rates, sports trivia, about 1000 toll-free telephone numbers, astronomical data, geographical info, famous dates in history, key words in 34 languages, unit conversions, a calorie counter, financial calculations, and the latitude and longitude of hundreds of places on the face of the earth. Whew...

The nicest part of this information is that the program lets you use natural language to get what you want. Ask it "Who played in the 1945 World Series?" and it will tell



you that the Cubs met the Tigers and (what else?) lost. It is also smart enough to know when it's being asked to do arithmetic; for example, to figure the distance between two cities or the number of calories in a 16 ounce New York strip steak.

The *Hippo Almanac* is one of those program you wonder why no one devised sooner. It also presages the day when the digital compact disc will be used to access enor-

mous databases, like encyclopedias or the *Physicians' Desk Reference*. Until then having a *Hippo* on the desk is a step in the right direction.

—Tim Onosko

Hacking Goes Legit

Hacker, the program from Activision (Commodore 64, \$29.95, Apple II series, \$34.95), should not be confused with hacking, the sport of whiz kids. *Hacker* is strict-

ly a game with a gimmick. As a game, it's fun. As an experiment in hacking, it's no contest.

Hacker begins—there are no instructions—by having you guess the password to gain entry into the system operated by the fictitious company Magma Ltd. Magma, you soon discover, is planning to dominate the world by capturing energy sources in 10 strategic locations worldwide. Crucial information concerning the Magma project is in the hands of 10 spies, each of whom possesses a piece of a shredded document. Piece it together and hand the information over to the FBI. Accomplish all of this in the allotted time and your name will appear in a simulated electronic version of the *Washington Post*. Realism counts for little here, considering that hackers' names usually appear in newspaper accounts only when they have been arrested for breaking and entering into a system. —Steve Bloom

Instant Avant Garde

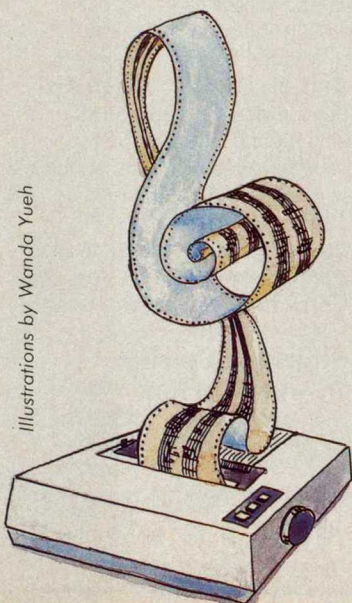
Computers that play music have been around for years. But *Cantus* is probably the first microcomputer software that composes music. Like *Racter*, a program that creates readable (though nonsensical) prose, *Cantus* produces music—not songs, but music—after a fashion.

Cantus couldn't recreate a Mozart piano concert or a

Lennon and McCartney tune, but it does generate three-voice sequences of chords and improvised melodies. If the result is vaguely reminiscent of the work of contemporary composer Philip Glass (often referred to as a minimalist because his meandering melodies comprise a limited number of tones), it isn't accidental. *Cantus*'s creator is Michael Riesman, musical director of the Philip Glass Ensemble and the conductor of the recordings of Glass' "Glass Works," "Einstein on the Beach," "The Photographer," and the film scores for Godfrey Reggio's *Koyaanisqatsi* and Paul Schrader's new film, *Mishima*. Riesman says Glass himself has listened to *Cantus* and likes the results. With a pedigree like that, this marks the entry of world-class artistic talent into the micro-software medium.

Cantus is available for the Commodore 64, and versions are being prepared for other systems, including the Macintosh. (*Cantus* is \$54 from Algo-Rhythm Software, 176 Mineola Blvd., Mineola, NY 11501.)

—Tim Onosko



Illustrations by Wanda Yueh

BEST SELLERS/HOME

1. **Print Shop.** AP, C64, AT. Broderbund.
2. **Newsroom.** AP, IBM. Springboard.
3. **Print Shop Graphics Library, 1.** AP, C64, AT. Broderbund.
4. **Clip Art Volume 1 for Newsroom.** AP, IBM. Springboard.
5. **Print Shop Graphics Library 2.** AP. Broderbund.
6. **Bank Street Writer.** AP, APc, IBM, C64, AT. Broderbund.
7. **Print Master.** IBM, PCjr. Advanced Product Solutions.
8. **Dollars & Sense.** AP, APc, IBM, MAC, TP. Monogram.
9. **Print Master Art Gallery 1.** IBM. Advanced Product
10. **Managing Your Money.** AP, IBM. Mecca.

BEST SELLERS/RECREATION

1. **Jet.** IBM. Sublogic.
2. **Gato.** AP, IBM, MAC, PCjr. Spectrum Holobyte.
3. **Flight Simulator.** IBM. Microsoft.
4. **Flight Simulator II.** AP, C64, AT, DG. Sublogic.
5. **Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy.** AP, IBM, MAC, C64, AT. Infocom.
6. **Wishbringer.** AP, IBM, MAC, C64, AT. Infocom.
7. **F-15 Strike Eagle.** AP, IBM, C64, AT. Microprose.
8. **Karateka.** AP, C64. Broderbund.
9. **Sargon III.** AP, IBM, MAC, C64. Hayden Software.
10. **Zork I.** AP, IBM, MAC, AT, CP/M, DEC, TIP. Infocom.

LEGEND: AP = Apple, APc = Apple IIc, APe = Apple IIe, AT = Atari, C64 = Commodore 64, COM = Commodore Pet/CBM, CP/M = 5 1/4" and 8" formats, DEC = DEC Rainbow, DG = Data General, EPS = Epson QX-10, IBM = IBM-PC, MAC = Apple Macintosh, PCjr = IBM PCjr, TIP = Texas Instruments Professional, TRS = TRS-80, VIC = Commodore Vic-20, VTR = Victor 9000, WNG = Wang Personal Computer, ZEN = Zenith 100.
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