

Dial Up Digest

Bulletin Board Newsletter

Now Available Online



By P.R. Adler

Modem maniacs will be happy to know that they never have to leave their chairs to read *Plumb*, a newsletter that covers bulletin board services (BBS) and personal telecommunications. It is now available online through NewsNet (see Winter 1984 *Atari Connection*).

Reporting eight times a year, *Plumb* provides some very interesting bulletin board information. Regular areas covered include education, professions, business, pirate and adult BBS. Some examples from their October issue: A bulletin board in Colorado Springs where students, teachers and parents all debate about high-school prom policy; an Ohio shortwave radio BBS; Story, a California BBS where writers get to start and finish each other's

stories; and "Castle Dark-skull", an Atari board for role-playing games.

The newsletter tries to stay current. "People put up a bulletin board one day and take it down the next," said Ric Manning, *Plumb* editor. "That's the problem with the books and the lists." *Plumb* covers so many bulletin boards, however, they have produced quite a list themselves. Subscribers will receive, sometime in 1985, a booklet of close to 1000 boards covered in 1983, says Manning.

Plumb started two years ago, when its Kentucky founders (who prefer to remain anonymous) started calling bulletin board numbers listed on CompuServe and found most of them were invalid. They got in touch with the boards that were still in business, left messages on

CompuServe and The Source that announced their desire to know of any new boards, sat back and read their electronic mail.

"When someone buys a personal computer, they are going to look around for things to do" Manning said. "Telecommunication is the great equalizer. It doesn't matter what kind of computer you have, you can just dial up and communicate. . . We did a poll of board operators and the biggest problem was crowded access."

Plumb costs \$26.50 for 8 issues and is available from Riverside Data Inc, P.O. Box 300, Harrods Creek, KY 40027. Electronic mail may be left at Source # STQ007 and CompuServe # 72715,210.

A NewsNet ID is available by writing the service at 945 Haverford Road, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010.