FLYING CODING ACE: THE MOVIE - PART II

Synopsis: Flight 21 is in trouble; a bug in the automated landing program has doomed everyone on board, unless passenger and reluctant programmer Jonny Rebuto can debug the program in the next 17 minutes.

We take you back now to the Airport Control Tower, where flight-controller John and airline rep Sonia have just convinced Jonny Rebuto to press the escape key on the plane's console...

John: ...Three!

Jonny Rebuto stabs the escape key. Suddenly, the plane is filled with the sound of roaring engines and tortured wind as the plane rocks and bounces. A huge screaming whine rises in pitch as the plane spirals into a dive.

Pilot: This is McIntyre here. Flight 21, remember?

John: Yes, dammit, McIntyre! Of course I remember you! What the hell is going on up there?

Pilot: Well, this here dune-buggy is buckin' and kickin' like a two-year-old stallion with hemorrhoids in a dust-storm on a hot-day when the horse-flies are bitin' like a team o' F-14's firin' buckets a bb's out of a fire-hose and the...

John: Cut the horseshit, McIntyre, and just tell me what's happening!

Pilot: Basically, ground, we're spiraling down in a shallow uncontrolled dive. I estimate our ETA with the ground at about three minutes and forty seconds, give or take...

John: Rebuto!!! Come in!!! Now listen to me, Jonny, there's been a slight change in plans. You only have three minutes to fix that damn program. You hear me, Rebuto?

Jonny: [Sweating profusely, he answers over the sound of screaming passengers in the background] Yeah, yeah, what do I do?

John: What does the screen say now, Jonny?

Jonny: Let's see, uh... "Volume in drive C has no label..."

John: [Clicking off the mike, turning to Sonia, his assistant Bob, and Jonny's Department Manager] I thought you said this guy was a goddamn programmer, fer cry-sakes!

Bob grabs some papers from Jonny's DM and rifles through them on his clipboard.

Bob: He has a certificate from ITT, a couple courses in Word Processing from the Learning Annex, and expense reports for the books, "MS-DOS 2.0 Tricks", "You Can Learn Object-Oriented Operating Systems Programming in Three Weeks", and "Romulo-Remus: Nicholas Wirth's Last Try".

John: [Putting his head in his hands] Shit.

Bob: I have to go call the insurance company. Maybe they can get the families of the passengers to sign some kind of a-priori agreement.

John, you better see how far you can get with Mr. Rebuto before final impact. It might help our case to show we did everything possible, etcetera and so forth. Go through the motions.

John: [In a dry, almost sarcastic tone] Mr. Rebuto, would you be so kind as to type, "EDIT SOURCE.ASM" for me please?

Jonny: Okay, I did it. Hey, what is this stuff?

Jonny begins PAGE-DOWNing furiously, scanning the lines of programming source-code. One of the flight-attendants faints, slumping onto his shoulder, but he just pushes her off. The other attendant is sobbing.

Attendant: I could have been a court-reporter like my sister. The travel-benefits aren't as good, but at least I would be ALIIIIVE! [breaks down sobbing again]

John: Okay, Mr. Rebuto, what you are looking at there is 12,000 lines of assembler code. Your mission, should you decide to accept it, of course, is to find the buggy line of code, and fix it. You have about two minutes, give or take a few seconds.

Wait - there's more...

Jonny: But I don't remember assembler! Isn't there a Lotus macro version of this program? That I know! This is hopeless, hopeless. When I went to college, there wasn't any MOB command in assembler...

There is a moment of silence in the control tower. Sonia takes the mike.

Sonia: Excuse me, Jonny, but what did you just say?

Jonny: I said, is there a Lotus macro version of this program? That I know! Then I said, "This is hopeless, hopeless."

Sonia: Yes, yes, Jonny, and **then** what did you say about a MOB command?

Jonny: Well, when I got that D in assembly-language, there wasn't any MOB command. I mean at the time...

Sonia: JONNY! JONNY! There STILL ISN'T any MOB command!

Jonny: Really? Well, there's a line here that says, MOB something. Just one. There are some others that say, MOV, but no more MOB's.

Sonia: Change it, Jonny, change it! Change it to MOV, Jonny, do it for me, do it for all the passengers on the plane...

Bob: Not to mention the stockholders...

Sonia: ...and please Jonny, do it QUICKLY!

Jonny: Sure, edit the line, no problem.

Sonia: Save the file...

Jonny: Sure, save the file... no problem.

Sonia: Now compile the file, Jonny.

Jonny: Sure, compile the file... no problem.

Sonia: Now link the file, Jonny.

Jonny: What?

Sonia: Link the file! Link the file, Jonny!

Jonny: [jumping back from the keyboard] NO! NO! I can't link the file! Don't ask me to link the file! I just can't do it!!!

Sonia: Why, Jonny? What's the matter? For the love of god, Jonny, why won't you just link the file?

The Department Manager steps forward:

DM: It was right after the war..

John: World War II?

DM: No, Panama. Jonny was in love with a woman over in accounting. One night she was preparing the quarterly numbers. Jonny stayed late to do some tech support. He was using a new product that compiles and links Lotus macros into an executable file, and he was helping her out. The file compiled fine, and they were so happy together, it seemed like all was perfect.

Sonia: And then?

DM: During the link cycle, the linker crashed. Trashed all of her files, her disk, her work... all up in smoke. She was fired the next day. Never came back. Never left word of where she could be reached. Oh sure, Jonny tried a few searches on Compuserve.

Sonia: But he never found her...

The DM walks over to the window, looks out into the dark night, his back to the room, his hands in his pockets.

DM: Jonny blamed himself. Heaped on the blame, then heaped on some more. Never forgot it. [Turning back to face the others] To this day, he won't touch a linker. Interpreters, compilers, real-time late-binding stuff, no problem. But won't touch a linker. We tried to get him some training, but he wouldn't go.

Bob: Wow...

DM: Even changed his name to "Rebuto" so that he would never forget her. Before that, his name was "Icebrakker".

Sonia: OH!!!

Sonia half-faints. Bob and the DM hold her up. She raises one hand to her forehead.

Sonia: Please. I'm okay. Let me have the mike.

Sonia: [Quietly] Jonny, you have to link that program or many innocent people will die tonight.

Jonny: I can't, I can't do it!

Sonia: Jonny, oh Jonny, this is me, Sonia... Sonia in accounting!!!

Jonny: Sonia!

Sonia: Jonny!

Wait - there's more...

Jonny: You know I don't deserve to live, Sonia! I'm sorry for what I did, though...

Sonia: Oh, Jonny, there's something you should know...

Jonny: You don't have to explain anything to me, Sonia, I'll always love you..

Sonia: You don't understand, Jonny. You see, Jonny, the week after the incident, I was working with my spreadsheet model on my new job, and I discovered there was a... a... a... circular reference in my formula! That's why the linker crashed! It wasn't your fault at all!

Jonny: Sonia!

Sonia: I wanted to tell you, but I was afraid you would never forgive me!

Jonny: I forgive you now, Sonia!

Sonia: And I love you, too, Jonny.

Jonny: Okay, Sonia, maybe I can link this darn program. It's just a little old linker, right? Just a couple taps on the keyboard and then a carriage-return, right? What's to be afraid of?

Sonia: You're my hero, Jonny, just like you always were!

Pilot: I can just about make out the license plates on the cars in that shopping center 12,000 feet below us, folks, which should put our time of impact at about 1 minute from now. Unless you'd like to get a lot closer look, I'd suggest you fix that dang-fool piece of a landing program right about now.

Jonny: Okay, I'm linking the program... It's going, no errors, processing all the make files. Done!

John: Okay, Jonny now reload the exe!

Jonny: Loading...

Suddenly, the plane loops out of the dive and steers back on course. The screaming sound of wind and roaring engines dies down.

Attendant: In preparation for landing, please raise your seats to their upright and most uncomfortable position, and stow all baggage. We thank you for flying with us tonight, and hope you have had a pleasant journey.

Pilot: This is flight 21, preparing for final approach. Request landing slot.

John: You're gonna have to circle for awhile like everyone else. We're pretty busy down here, and you missed your turn.

Pilot: Roger, John.

Sonia: I love you, Jonny Icebrakker. I'll be waiting for you in Area C when you land.

Jonny: I can't wait to see you, Sonia.

Bob: Well, that will be soon enough. You can give her a big hug.

Jonny: [anxiously] A hug?

DM: It was after the war. Grenada. Jonny had a brother down in the mailroom. He was sorting mail using this big sorting machine. Jonny stopped in, and gave his brother a big friendly hug. Suddenly, his brother's shirt got caught in the sorting machine...

John: Shift's over. I'm outta here...

Bob: I'm right behind you...

Sonia: Wait for me...

THE END

THE MAKING OF FLYING CODING ACE: THE MOVIE

CODERZINE # 2 was banned on the Databased Advisor forum for its language content. Specifically, 8 occurrences of words were unacceptable to the editors of Datatabased Advisor.

I politely and rationally appealed the decision of the forum sysop. The decision to ban **CODERZIINE** # 2 was upheld by the editors, publishers, and corporate entity Databased Solutions.

I have enjoyed reading Databased Advisor magazine through the years, I've written articles and columns for the magazine, and I've participated on the forum. The banning of **CODERZINE** #2 came as a complete shock to me.

There haven't been any words in any issue of **CODERZINE** that are not heard on primetime television, or in PG-rated movies. I don't know what their gosh-tootin problem is, but they should get their act together, dang-it!

Maybe we should submit a list of words we are planning to use to Databased Advisor in advance, to avoid banning of future issues. Hopefully, none of words on the following list will offend the sensibilities of Databased Advisor.

Suffering succotash!	Heavens to betsy!
Gosh!	My word!
Lordy-lordy!	Gee willickers!
Yipes!	**Mother of Pearl!**
Geehosephat!	**Holy smoke!**

Look for these approved words in to be used in future issues of CODERZINE... NOT!

Wait - there's more...

CONTRACT NEWS

ITEM: I just finished development of Proactive Inspection Maintenance system, a FoxPro for Windows application to automate data collection and reporting in the home inspection industry. The program is designed to run in a Windows for Pen Computing environment and the client intends to package it with an NCR System 3130 Pen Computer. Development time was 8 weeks and the client, Sales Action Communications, of Jamestown, Ohio, is now running it on the NCR 3130 and other systems. Tim Hatton [70742,1405] / Consulting Services / Jamestown, Ohio

ITEM: I'd like to announce the opening of Programmers Choice in Greenwood, Indiana. We are a computer consulting and custom programming company for small businesses using IBM and compatible personal computers. We perform installations of software and hardware, troubleshoot problems, and write custom applications where needed, for DOS or Windows. You shouldn't have to be a computer professional to use one in your business. Let us be your data processing staff. Phone: US (317) 888-5048. PS: I like CDZ, and hope it takes off. Hope to see the next issue soon. // Robert P. Nix 74007,3330

CONTRACTS AVAILABLE

ITEM: My software company is looking for programmers who can create small virtual reality scenes where users don't necessarily have to use headgear, etc. for now. Perhaps some who have worked with Virtual Reality Studio 2. John Slegman 72754,2773 / Diskotech, Inc. / Prairie Village, Kansas

CONTRACTS WANTED

ITEM: Freelancing C programmer with experience in Graphics, Animation, Business, GUI, and Game programming under DOS, OS/2, Windows, UNIX, and Novel. And I currently have a bit of extra time on my hands that I would like to convert into something productive. By the way, I can also Translate English to German for those interested in converting Help Files or Menu Text for German Releases of there products. // Mark Dunsmore [100142,1451]

FAMILY NEWS

ITEM: How's this for Family News.. my cat just had kittens. So if anyone wants a cute little kitten in a few weeks drop me a note. Mike Godwin 71212,234 Columbus, Ohio

FEEDBACK

ITEM: I just read **CODERZINE**s 0, 1, and 2. I like what I see so far! I'm looking forward to **CODERZINE** 3. I'm curious to see what direction this virtual 'zine will take. Oh, BTW, I've got an Oki OL-400... the HP output looks really sharp on it. James Shields / 71231,2066 // Seattle, Washington

ITEM: Just picked up **CODERZINE** from somewhere -- probably the TAPCIS forum. I like it! Here's wishing it success. I especially liked your Jurassic Park review. Now, the reason I'm writing is to ask you if I could reprint the review in my own newsletter. Of course, it would be attributed to you and **CODERZINE**, and heck, I'll be plugging **CODERZINE** anyway in my monthly editorial.

I'm the editor of _Terminal Intelligence_, the newsletter of the Computer Hobbyists' SIG of American Mensa. We have about 200 subscribers, and I usually send about 50 samples to folks who hear about the SIG from others. My newsletter comes out 4-6 times a year, with the next issue in a few weeks. Geoff Smith [Mensa] [76711,400]

Yes - Editor

ITEM: I am panicked, puzzled and perturbed. I felt if I did not write immediately you may stop producing **CODERZINE** and that would be a pity because it offers hope in this world of commercially inspired information.

Where else can one get so much for so little except maybe the library or even in the rubbish bins (if you are really careful). Seriously, I enjoyed both Virtual Volumes 1 and 2 and would hate to see it end there.

Down under (Australia - in the Pacific, under Indonesia and New Guinea not Austria next to Germany and other places) we appreciate a free anything and this is a close as we can get (except for connection charges and download plus a small startup cost of around $5000.00 for hardware plus the telephone company charge and the twelve year investment in computing skills and knowledge. As I said keep up the good work. Barry Glick [100036,155] / Sydney / Australia.

ITEM: I was poking around in CIS yesterday when I came upon a remark made about **CODERZINE**. At the time I didn't pay much attention to it. Then I finished setting up a new Offline reader I downloaded and tested it out. I then came upon another remark about **CODERZINE** and started to get curious. I then downloaded the 3 issues that were in the PCVEND section 4 forum. As I stated reading the first issue I thought to myself " What the Hell is this ?". I read all 3 issues in one shot ! I must say that this newsletter is just tooooo COOL !! I hope to see it continue and I can't wait for the next issue! The concept of a newsletter for programmers, by programmers, about programmers is a great one! Thanks for the great stuff and please keep it coming! PS Why not publish a WinWord Format of **CODERZINE** so that everyone can print it the way it was meant to be printed? // Mark Dunsmore [100142,1451]

ITEM: Richard, I like what you've done with the ZINE. I would like to know the names of the fonts that you used to produce **CODERZINE**. Are they Shareware, Freeware or Commercial? Mark Brown [72567,2674]

The fonts are Garamond and Informal011 BT. - Editor

ITEM: Well I just finished my 3rd **CODERZINE** newsletter (I counted # 0 too). It's great.. What a great way to breakup a rotten day. / Mike Godwin 71212,234 Columbus, Ohio

Thanks for noticing. - Editor

ITEM: Why don't you add the Word document to the ZIP file so that we can print it the way it is intended if we can't get the PRN file to work. Also, **CODERZINE** is a perfect candidate for Adobes new program Acrobat. I'd buy the Acrobat reader to read **CODERZINE**. Dan Harris, San Jose CA, 76356,122

If you don't have the fonts used to create **CODERZINE**, you still won't get much out of having the MS Word format. The ultimate answer is to use one of the upcoming distribution programs. One of them promises to have a Freeware READER. When it comes along, we will use it. We probably won't use anything that does not have a

free reader, or cannot reproduce the fonts independently, including MS Word itself.

Wait - there's more...
The native MS Word format will be available to re-distributors who want to translate CDZ into other languages, or formats such as the MS Help format.

HELP!

ITEM: Advice wanted for a contract engineer in Cedar Rapids with a remote chance at actually programming in C++. I have the Borland C++ compiler, but can anyone tell me if it would be worthwhile to chuck it in favor of Visual C++? Yes, it's a Windows app. /Geoff Smith 76711,400

JOBS WANTED

ITEM: I never tried this before so be gentle with me. I'm looking around to see what other jobs are out there. I program in Clipper and dBase III+. Mostly small utilities and reports but I have written a couple of larger systems. I've got about 7 years in this. I do PC Support for many clients (mostly for people that have no idea what they are doing).

I have a lot of network experience working on small networks (Novell 3.11, IBM PC LAN, & OS/2) of 50 or less workstations. I would like to stay local to the central Ohio area. Resume and salary history available on request. / Mike Godwin 71212,234 / Columbus, Ohio

LAUGH-TRACKS

ITEM: Microsoft May Pursue Action Against FTC

MICROSOFT is considering legal action against the Federal Trade Commission after they once again failed to reach a decision in their ongoing investigation of the company.

John Welsuyerass, counsel for MICROSOFT Corp., issued a strong warning to the FTC, stating among other things that more people use Microsoft's products than FTC products, and if they don't end their inane investigation soon, Microsoft may revoke the FTC's site license for MS Golf.

"Nobody else is investigating us," Welsuyerass remarked. "Isn't that a monopolistic and unfair practice? They should let other agencies investigate us too. Maybe we should advocate for breaking up the FTC into three separate entities: F, T and C."

In a related announcement, Microsoft announced their new 32-bit WinFTC API today, which returns accusatory objects every time a function call is made, but performs no real action. After this announcement, Microsoft stock rebounded to 35 1/8. The FTC could not decide on a comment.

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OTHER

ITEM: PROBLEM WITH .PRN   If like me you live in an area that uses A4 size paper instead of LETTER size here is a solution to the dreaded LETTER TRAY REQUEST error that occurs with the .PRN version of **CODERZINE**. On my printer, an OKI OL400, if I press the RESET button when the error appears the error is cleared and the pages print ok. // Peter Shortland / Cork,IRELAND / [100271,1576]

REVIEWS

ITEM: If you like music while you program, but hate to listen to commercials or change CDs every hour or so, then you will love DMX. DMX (Digital Music Express) is a service provided by your cable company. For approx $5.00 a month you get a converter box that hooks into your cable and provides 30 channels of non-commercial, CD quality music.

There are no DJ's, no News reports or interruptions in the music. The 30 channels contain Classical, Country, Rock, Ethnic and Christian music. The music is transmitted digitally so that you get CD quality. For an additional $5 you can get the mega cool remote control that features a LCD that displays information on song title, composer, artist, album, and producer.

DMX is the number one productivity tool in my office. Nothing would interrupt my train of thought more than a break in the music. I no longer listen to FM radio, the only radio I listen to is AM, from 9-12 PST (me and 20 million other Americans!). Be warned if you try DMX you will NEVER go back to old fashion FM radio. Dan Harris 76356,122 / San Jose, CA

ITEM: After reading Shaun Brachmann's [74230,61] review of EARTH (CDZ002), I picked up a copy and it is great, especially the high school in Indiana "J. D. Quayle H. S.". I loved it!!! PS: Working on FoxPro/Win/DOS & the new OzCIS2!!! Tim Malloy [70744,2116]

ITEM: Icon Make It from Moon Valley Software. This little program really wakes Windoze up!! It lets you create your own Animated Icons and Cursors and then attach sounds to them.

It comes complete with a Icon Animation Program, Icon Draw and Editor, Sound Attacher, and a lot of Samples. The Animation Program has a lot of very useful tools like Rotate, Shift, Fade in-out, Move X/Y-axis and Stuff like that. Really fun to play with !! You can also set Sounds to all Windoze System Functions like OK, Cancel, etc. I must say a job well done to Moon Valley Software on this one! // Mark Dunsmore [100142,1451]

ITEM: I don't really program for a living (I just try to unscramble what the programmers torched), but if I did Billy Idol's _Cyberpunk_ would be at the top of my list. He tries and succeeds in capturing a popular, if commercial, gritty futuristic feel that reminds me of Sigue Sigue Sputnik without the marketing hype. Especially haunting is his cover of "Heroin" -- it's a big jump from "Dancing with Myself." Good music to keep you going at 0400 along with intravenous Jolt and coffee bongs. // Dane Manes [73260,124]

ITEM: If you haven't heard of _Wired_ yet, perhaps you've been hibernating. Or compiling BASIC. WAKE UP AND SMELL THE TRANSISTORS! We're talking about one of the nicest technology rag to hit the market for a while. Great content and enough tidbits to keep you going for weeks. Good signal/noise ratio and email addresses for almost all of the authors and leads -- these guys are doing their homework. Contact subscriptions@wired.com for more info. Also noted in _Wired_ 1.3 is a new magazine called _Black Ice_ -- it seems the _Black Ice_ developers were getting disappointed

in _Mondo 2000_ and decided to take matters into their own hands. It'll be fun to watch them trying to outdo each other. They plan to have a second issue ready sometime in October. Watch for it! // Dane Manes [73260,124]

Wait - there's more...

SELLING IT

ITEM: UNIT CONVERSION DATABASE. Having problems converting from inches to centimeters, pounds to dollars? This program may just be the utility you have been looking for. Designed to convert between different units (e.g. inches to centimeters, horsepower to watts, pounds to dollars etc.), The UNIT CONVERSION DATABASE will handle any conversion which has a linear relationship between the units involved (i.e. they can be multiplied or divided by a constant). New conversions can be easily added and existing conversions changed or deleted from the database. The database is updated every 6 months by the author. Check out UNITCO.EXE in the UKSHARE, LEAP or ZNT:PBS forums. Peter Shortland [100271,1576]

ITEM: DBVIEW Version 2.1 is out!!! This DOS database file viewer reads dBASE III/IV, Foxbase, and FoxPro database files. It displays the data, including memo fields, in either record or browse format. A mouse can be used to navigate around the database. This is a small, fast utility created in C by a FoxPro programmer. A definite must have!!! (Author's bias, but then he should know.) This Shareware program is available in the Miscellaneous Library of the Fox Forum on Compuserve or your local BBS. Author: Tom Kulaga / Compuserve ID 72133,3225 / T&T Engineering, Kirkland, WA

CODERZINE BUSINESS

In case you were wondering, **CODERZINE** has not yet been sold for a vast some of money to either Ziff-Davis or Microsoft. But maybe I was out when they called.

Meanwhile, I apologize for the delay on this issue, but I became depressed over the Databased Advisor banning of issue # 2 and had to come to Paris to cool out.

If you work at a company that could donate something to **CODERZINE** like a Toshiba 4600, modems, printers, press-passes, travel, etc., please get them to do so. Mostly what I really would like at this point is some free travel and press-passes to trade-shows. Pass it on. // Richard Grossman 75300,1556

ABOUT CODERZINE

The idea is that you can announce news like getting a new contract, moving to Paris, starting a new consulting business, begging for work, hiring more programmer-slaves to exploit, head-hunting, liking or hating some new product, attacking vendors, reviewing another magazine, recommending a book, etc.

CODERZINE is available in it's home forum, PCVEND Section 4 (Tech III's forum), as well as many other fine forums. Sysops of CIS forums and BBS systems are invited to upload it freely. I would appreciate monthly feedback on how **CODERZINE** is doing download-statistic-wise. User group newsletters are invited to reprint **CODERZINE**. Please mail me a copy.

Everyone is invited to submit stuff. Real short = Good. EMAIL it to me, and use one of the category headings you see in this issue as the first line of your message. CDZCAT.TXT contains a list of ALL the valid categories for submitting material. CDZLAW.TXT contains

rights, permissions, and disclaimers of interest to lawyers, user-groups, and sysops.

Please send me your stuff READY TO USE, AS IS. If you want to add commentary or apologetica, do it in a separate message.

Contrary to conventional wisdom, SYSOPS are INVITED TO UPLOAD EVERY ISSUE of CDZ to YOUR FORUM, BBS, or DWEEZILNET. CDZ000.ZIP has more info.

We've already got a few thousand readers, and those readers have written to me from Compuserve, Internet, and other BBS systems.

Filler-Quote: "Two people in love don't amount to a hill of beans in this crazy world."

CREDITS

If your company makes something that would help us in producing **CODERZINE**, or make it better, please give us one!

For the purpose of the Berne Convention, the author of these bytes is Richard Grossman. This issue was produced in Paris, and the bytes smuggled across the border via satellite.

END-OF-TRANSMISSION

THIS SPACE FOOLISHLY LEFT BLANK