

# mits

## WORLD ALTAIR

### COMPUTER CONVENTION

THE FIRST WORLD ALTAIR COMPUTER CONVENTION WAS HELD March 26-28 at the Airport Marina Hotel in Albuquerque, NM. Successful? Was it ever! Over 700 participants from 46 states and 7 foreign countries gathered to talk computers, exchange information, ask questions, participate in seminars, match their system against other systems in a demonstration contest and see many different systems in operation.

MITS sponsored the convention and they plan to make it an annual event. Seminars were presented by MITS' engineers and software developers.

Saturday night's event was a discussion led by a group of



**BILL GATES**, one of the writers of Altair Basic, presents a general software seminar.



**SEMINARS** were interesting and well attended, as can be seen from the above photograph.



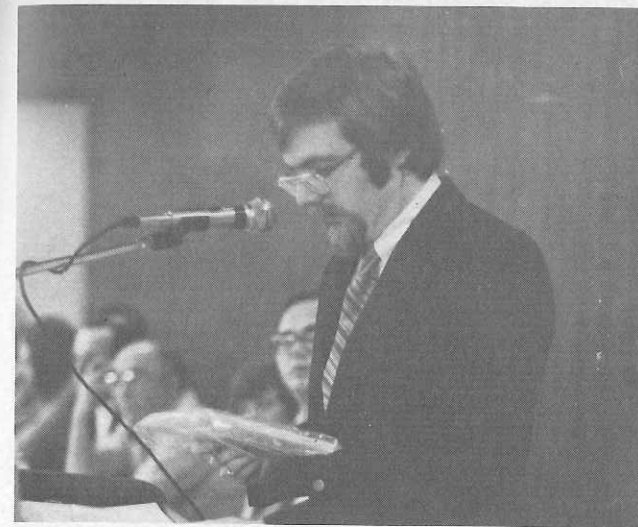
**GUEST SPEAKERS** at Awards Banquet are, from left to right, Lou Fields (Vice President of Southern California Computer Society), Manfred and Virginia Peschke (publishers of Byte), David Ahl (publisher of Creative Computing) and Larry Steckler (Editor of Radio-Electronics).

guest speakers. The theme of the discussion was the future of computers in general and its effect upon hobbyists in particular. The group of speakers included Ted Nelson (author of *Computer Lib*), David Ahl (*Creative Computing*), Carl Helmers (*Byte Magazine*), Larry Steckler (**Radio-Electronics**) and Les Solomon (*Popular Electronics*) among others.

The highlight of the convention was the awards banquet held Sunday where the winners of the demonstration contest were announced. The grand prize, a complete Altair floppy-disc system, was awarded to Don Alexander of Columbus,



**CARL HELMERS** of Byte receives trophy from Lou Fields, Vice President of Southern California Computer Society, in recognition of Byte's contribution to the home computer field.



**PAUL ALLEN**, director of software at MITS, announces the winners of the software contest at the Awards Banquet.

OH, for his computer-controlled amateur radio station. The system consisted of an Altair 8800 with 8K of memory, an ASCII keyboard, a video display, Baudot Teletype and stan-



**DON ALEXANDER** receives Grand Prize, a complete Altair floppy-disc system, for his amateur radio station.



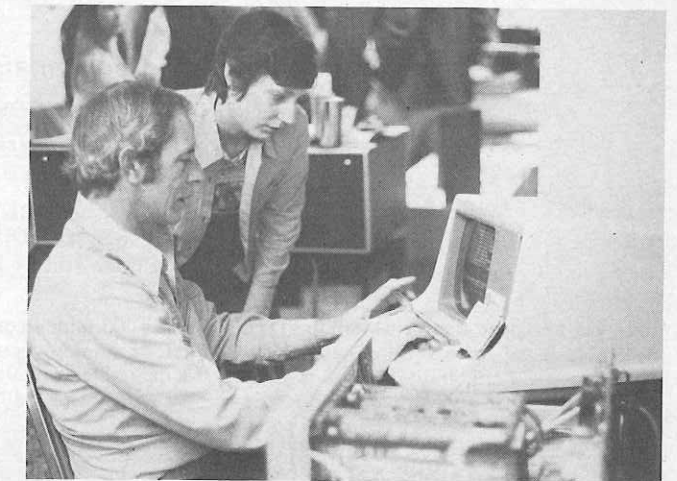
**GRAND PRIZE WINNER** Don Alexander demonstrating his computer-controlled amateur radio station.

dard transmitter and receiver. The system was designed to transmit and receive messages in a radio Teletype contest. The Altair was used for ASCII to BAUDOT translation, cross-checking calls for duplication, transmitting the time and message number of a transmission and generating a hard-copy printout of all exchanges. Mr. Alexander devel-

oped his own software and wrote the assembler and editor in addition to building the hardware.

The competition resulted in a tie for second place. Randy Miller of Tempe, AZ, with a computer chess demonstration and Wirt and Valerie Atmar of Las Cruces, NM, with a speech synthesizer, were the second place winners. Both winners received an Altair 8800B.

Third place was awarded to Danny Kleinman, Steve Grumette and Mike Gilbert of Los Angeles, CA, for their



**NORMAN TILBURY** AND **BARBRA SOLOMON** demonstrating Day-light Savings Company system.

backgammon game. The software was written in Altair Basic and displayed by a Cromemco TV Dazzler. An Altair 16K static-memory card was the prize.

The winners of the MITS' yearly software contest were also announced at the banquet. James Gerow of Houston, TX, took first place for the Best Program and Lee M. Eastburn of Langdon, MD, won the top prize in the subroutine category.



**WINNERS OF THE DEMONSTRATION CONTEST** are, from left to right, Randy Miller (second place), Danny Kleinman, Steve Grumette and Mike Gilbert (third place).

This was the first computer convention of its kind and you had to be there to experience the enthusiasm. Computer hobbyists brought just about everything with them to the convention—from Teletypes to floppy discs. Have you ever walked through the halls of a hotel in the early hours of the morning and heard Teletypes clanking away? The era of the home computer system is definitely upon us and we would like to add our support to MITS and hope their plans for an annual convention develops into a reality in time for next year's convention. BRAVO MITS!