

A C T I V I S I O N ' S

MODERN COMPUTER PEOPLE

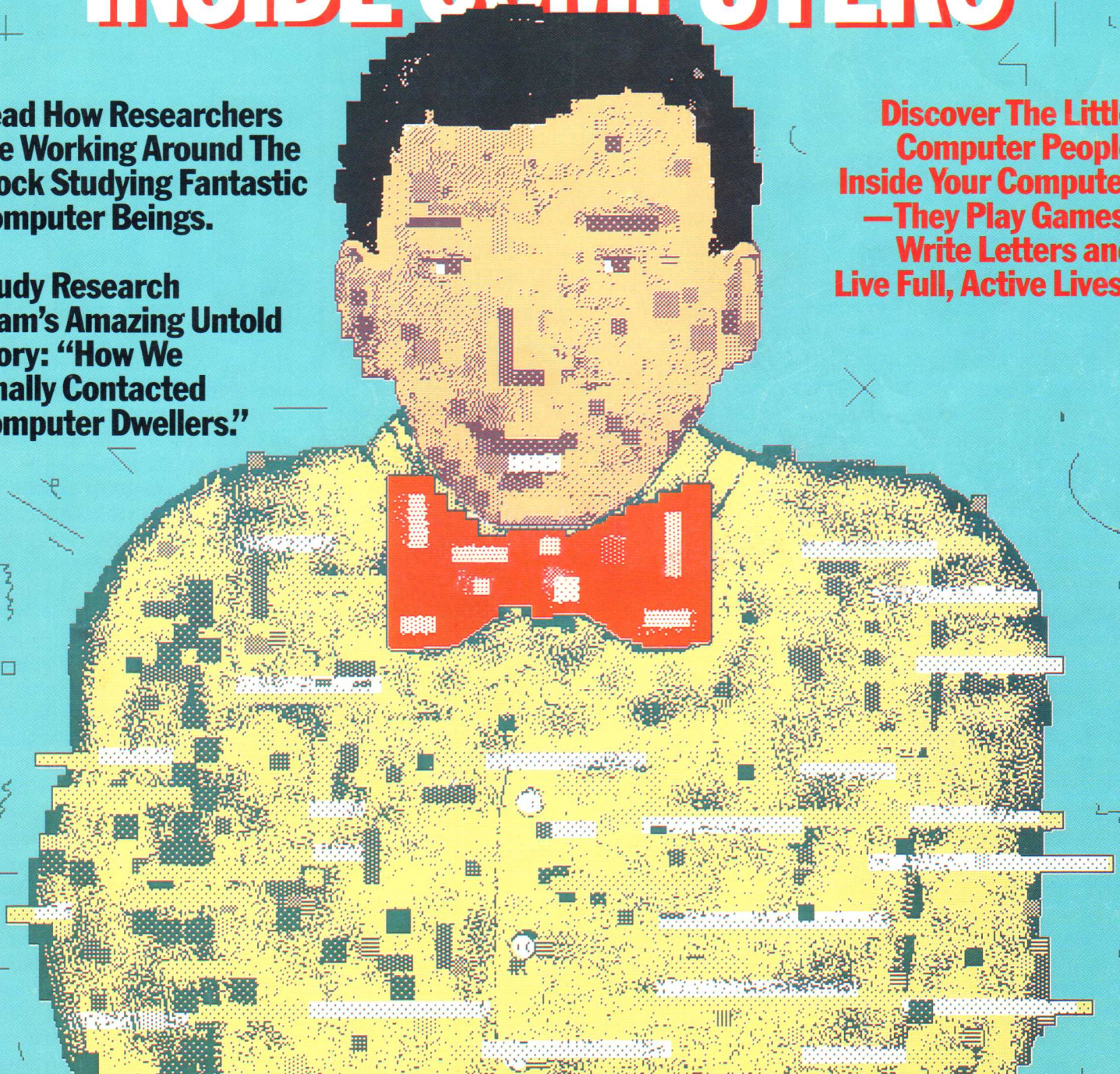
ASTONISHING
DISCOVERY!

HUMAN-LIKE BEINGS ACTUALLY FOUND LIVING INSIDE COMPUTERS

**Read How Researchers
Are Working Around The
Clock Studying Fantastic
Computer Beings.**

**Study Research
Team's Amazing Untold
Story: "How We
Finally Contacted
Computer Dwellers."**

**Discover The Little
Computer People
Inside Your Computer
—They Play Games,
Write Letters and
Live Full, Active Lives!**

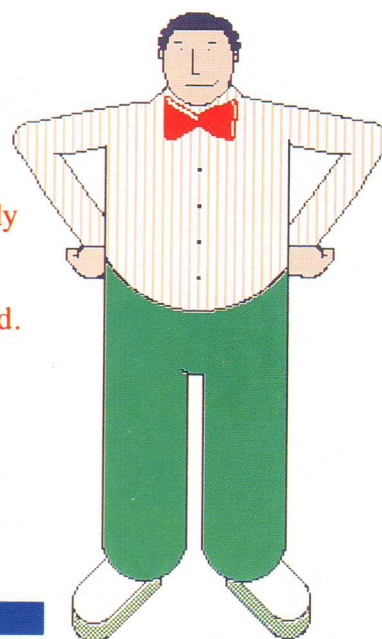


THE MAGAZINE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

ASTONISHING
DISCOVERY!

COVER STORY

First, they simply stared at each other. A group of about half-a-dozen researchers badly in need of sleep and a very curious, newly-discovered 1½ inch inhabitant of a computer. That's right. At first they just stared. And, then, someone spoke.



“WELL HOW DO YOU DO?”

In a way, high technology has always been the supreme science of hide and seek. More often than not, odds have been against the electronic seekers—a stalwart clan always searching for much-coveted “solutions,” only to find that their cherished goals exhibit an exquisite gift for elusion. But, every now and again, somebody bucks the odds.

In the very early hours of a bright Spring day, one of high-tech's all-time “solutions” was finally cornered (or, more appropriately, coaxed out).

How It All Began David Crane knows a lot about computers. He is, in fact, a professional in the field of software design. Rich Gold is an artist and musician with a modest computer background.

Like anybody else who has ever worked with computers, both Gold and Crane have experienced their share of computer operating hiccups, commonly called “glitches.” Most could be explained away as results of either technical or human error. Some couldn't.

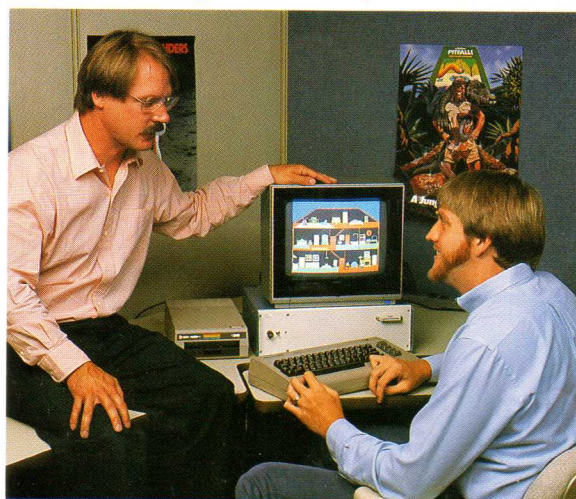
Because of these glitches, both men were, at times, prepared to pull their hair out or just pull the plug on their respective projects. Without realizing it, Crane and Gold were simultaneously experiencing many of the very same problems and actually were coming to the same conclusions or, shall we say, ‘suspensions.’

HELP! Rich Gold and David Crane pondered this problem over several years. Gold took action first. In mid-1984, he contacted Malcolm Kaufman, renowned computer industry producer, and asked to be put in touch with individuals who could help him get to the bottom of his suspicions.

Kaufman knew immediately where to turn. He enlisted the somewhat skeptical help of James Wickstead and Associates, well-known electronics design engineers. At that point, the thought of Little Computer People was the furthest thing from anyone's mind, except Gold's.

Suspensions Grow Stronger For months, the research and study continued. And, through it all, suspicions were continually growing stronger, being fed now by some real data. Glitches were becoming more and more frequent. It was as though someone was trying to tell the researchers something...something like “Go away!”. Researchers had gotten to the point where they could almost “communicate” with the perpetrators by setting up what they called “glitch-trap scenarios”—creating situations that invited tampering. Their requests were always granted.

Various methods of “extraction” were then employed—the computer equivalents of bull horns (data compression), sledge hammers (power



Activision Research Group Leaders Sam Nelson and David Crane discuss the discovery.

surges) and tear gas (irritating software subroutines) included. Fortunately, cooler heads prevailed.

Breakthrough Thinking At that point, Gold decided it was time for everyone to take a step back. (In other words, the researchers weren't getting anywhere, so they shifted gears.) Gold and Wickstead realized that, if someone or something was actually inside a computer, he or it would *probably* know all about the computer's owner—how he lived, what he was like and so on. Why? Because everything that passed through the computer would have to pass by the computer dweller.

And that very thought led directly to a "friendship treaty." "Maybe they like us," claimed Gold. "If so, we need to create a comfortable environment to lure them out." Taking things a step further, Gold postulated that the little computer dwellers probably would not care for an "unfurnished" environment. Instead, they would know and want all the comforts and tools of modern day life, i.e. a "home." The task of identifying the proper amenities began.

Micro-Interior Decorating Meanwhile, back in Mountain View, California, David Crane had decided to spearhead Activision's Research Group (ARG) into the mysterious forces inside of computers. Word of Gold's work reached Crane through various industry sources. Crane and Gold quickly decided to join forces and began working night and day on everything from furnishings to plumbing to electrical necessities for the "home" they were creating.

After months of intense research, the house-on-a-disk was fully constructed. A thing of beauty, the 2½ story house was finally loaded into a laboratory computer.

At first, nothing happened. Everyone froze, waiting. After what seemed an eternity, the doorbell rang...twice. A 1½" humanoid "person"—the first Little Computer Person—appeared. He looked around but did not enter the house. Then, abruptly, he left. Disappointment fell like a giant millstone on the Group. But, minutes later, just as several researchers were about to hurl themselves on their compilers, he re-

CHRONOLOGY OF A DISCOVERY

1977 It was a typically warm, lazy August night in California. Children

laughing. Dogs barking in the distance. But, on a quiet Palo Alto street, in a nondescript 2-car garage, a hand-assembled prototype of the world's first home computer was set on top of a workbench. Two tired engineers beamed as they admired their hard work. They had only the slightest idea of what they had actually "created."

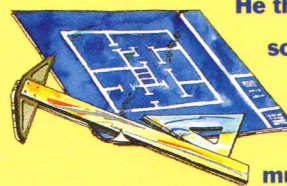


1980 In the middle of a cold winter night, David Crane was thinking

about computer systems and frowning. Perched atop a not-so-comfortable stool, with a large mug of root beer in one hand and his chin in the other, he had problems. A pesky "glitch" had been haunting him. Perfect code was going in, but mumbo-jumbo was coming out.



1984 In sunny Southern California, artist/composer Rich Gold was off key. Every D-flat he hit on his computer resounded back as a D-sharp. Not a pretty sound.



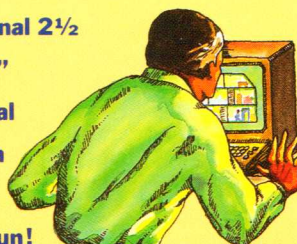
He theorized that someone or something was actually inside his computer, playing havoc with his music. Through Malcolm

Kaufman, he enlisted the aid of James Wickstead Associates, a highly respected engineering firm in New Jersey. The search was on.

1985 It's a time of growth in many ways. Forces are joined. David

Crane spearheads Activision's Research Group, and a breakthrough is quickly achieved. The very first Little Computer Person is spotted. A fully functional 2½ story "house-on-a-disk"

is devised, and an actual Little Computer Person moves in! A modern-day revolution has begun!



turned. With belongings in hand and shyness written all over his face, the first LCP strolled into his new home. He seemed to be intelligent, if not a tad mischievous. The researchers had found their man...and more. For a few steps behind the Little Computer Person, a small dog of indefinite breed bounced in.

A Flood of Information Since that day, the research work has continued nonstop. Dozens of Little Computer People have been contacted, each quite individual and each with his own canine companion. Each day seems to result in fresh insight and new revelation. Recent important discoveries about the LCP's:

They communicate in writing.

They play games.

Each has his own name.

They are accomplished musicians.

They can dance.

As the Little Computer People became accustomed to their new surroundings, Gold, Crane and Wickstead introduced new stimuli. One night, a typewriter was left in one room. The next day, the researchers discovered their Little Computer Person was not only typing away but seemed to be writing a letter "back home."

Another night, a stereo with records was provided. They seemed much appreciated.

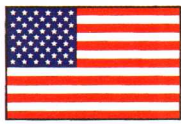
Some items, however, were neither appreciated nor understood. A state-of-the-art VCR, for instance, was returned in small pieces. No explanation was forthcoming, however it was assumed that this little person may have been neglected for a while due to a particular computer owner's heavy VCR use.

Today Mountain View, Tomorrow the World! There's really no telling where this research will lead to next. The people at Activision do concede two things: They will soon market what they're calling "The Activision Little Computer People Discovery Kit" for use on ordinary personal computers, and they also plan to take this research worldwide. As David Crane puts it, "There's a whole world of Little Computer People out there, and we just can't imagine what we'll find."

Somehow, neither can we.



AMERICA REACTS



Despite one of recent history's most furious and massive attempts to block a news leak, the word is out. The Little Computer People are coming.

Reactions around the country have been varied but predictable. Some folks see opportunities, others see a threat to the very heart of the Republic. But virtually everyone sees something

interesting in it all. Here's a sampling:

Washington: Top Pentagon brass, initially concerned with the impact on America's military machine, are now seeking ways to "enlist" this potential new "Corps." (However, this may be difficult since research indicates that Little Computer People have a strong dislike for khaki-colored clothes.)

Berkeley: While some University

of California think tanks are re-examining accepted fundamentals of Western thought, a Save the Little Computer People Foundation has sprung up on campus. Claims SLCPF Director Linda Freeburg, "They're no different than whales or baby seals. Sooner or later, they'll be headed for major exploitation, too."

Las Vegas: "If they're in computers, why not slot machines?" asks Billy Joe Griffin, long-time player. Even though everyone can certainly see the profitability of such an hypothesis, no one has begun to produce a "house-on-a-disk" for one-armed bandits.

New York: Many major corporate data processing executives are meeting around the clock, evaluating the discovery in terms of their own computer systems. New light may now be cast on long term *unexplainable* catastrophes: why the president of a top American automobile manufacturer reserved a seat on a non-stop to Detroit only to be "held over" in Tokyo; why a young doctor's wife goes on wild splurges in Bloomingdale's only to receive monthly statements with zero balances and ever increasing credit limits. Answers are expected soon.

Topeka: "You bet they're from another solar system, I've got proof." Sheriff J.D. Heffer, disputing recent research, claimed Little Computer People "really don't live inside computers—they're just visiting, and they'll be headed back to their real home very soon." Sheriff Heffer added that he would substantiate his claim at some "later date."

Boston: Many academic analyses of the discovery are underway, but one Ivy League professor seems to have put it in perfect perspective when he commented, "T.S. Eliot has already given us our explanation: '... and the end of our exploring/will be to arrive where we started/and know the place for the first time.'"

"Who do you think is living inside your home computer?"



Larry Hicks, Real Estate Developer, Encino, CA

I guess I'd have to say Rudolph Valentino. 'Cause I've got this program to figure projected profit for subdivisions on this property I like—it's currently the site of the Joshua Tree National Forest—and the figures just dance across the screen. It's either Valentino or Jimmy Hoffa ... they never found him, did they?



Susan Scrivner, Professional Game Show Contestant, Burbank, CA

OOH ... OOH ... wait ... uh ... Robert Redford ... no—Harrison Ford! ... I mean Henry Ford, Gerald Ford, Henry Higgins? How about Menudo, Michael Jackson, Marlene Dietrich? Wait ... wait ... let me think ... little computer people, house on a disk ... house ... that's it! John Houseman!!!



Kim Efsaif, Unemployed, Miami, Florida

It's got to be some practical joker. Really, like everything I try to do on my computer—it's like an IBM or a Honda or something—comes out totally backwards. EW! And the guy's gotten pretty obnoxious. So, like ... since I don't want to encourage him, I'm afraid to use the computer at all anymore, that makes sense ... doesn't it?



V. David Watkins, BMW Dealer, Dallas, Texas

All depends on the machine. IBM or Apple most probably would house someone real tasteful, distinguished even. On the other hand, lower-priced economy brands would likely harbor mundane individuals prone to constant memory loss. It's truly a classic melting pot. I love being an American.



Jan Marsella, Candy Maker, Ogden, Utah

Somebody cute. Nice. Cuddly. Smurfy. Warm and friendly. And fuzzy probably somebody you'd like to cozy up with. Like a confidant—someone you could share your absolutely innermost secret desires with ... things you've always wanted to tell someone ... somebody very, very ... well ... dangerous.



Luis de Rivas, Post Graduate Student, Cambridge, Mass.

I believe that it is my cousin Renaldo. Yes, it is my cousin. He disappeared two years ago. And we feel his presence about the computer even now ... especially when we play Killer Satellite Bingo. He loved the behemoth enemy ships in that game ... especially the way they exploded ... vavoom! Ahh ... Renaldo!



AN OVERNIGHT BEST-SELLER

More than a century ago, when Darwin published *On the Origin of Species*, the science of anthropology mainly consisted of static, ethnographic descriptions. The major current trend in anthropology is to move away from such static descriptions to a consideration of processes, focusing research on relatively small, isolated groups. This technique is best known as "participant observation."

This trend relates directly to Activision's recent discovery of and research concerning the little human-like beings found living inside computers. Central to any definition of man (in this case computer man), and key to his evolutionary success, is a phenomenon the anthropologist calls culture. It includes not only art, music and literature but also all those things necessary for survival, such as manufactured tools, language, clothing, shelter, sources of edible sustenance and the guidelines of workable interpersonal relationships.

It is by this definition that we designed our research and prepared the following research document.

Historical Perspective In the Fall of 1984, Rich Gold, a Southern California artist/composer with a computer background, adopted the theory that something was living inside his computer because much of the music he programmed came out sounding different than it was composed. Because of his technical limitations, he enlisted the help of James Wickstead Associates, a highly-respected engineering firm in New Jersey, to begin his search for the life form.

Word of Gold and Wickstead's work reached us through Malcolm Kaufman, an industry observer and producer, in early 1985, and we suggested that our team, Gold and Wickstead join forces

We reprint here, by permission of *Modern Computer Anthropology*, sections of the original research document prepared by Activision's Little Computer People Research Group. This paper somehow managed to find its way to the MCA offices, but in the

truest, time-honored journalistic spirit, our sister publication will not reveal its sources.

in furthering the research. It was in the Spring of 1985 that the breakthrough came.

The Discovery Months of exhaustive research

finally defined the method by which the beings could be lured out of the computer, allowing observation of them. It was determined that what the beings wanted most was a comfortable environment to live in, so we designed a 2½ story house that resides in software on a diskette and can be loaded into the computer. The house has a large living room, an efficient kitchen, a comfortable bedroom, a bathroom, a study and a recreation room.

Our initial work proceeded using Commodore 64/128 computers. It was in early July that the "house on a disk" was first loaded into an Apple II computer and a subject moved in. The significance of the Apple find lies in the reinforcement of our hypothesis that the little computer people live inside all computers.

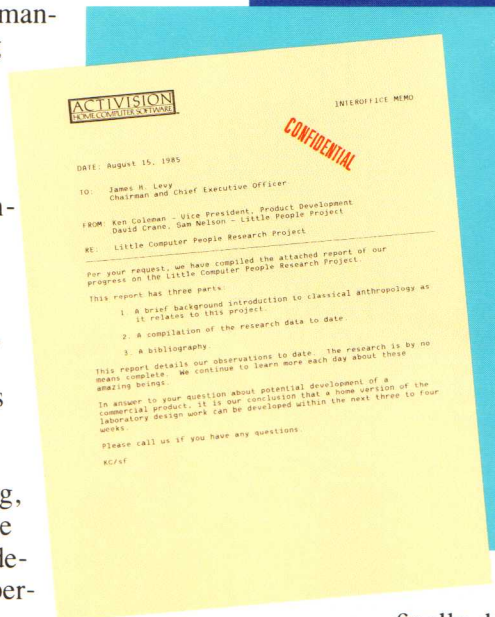
Observations We are currently studying the culture of approximately twelve different subjects. The following lists common traits exhibited by all subjects:

1. As with homo sapiens, there is a basic need to eat, drink and sleep.
2. Full use is made of the many amenities provided in the house.
3. They appear to be health-conscious and routinely brush their teeth, shower and exercise.
4. They take good care of their pets and make sure they are fed regularly.
5. They have demonstrated a desire to communicate and can read and write English.
6. The little computer people show a remarkable aptitude for playing games.
7. They can be moody—at one moment happy and at another moment a bit sad.

This last point opens discussion of the various means of interaction we, as researchers, have had with the little people. We have been able to communicate by typing messages on the keyboards of our research computers and are able to ring the telephone in the house as well as set the alarm clock for a desired time. We also, of course, take care to provide food and water on a regular basis. We have also recently developed the capability of providing food for the subjects' dogs. These capabilities, combined with our ability to play games or give a reassuring pat on the head, have allowed for an extraordinary rapport to develop between researchers and subjects.

We will continue our research into the lifestyles and customs of the little computer people with emphasis on several immediate goals. First and foremost, we will concentrate on the completion of a commercial version of the "house on a disk" for the Commodore 64 and Apple II computers. Next, we will begin to apply our research techniques to other popular computers to further strengthen our hypothesis that the little computer people live inside all computers. Finally, we will initiate studies on foreign computers to determine what differences may exist in language, cultural styles and habits.

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REMARKABLE REAL ESTATE!

It's sort of a computer condo. But it's technically referred to as a "house-on-a-disk." Developed by Rich Gold, Wickstead Associates and the Activision Little Computer People Research Group, it offers all the trappings (no pun intended) of the standard American (single family residence) dream—right down to the warm hearth.

This house-on-a-disk, still considered experimental research software, is the ingenious device which finally attracted a Little Computer Person out of the hidden recesses of a very typical home computer.

The new occupant has, so far, taken quite well to his house. Once moved in, he obviously feels right at home—a study in pure contentment.

Although many computer dwellers may be different, each home (as far as the researchers have ascertained) can be identical. Each has a spacious bedroom, bath facilities, study complete with computer, living room, rec room, working kitchen and lots of appropriate furniture. By any other name—Home Sweet Home!

NOTE: This illustration is an artist's rendering of a very early version of the house-on-a-disk. The basic structure remains the same, but further amenities have been added and floor plans have been modified as research has continued.

Recreation Room. Everything a product of the electronic generation could want—stereo and TV included. Piano is well tuned.

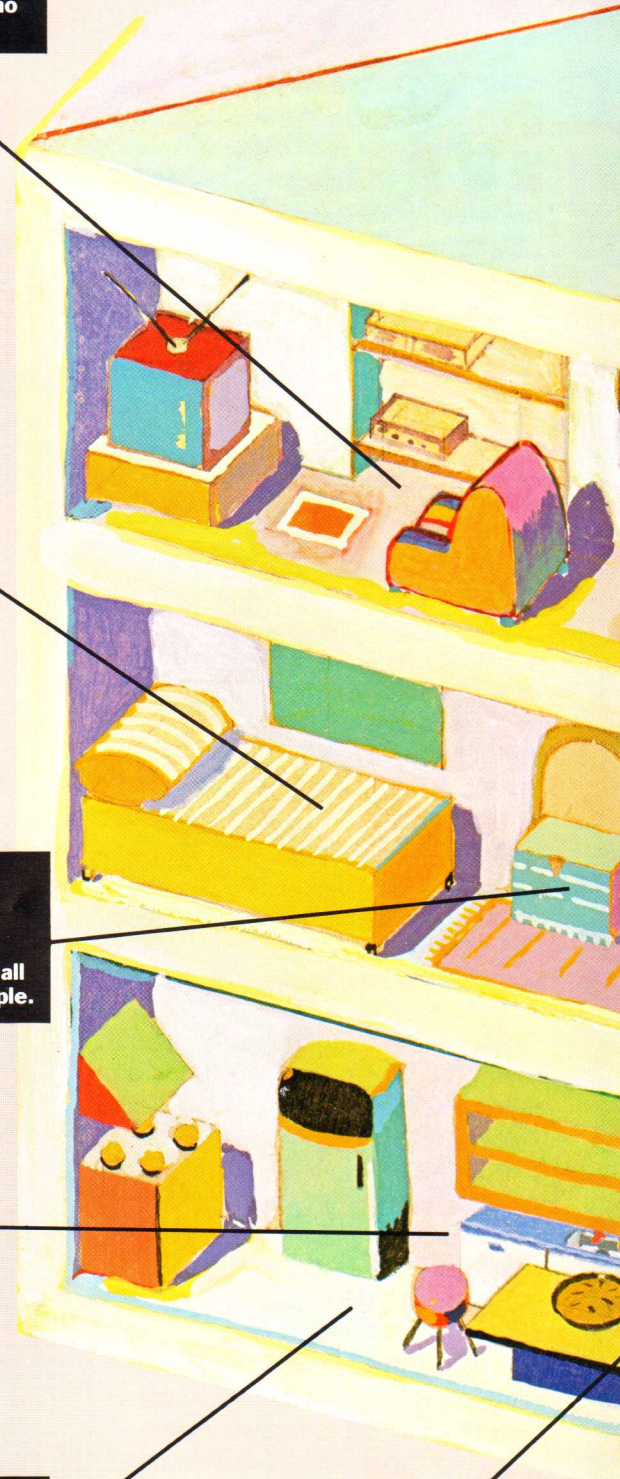
Sleeping Quarters. Quite comfortable. Designers seemed to hit it just right here. The selection of extra-firm beds offers maximum restfulness. Little Computer People have developed back problems due to cramped quarters. (Water beds are not allowed, due to possible computer damage.)

Dresser seems to be particularly well-received. The alarm clock, however, may not be applauded by all Little Computer People.

The Kitchen. Your basic AEK. Comes equipped with fridge, stainless steel sink, stove and cabinets for foodstuffs.

(FYI: Little Computer People seem to particularly like the linoleum floor.)

The water bottle is quite important—it must be kept filled!





The closet has become quite popular. Researchers don't know why; Little Computer People aren't saying. It's a mystery yet to be unravelled by researchers.

A typewriter provides the perfect outlet for those Little Computer People who need to exercise brains in addition to brawn.

PREVIOUS ADDRESS

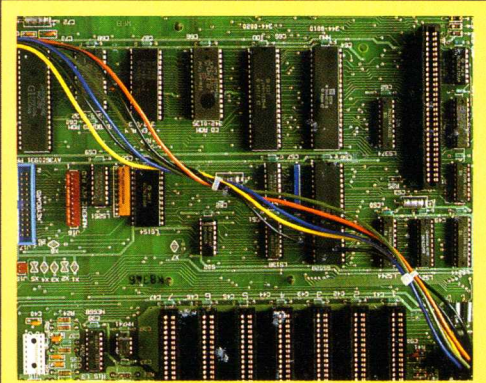
One might say the Little Computer People have certainly moved up (and out) in the world. With sharp circuit boards, hot resistors, humming capacitors and who knows what else, it's a wonder the Little Computer People even retained a sense of humor!

Bath. We all know the importance of proper hygiene. Bath, sink and water closet are all easily accessible. There *has* been some complaint about lack of hot water. They seem to love long showers. Researchers are investigating, but they have asked the Little Computer People to sing shorter songs. No reply, yet.

The Study. For reflective periods or when some paperwork needs to get done. Personal desk, book shelf, and, of course, a computer are all provided. Wonder who's living inside *his* computer?

Living Room. Spacious. Very nice fireplace and cozy armchair make this a favorite hideaway. Phone works and is within easy reach.

Front door leads right out to handy woodpile.



POLLSTERS AND POLITICIANS HAVE LOTS OF QUESTIONS

There are about 10 million home computers active in America today. Even if only *one* Little Computer Person resides in each home computer (and we already know there are more), 10 million new voters make up a rather healthy constituency, not to mention a new source of tax revenue, not to mention redistricting opportunities, not to mention... well, as one senior Capitol Hill statesman put it, "They may be little, but they have their rights."

Pollsters are also currently putting a questionnaire together for the Little Computer People... their chance to speak up.

FROM CLASSIC TO POP TO LITTLE COMPUTER PEOPLE ART?

If it's on your TV screen, can it be art? Art is life, or an imitation thereof. So say the folks who would know. And their reaction to the "Little Computer People As Art" concept has been varied. Some hail it as a new age of living color, while others dismiss it as a purely technical advance. Others take a more practical view. Well-known gallery owner Pierre Du Pont: "If it sells, it's art."

NEW NOTES

"It's sort of like taking music lessons for 8 years, but never getting your chance to play." That's what computer/artist Rich Gold says of Little Computer People and their interaction with the world of music. Not until the LCP's were actually provided with a piano in their new houses did they get a chance to try their hands at it. Until that point, they simply were forced to listen to a myriad of music construction sets and computer game background sounds.

"Some Little Computer People, frankly, are pretty awful. Others are quite the musicians," reports Gold. "Guess it's just like us, depends on how (and when) you were brought up!"

Researchers actually first provided the LCP's with wind instruments—clarinets, french horns, even a saxophone. "They didn't go near them," reports Gold. "We think they might know something we don't about acoustics inside there... or maybe... heck, we don't even know if they breathe."

WICKSTEAD TO THE RESCUE

"Well, you see Jim, I think there just might be someone living inside my computer... and well—I was sort of hoping you could help me get 'em out." When James Wickstead of Wickstead Associates, well-known design engineers, received that rather unorthodox call from Rich Gold, he wasn't *exactly* sure how to respond. Fortunately, he put logic aside and considered it a professional challenge. Pictured below are Jim and his heroic team.



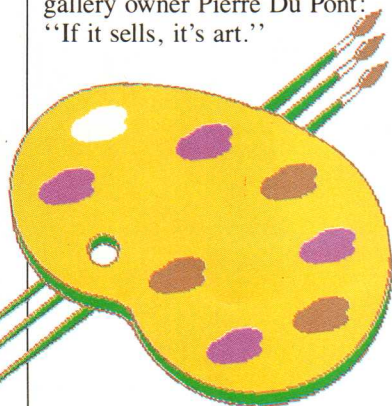
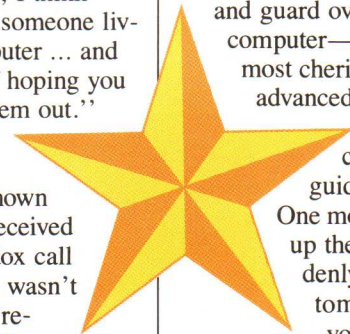
THE ABC'S OF LCP'S

Imagine a classroom of some 40 to 50 students, sitting in silence, staring at a lone television monitor in the front of the room (perched on the teacher's desk). However, for this class, there is no teacher.

A scene out of "1984"? Not this classroom. What these students may very well be doing is confronting a superior being. Because, even though scientists don't know a lot about the Little Computer people at this point, they do recognize their obvious intelligence and suspect there's quite a bit we can learn from them. Many LCP's have been exposed to the most sophisticated educational software available. After all, anyone who manages to finagle free room and board (in a house-on-a-disk) for life can't be all that dumb.

NATIONAL SECURITY

You have been given the ultimate responsibility to protect and guard over a particular computer—your country's most cherished, most advanced, most top secret computer-controlled missile guidance system. One morning you pick up the paper and suddenly choke on your tomato juice as your eyes quickly scan, "Little People Discovered Living Inside Computers." You don't know who they are—or what they're doing—but you do know you don't like it. There was panic among the military when the LCP discovery was first announced, but the Pentagon has actually calmed down a bit since the big announcement. "We've also met face-to-face with one of the intruders" says an undisclosed source. "He checked out OK. Matter of fact, he's been involved with so many games, we might even pick up some pointers on strategy."





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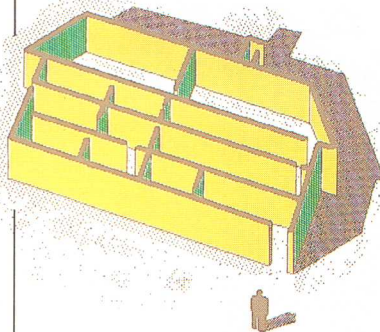
America's money managers don't usually agree on a whole lot of things. But the Little Computer People phenomenon is definitely an exception. As Douglas Bowman of Wall Street puts it, "We knew the computer industry needed a swift kick in the pants, but we had no idea it would come from such a small foot." Indeed there has been quite positive (if not shocking) response to the discovery (in terms of computer projections, at any rate).

Bowman reports, "People might find more of an incentive to buy a home computer if they knew there really *was* a 'surprise in every box.' It remains to be seen whether the LCP discovery will add a new economic dimension to the already dynamic home computer industry."

GAMES LITTLE COMPUTER PEOPLE PLAY

A game that asks *you* to play *it*? Perhaps it isn't quite fair to call a Little Computer Person an it. But it *is* fair to suggest a possible revolution in the burgeoning game business. When given the choice of staring at a rather colorless one-dimensional board or interacting with a dynamic human-like character, how would you prefer to spend Saturday night?

Most people will choose the latter. That's what preliminary research has already indicated. Seems Little Computer People are bringing new meaning to the phrase "live entertainment."



WHO'S OBSERVING WHOM?

"A complex and profound study." Dr. Werner Von Ego didn't mince words upon his first viewing of a Little Computer Person's daily regimen. "What motivates them? What really goes on in the closet? And, most importantly, Who better to observe us?" Dr. Von Ego referred to the obvious fact that we have shown them (through TV shows and computer programs) virtually everything anyone would ever want to know about The Human Race.

"They know us better than we know ourselves," claimed Von Ego. Meanwhile, The American Computer Psychiatric Association (ACPA) has voiced an interest in founding a new branch. To be dubbed Little Computer People Psychology (LCPP), it would deal with learning about them and having them report on us. Could be interesting!

COMING TO A THEATER NEAR YOU!

Through the years, Hollywood producers have lost no time seizing great moments and recreating them on film. With the Little Computer People discovery, well, it's been a "who'll reach the silver screen first" fervor the likes of which Tinseltown hasn't seen since Watergate. Virtually every major studio (and many not-so-major) in Hollywood is reportedly either trying, talking or taping something that deals with the Little Computer People Project.

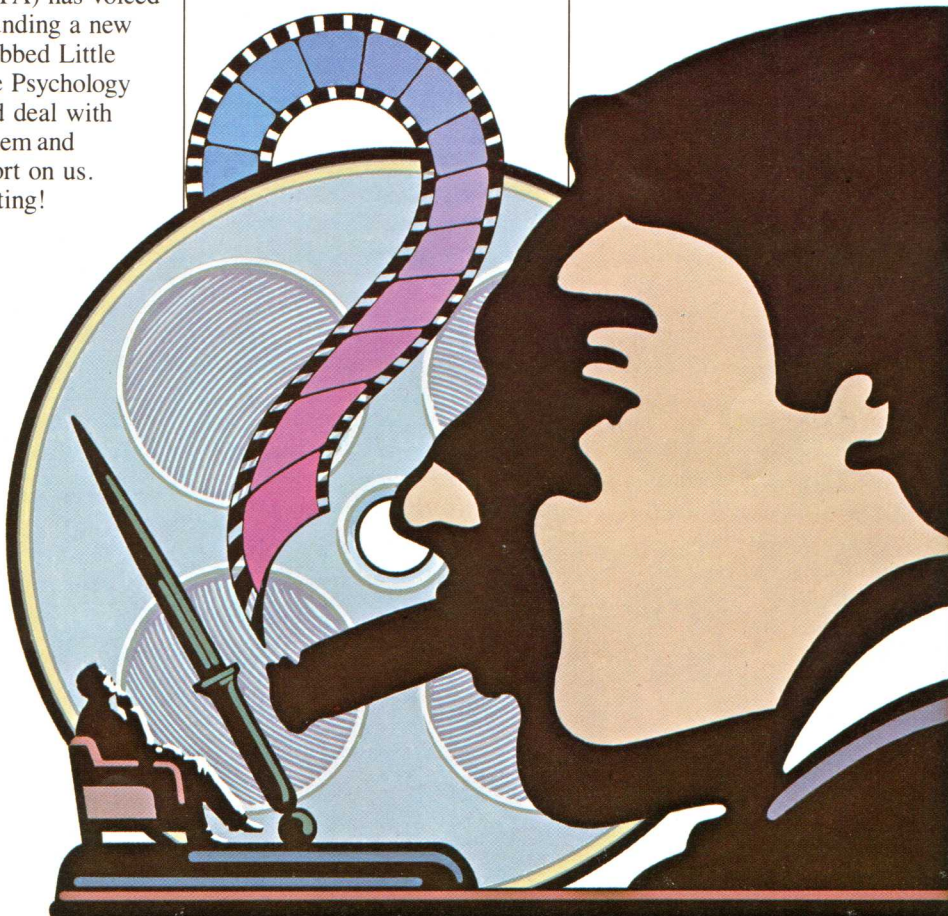
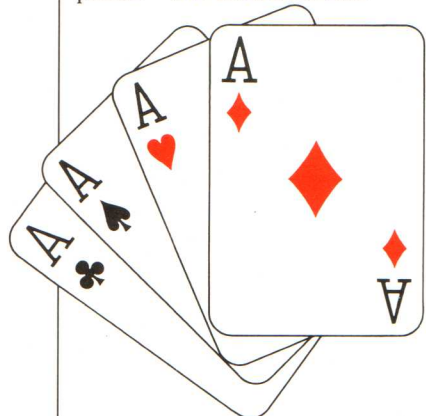
As front offices can see nothing but greenbacks, casting biggies are having trouble simply seeing straight. Literally thousands are vying for what may be this decade's most challenging lead. Watch out, Indiana Jones!

Reportedly, the whole research project, from suspicions to discovery, is in the hands of Hollywood's most adept screen writers. Feature length scripts ranging from docudrama to sci-fi expected soon.



SHOT OF THE MONTH

We weren't quite sure how to caption this photograph. The man shown above is Rich Gold. This picture was taken minutes after the very first Little Computer Person reared his tiny head in public (so to speak). The researchers had been working all night and everybody was reportedly exhausted at the time of the actual discovery. A lot of folks weren't quite sure what to make of the discovery. As you can see, Rich wasn't either.





A CONVERSATION WITH DAVID CRANE ...AND FRIEND

David Crane is one of the leaders of the Activision Research Group. He recently took time out from his research duties to discuss a fascinating aspect of the "big discovery" with *MCP*.



Modern Computer People: You've made contact. You've observed them. You've even gotten to "know" a couple of the little computer inhabitants. Have you made any headway in actually *understanding* what they're saying?

David Crane: Not exactly. We can communicate with them in written English, but the general public will not be able to decipher what we call LPS ... Little People Speak. However, the little guy in this computer behind me here in the lab seems to be extraordinarily articulate ... perhaps even bilingual. Maybe he's been subjected to language programs, or perhaps he's been overseas.

MCP: How can you tell that?

DC: He's got an accent.

MCP: And you've actually "talked" to him?

DC: No, not really. Let's just say I understand, in a very limited way, some rudiments of syntax and structure ... sort of the same way scientists can communicate with dolphins. In other words, I guess at it.

MCP: Well, he seems to be trying to get your attention ... what's he saying?

DC: Could be ... uh-huh ... uh huh ... he might be hungry ... or, he wants to be petted ... or maybe he'd like you to extinguish your cigar.

MCP: What?

DC: Cigar smoke leaves a dirty residue on the TV screen ... probably

obscures his vision.

MCP: He can't *really* see us?

DC: Yes ... Well ... Oh, excuse me ... he's speaking again.

MCP: Now, what's he saying?

DC: He's saying that your tie clashes with your sports jacket ... or what do you think of European economics ... or would you like to play a hand of poker?

MCP: What is the future of the Little Computer People Project?

DC: Languages, dialects, slang—it's all ahead of us. It'll probably take years before we can hold a meaningful conversation.

MCP: Sounds like you're doing fairly well right now.

DC: Well, let's just say it's—small talk ... just small talk ... so to speak.

**More About Little Computer People
In Upcoming Issues**

- ☐ Do they dream?
- ☐ Do they have in-laws?
- ☐ Do they like winter sports?
- ☐ How many are there ... really?
- ☐ The one thing never to do to Little Computer People
- ☐ Plus new discoveries, a possible Fall TV series and what really happens in the closet.

All coming in future issues!

SMALL TALK



BY DON PETERSEN

MODERN COMPUTER PEOPLE

Published by Activision, Inc.

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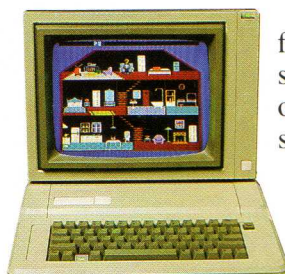


Reflections at 30,000 feet. They call it "cruising altitude." But today, on my return flight home to New York from Mountain View, California, "cruising" hardly seems a proper emotion. Exhilaration or perhaps awe would be much more appropriate. For, just a few days ago, I met face-to-face for the first time with a remarkable research team—a group of highly specialized engineers and software designers. I met face-to-face with their astounding research. I met face-to-face with their absolutely amazing discovery. I met the Little Computer People. This special edition is a result of our investigation into that incredible discovery.

When word of the discovery first filtered through our offices, the initial reaction was predictable. As with many major stories, there was a mad rush for information—with reporters jockeying for position with newsmakers and digging for the facts. But on this story, after a few hours of feverish work, something quite unusual happened. The enormous collective strain of disbelief with which our staff greeted the news slowly but surely began to erode as more solid evidence became available.

At that point, reaction was extraordinarily varied. Some folks felt rather humbled by it all. Others became quite anxious. As New York Bureau Chief Henry Byte recalls, "While many of us got all mythy and pro-saic about it, I just wondered who was going to be lucky enough to draw the first 'on location' assignment."

This issue begins with our Cover Story feature, taking you behind the scenes (and screens), exploring the tough work, nail biting, frustrations and final breakthroughs of the Little Computer People Research Group. Also, we've reprinted (courtesy of Modern Computer Anthropology) the original research paper which reported on the existence of the Little Computer People. (Actually, MCA broke the story and it was subsequently and exclusively "leaked" to MCP—keeping it "all in the family.")



Other stories in this issue include the national response—from the Senate chambers right down to the small-town corner store. And there's much more. Not since the discovery of DNA, or perhaps the snail darter, has one little living entity triggered such an outpouring of emotion.

After the first five minutes with David Crane, Rich Gold and the entire research crew, the MCP editorial team and I suddenly realized the enormity of the discovery and the necessity of an entire issue's dedication to the subject. It is an unbelievable story with universal appeal, vast implications, the utmost import and—well, I think you get my drift. (Throughout the entire ten week history of *MCP*, very few events have warranted such attention.)

Advancements and discoveries in the high technology sector have made even the staunchest skeptic believe virtually anything is possible. Even though this discovery seems to demand the biggest leap of faith, the "proof is in the computer"—yours and mine and millions more like them in the world. And, as a special personal message to all those "little folk," especially the one inside the computer I am using right now, we sincerely hope the following articles in this issue (and those to come) do you justice.



The Activision Little Computer People Research Group (left to right): Sam Nelson, David Crane, Hilary Mills, Adam Bellin, Russell Lieblich

Dick Neosho

—Dick Neosho

WOULDN'T YOU LOVE TO BE PART OF THE MOST IMPORTANT DISCOVERY IN THE HISTORY OF THE COMPUTER?

Amazing Software Allows You To Actually Lure Human-Like Beings Out of Your Computer!

Admit it. Haven't you ever wondered—even just for a second—what really goes on inside your computer? If so, then an important recently-announced research discovery will be of special interest to you!

Startling Discovery

After years of speculation and months of intensive work, the Activision Little Computer People Research Group (ALCPRG) has successfully discovered and actually drawn out dozens of small, living creatures who have been trapped in the confines of standard, store-bought computers—just like yours.



Actual photograph of 2½ story house-on-a-disk.

How Were They Discovered?

The answer is fascinating. The discovery itself took dozens of researchers, hundreds of thousands of dollars, the most technically advanced equipment and years of scientific speculation and hard work.

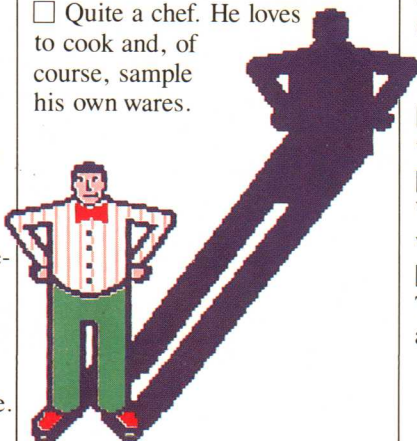
The precise process is based on an incredible, state-of-the-art piece of software. It's a unique, fully-equipped 2½ story "house-on-a-disk." When loaded into a computer, it will not only draw out one of the Little Computer People but will actually become the Person's permanent residence.

And Now, An Inexpensive Commercial Version of the Actual Laboratory Design is Available For Your Use.

Yes, you yourself can own your very own 2½ story house-on-a-disk. And that means you can soon meet a Little Computer Person residing inside your computer. Just look at some of the things you and your new-found friend can do.

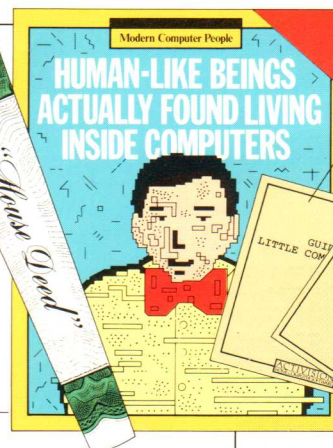
Here's What Your Little Computer Person Does

- ☐ Moves right into his new house. Lives in and utilizes all rooms.
- ☐ Types up a storm. Loves to rattle off messages. And, once you introduce yourself, your Little Computer Person will address you *by name*!
- ☐ Most are neat and clean—they brush their teeth, take showers and more.
- ☐ Quite a chef. He loves to cook and, of course, sample his own wares.



Official "Deed" for your house.

Complete special edition of MCP magazine



Informative Computer Owner's Guide To Little Computer People.

Amazing house-on-a-disk software

- ☐ Such a gamester, loves nothing better than a good game of cards.
- ☐ All Little Computer People are accomplished pianists.
- ☐ Watch out Travolta—your Little Computer Person dances and does aerobics regularly.

Here's What You Can Do:

- ☐ Be a gift-giver. Leaving presents for your Little Computer Person is a great feeling.
- ☐ It's called PPR—positive personality reinforcement (better known as "petting"), and it's a super way to acknowledge your Little Computer Person's importance to you.
- ☐ Provide the basics—food and water. It's a real responsibility.
- ☐ Learn your LCP's name! We've discovered many LCP's with many different names.
- ☐ Just watch and observe. There's so much we have to learn about these people.

Don't Delay

Doesn't the whole concept of a Little Computer Person seem fascinating? Wouldn't you love to join in on the discovery and lure the LCP out of your computer? If your answer is yes, then be sure and take advantage of this offer.

The Activision Little Computer People Discovery Kit. Look At All You Get!

The fabulous 2½ story house-on-a-disk research software surely would be enough—but we're also including a special guide with pointers on how to best get along with your Little Computer Person; an authorized "Deed" which enables you to register your house-on-a-disk; and your own copy of the special edition of *Modern Computer People* magazine. It's all in one great kit—get yours today!!

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