Photo 1: The main exhibit hall at the NCC.

Photo 2: The Personal Computing section of the NCC.

The NCC:

By Chris Morgan, Editor

Over 36,000 people filled the Dallas Convention Center on June 13 to 16 to attend the biggest National Computer Conference ever. Virtually every manufacturer in the computing field was there either to exhibit or to take notes. But what made this year's NCC different from past shows was the NCC sponsored Personal Computing Fair and Exposition held concurrently in the Convention Center.

Photo 3: Another view of the main exhibition hall.

A Dallas Delight

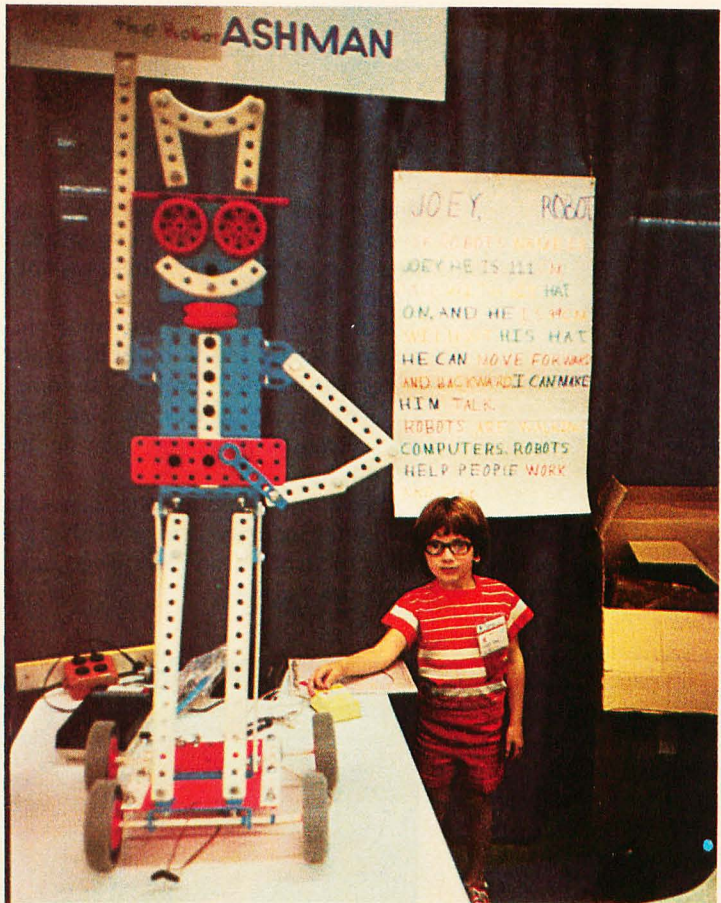Photographs by Charles Floto

Manufacturers of personal computers and related products turned out in force to display their wares before large crowds. Hopeful hobbyists and experimenters exhibited their home computer projects at the Personal Computing Fair (devoted entirely to noncommercial individual and group owned projects), and vied to win prizes.

Both sections of the show featured extensive seminars and panel discussions about present and future uses of computers; personal computing club representatives met to discuss the possibility of forming a National Club Congress.
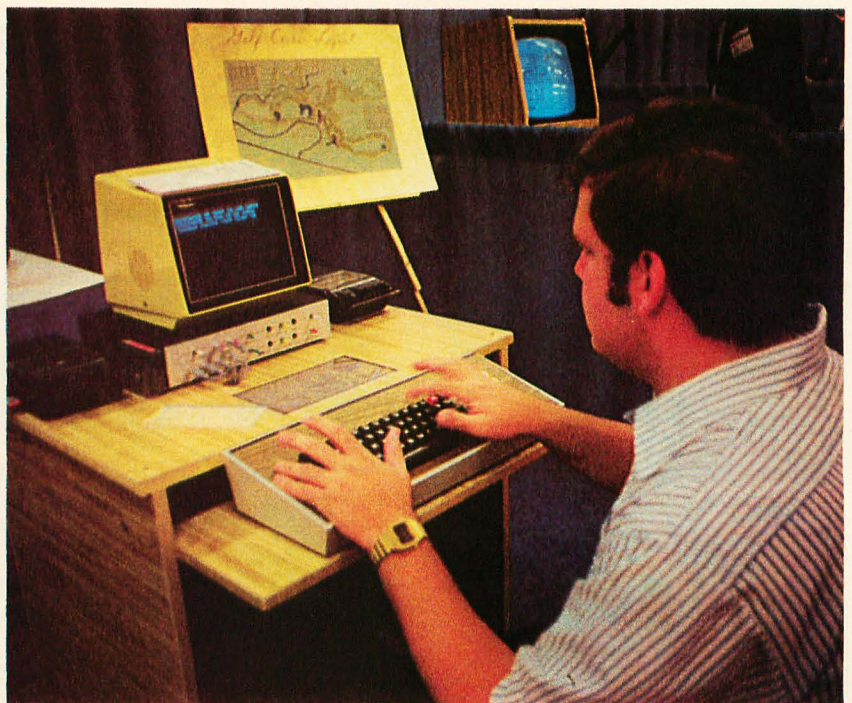
It was gratifying to see long term NCC veterans mingling with hackers from all over the country in a congenial atmosphere filled with microcomputers that played games and dazzled the eye with elegant color graphics. One group learned from the other, and ideas were exchanged at extremely high rates.

Seeing everything at the show was quite a challenge: some 300 manufacturers were spread out over five football field's worth of exhibits upstairs. And the main floor exhibits were *big*: Data General, for example, brought an entire working planetarium controlled by a Nova minicomputer and capable of holding 50 people inside. Many of the "booths" were two stories

Photo 4: Commodore's new PET computer, a popular item at the show. The unit features 14 K bytes of read only memory including an operating system, diagnostic routines and an 8 K BASIC interpreter by Microsoft. It sells for $595 including 4 K bytes of programmable memory. A lengthy waiting list is predicted for the unit.

Photo 5: Deborah Ashman demonstrating her robot Joey, who moved back and forth to the tune, "If I Only Had a Brain."

Photo 6: Wes Stewart working at the cabinet desk he built for his SwTPC 6800 computer system. The program running is a golf simulation.
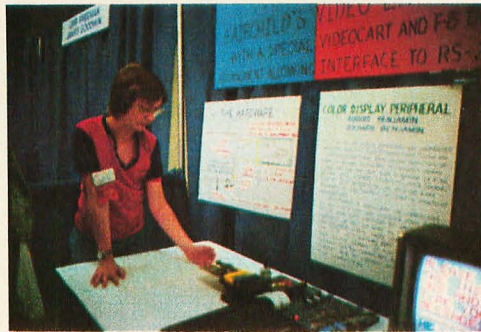
high; others took up areas of 30 by 60 feet or more.

There was much to see in the Personal Computing section downstairs, too: Commodore's new PET microcomputer, a variety of the latest video games programs (including a tank game for micros), new music programs, talking computers, software packages for FORTRAN, business programs, floppy disks, and so on.
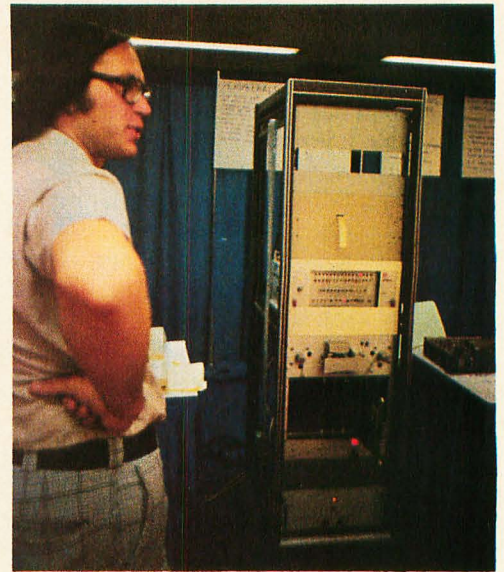
Summarizing the entire show is almost impossible: we found it inspiring (and sometimes frustrating!) to look at some of the state of the art devices, such as high resolution video displays, on view in the main exhibit hall.

From the looks of this convention, the computer industry is in good shape, and we look forward to an even bigger and better show next year. ∎

Photo 7: Allen Isaacson demonstrates one of the exhibits at the Personal Computing Fair: a video game converted into a color graphics terminal that uses a Teletype instead of a joystick. The hardware was designed by Robert and Richard Benjamin, father and son, respectively.

Photo 8: Personal Computer Fair first prize winner Tom Aschenbrenner shown with the system he amassed over a five year period from surplus computer parts. A Texas Instruments 980A controls a system which stores and transmits messages for the benefit of Dallas area hams.

Photo 9: Photographer Floto reflects on Sperry Univac's shiny display.