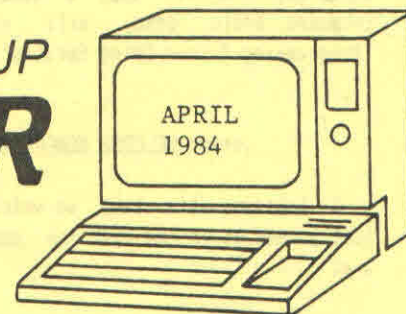# CEDAR VALLEY 99'ER USER GROUP
NEWSLETTER

APRIL
1984

***** MINUTES FROM APRIL MEETING *****

The meeting was called to order by President Chuck Moats at 7:00 P.M. Old business included acceptance of the previous meeting's minutes as printed in the newsletter; with an additional reference to the fact that the club is purging its software library of any potentially copyrighted material, and is pursuing a policy of not accepting any such material. The treasurer's report was also accepted. Bruce Graves mentioned that he still has an unclaimed TE II module for Mike Clay, and an Extended Basic module for Leon Durivage.

There was a discussion of the desireability of having summer meetings as opposed to shutting down during the summer months. The upshot was agreement to continue thru the summer.

After some discussion, it was decided to have a door prize at subsequent meetings. Pete Bradbury offered to provide a copy of his home budget program for our first door prize to be held at the next (May) meeting. Subsequent door prizes will consist of programs from the club's software library and/or purchased modules.

There was a general, free flowing, discussion on the availability and price of various bits of hardware and software.

The program for the evening was a demonstration of LOGO by Jim Trainor.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 P.M.

Bryan Hawkins
Secretary

***** THE TREASURY *****

	THRU FEB 1984	MAR 84	TOTAL
INCOME			
Memberships	$1542.00	$ 40.00	$1582.00
Sales of software	588.95	10.00	598.95
Sales of cassettes	480.95	3.00	483.95
Basic class	130.00	0	130.00
Dividend	8.70	2.93	8.70
Group S/W buy	0	421.75	421.75
TOTAL	$2750.60	$474.75	$3225.35
DISPERSALS			
Receipt book	$ 6.00	$ 0	$ 6.00
Meeting rent	91.00	4.00	95.00
Postage	168.10	27.10	195.20
Checks charge	5.92	0	5.92
Cassettes purchase	500.90	0	500.90
Software purchase	64.00	0	64.00
Subscriptions	24.50	0	24.50
Basic class salary	250.00	0	250.00
Basic class refund	5.00	0	5.00
Address labels	24.18	0	24.18
Recorder purchase	109.19	0	109.19
System purchase	838.21	0	838.21
Advertising	54.60	0	54.60
Group s/w buy	512.75	0	512.75
TOTAL	$2654.35	$ 31.10	$2685.45
ASSETS			
Savings account	$ 5.00	$ 0	$ 5.00
Cash on hand	62.65	(38.35)	24.30
Checking account	28.60	482.00	510.60
TOTAL	$ 96.25	$ 443.65	$ 539.90

Bruce Graves
Treasurer

+++++ MEETING REMINDER +++++

The May meeting will be held on the second Monday, May 14, 1984 at the JA building, 330 Collins Road, N.E. Cedar Rapids. The meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m. Dave Beckwith, who did such a good job last summer on his Extended Basic demo, will give a presentation on "Programming Tricks Using Sprites".

+++++ WELCOME NEWCOMERS!! +++++

I believe it's time we welcomed those members who have just joined us in the past few months. These new members are:

Mary Bishop	Karl Biskup
Karen Brimmer	Howard Dubishar
James Hoover	Arthur Potratz
Richard Spinler	Sam Warran
Mozell Williams	

Editor

+++++ USER GROUP CORRESPONDENCE +++++

The Cedar Valley 99'er User's Group has been sharing its newsletter with other user groups around the States. These groups are:

Pittsburgh Users Group Pittsburgh, PA	S.N.U.G. Las Vegas, NV
Rocky Mountain 99ers Littleton, CO	Atlanta 99/4A Computer Users Group Atlanta, GA
The Suncoast Beeper St. Petersburg, FL	Arizona 99er User Group Phoenix, AZ
Cedar Valley Computer Association Marion, IA	Northeast Iowa Home Computer User's Group Cedar Falls, IA

Editor

+++++ CASSETTE RECORDER CLEANING AND USE +++++

A few of you have been experiencing difficulties in using the cassette recorder with the computer. I believe there are even a few more who have been having simular problems but are afraid to ask. I feel it's about time we cover some of the basics again, especially for those new members who have just joined us. All of us have experienced the difficulties in understanding and using the proper procedures required to operate the computer and its peripherals.

First off, it is important to note that when you load a program from tape, the program on the tape is NOT removed. It is just copied into the machine. Do not load a program from tape into the computer and then try to SAVE it again on the same tape. You can very easily tape over other programs and ruin them. If you save a program, do it on another tape. I always have two copies of every program. One to use as my working program, and the other for a MASTER. This way, if something should happen, I can always get it back.

You should always make sure your cassette recorder is clean. That is, check the recorder heads to ensure they are free of dirt. I clean mine about once a month if I find myself using the computer quite a bit. Also, I demagnetize the heads about once every three months. This prevents damage to the tape (due to magnetism caused by the tape running across the heads), and damage to the heads themselves (caused by the residue off the tape). I use a cotton swab and a locally purchased head cleaner liquid to do the cleaning. I also purchased a head demagnetizer. This device plugs into a wall outlet and ERASES the magnetism built up on the heads. You must use extreme caution in using the demagnetizer to ensure it is never near a recorded tape while you're doing the cleaning.

If you are getting error messages everytime you attempt to load a program, don't panic. Refer to the Users Manual supplied with the computer and read up on the chapter discussing the use of the cassette recorder. If you have a cassette recorder that has both volume and tone controls, it will be necessary for you to perform some preliminary adjustments of these controls before you start using the recorder. First, the computer is very touchy when it comes to the tone level entering the machine. If the recorder's tone control is set with too much bass, the computer will not accept data inputs. Therefore, the first thing to do is set the tone control to almost maximum (full treble). If the tone control has numbers on it, (as does some Sears and Pansonic units) adjust the control to the number 8, at least. Set the volume control for no more than half volume (mid range). Now, try loading some data from the recorder into the computer. If you get a "NO DATA FOUND" message, adjust the volume up slightly and try again. If you get a "ERROR DETECTED IN DATA" message, adjust the volume down slightly. If you continue to get the error message "NO DATA FOUND" and you have adjusted the volume to maximum, re-adjust the volume to mid range, and set the tone up slightly. Repeat the procedures until the data finally takes. If the data finally takes but the volume level is almost maximum, you could be in for trouble. You need some leeway with the volume control so that you can make adjustments for various programs when loading. Not all programs in the club's library, or from your friends, are recorded on the same cassette recorder. Thus, not all programs have the same recording level. You may, therefore, have to re-adjust the volume on your recorder when loading programs recorded on other machines. If the latter is true, I'd suggest you return your recorder to the store where you purchased it and buy another one.

Those of you who have cassette recorders with only the volume control, your task is only half as difficult. You must find the proper level setting of the volume control. Use the procedures as mentioned above (for the volume control only) to accomplish this.

For those of you who do not have a remote input to your cassette recorder may find it confusing on when to start and stop the recorder. Do not panic! Follow the directions on the screen. When the computer states to press PLAY and then ENTER, press the ENTER key on the computer and then the PLAY button on the recorder. When the computer states that the DATA is OK, press the recorder's STOP button followed by the ENTER key on the computer. The same procedures are to be followed when recording data, however, use the RECORD button instead of the PLAY button.

If any of you continue to have problems and you have tried all of the above, contact one of the club's officers or any other member who is willing to help you. We want you to be able to enjoy your investment!

Editor

***** SPECIAL CONTROL FUNCTION KEYS *****

In the March issue of the Atlanta 99/4A Computer Users Group CALL NEWSLETTER is a very interesting article pertaining to the use of special function keys that can be used while programming. In a nutshell, the article addresses "hidden" functions that you can access using the CTRL key. If you hold the CTRL key and then press another, the cursor will move and provide a blank space on the screen. You actually get a command in that space, even though you can't see it. An example of this is CTRL and U means RANDOMIZE. Just about every key has something under its control version, but about one-third of them are useless for practical reasons.

To see what these keys are, type in the NUM command to automatically line number for you. At the beginning of each statement type in REM. After the REM, type in a key (any key of your choice) followed by the = sign. Finally, press CTRL and then the letter you typed in just before the = sign. Remember to press ENTER after entering each line. You can use the REM statement to list and see the keys in either BASIC or EXTENDED BASIC, but you can only use the CTRL commands in a program used with EXTENDED BASIC.

Following is a list of the practical CTRL function keys:

1= TO	E= GO	/= AND	K= END
2= STEP	R= INPUT	A= ELSE	L= FOR
8= OPTION	T= RESTORE	S= DATA	;= PRINT
9= OPEN	Y= DELETE	D= IF	Z= REM
O= THEN	U= RANDOMIZE	F= GOTO	X= STOP
== CALL	I= DEF	G= GOSUB	V= NEXT
Q= UNTRACE	O= UNBREAK	H= RETURN	N= BREAK
W= READ	P= TRACE	J= DIM	N= LET

***** TIPS FROM THE TIGERCLUB *****

From Tigerclub Software, 156 Collingwood Ave., Columbus, OH comes the following short program hints that can be used by almost everyone:

1. TIPS FOR BEGINNERS
   If your white text on a black screen looks blurry, try gray on black. If your colored graphics on a black screen look pale or colorless, try this:
```
100 CALL CLEAR
110 CALL COLOR(1,2,2)
120 CALL SCREEN(16)
130 CALL VCHAR(1,31,1,96)
```

2. The same trick will give you that professional looking bordered screen for your text:
```
100 CALL CLEAR
110 CALL SCREEN(5)
120 CALL VCHAR(1,31,1,96)
130 FOR SET=1 TO 12
140 CALL COLOR(SET,2,16)
150 NEXT SET
```

Now put your text on the screen, with a blank in the 1st and 28th spaces of each line. This border is not affected by scrolling but will be erased by CALL CLEAR, so clear the screen with CALL VCHAR(1,3,32,672).

3. This next routine will print key inputs on the screen in positions corresponding to the keyboard position:
```
100 CALL CLEAR
110 KEY$="1234567890=QWERTYUIOP
/ASDFGHJKL;"CHR$(13)"ZXCVBNM,."
120 CALL KEY(3,K,ST)
130 IF ST=0 THEN 120
140 X=POS(KEY$,CHR$(K),1)
150 Y=ABS(X>11)+ABS(X>22)+ABS(X>33)+1
160 R=Y*3
170 C=((X-ABS(Y>1)*(Y-1))*2)+4+Y
180 CALL HCHAR(R,C,K)
190 GOTO 120
```

4. Does your sorting routine allow you to add another name without resorting the entire list? Try this short program:
```
100 REM-SHORT SHOEHORN by Jim Peterson, Tigercub
Software
110 REM-This routine will insert a name into its
proper place in a presorted list of N number of
M$(N) names.
120 REM-Takes 12 to 14 seconds for a list of 500
130 INPUT "ADD NAME":ADD$
140 J=0
150 J=J+1
160 IF J>N THEN 230
170 IF ADD$>M$(J) THEN 150
180 FOR L=N+1 TO J STEP -1
190 M$(L)=M$(L-1)
200 NEXT L
210 M$(J)=ADD$
220 GOTO 240
230 M$(N+1)=ADD$
240 N=N+1
```

5. If you have the memory expansion system and are sorting long lists, you might find this faster:

```
100 REM - LONG SHOEHORN by Jim Peterson
110 INPUT "ADD NAME":ADD$
120 LEAST=0
130 MOST=N
140 IF ADD$>M$(1) THEN 170
150 D=0
160 GOTO 280
170 IF ADD$<M$(N) THEN 200
180 M$(N+1)=ADD$
190 GOTO 320
200 D=INT((MOST-LEAST)/2)
210 IF (ADD$>=M$(D))*(ADD$<=M$(D+1)) THEN 380
220 IF ADD$>M$(D) THEN 250
230 MOST=D
240 GOTO 200
250 LEAST=D
260 D=D+INT((MOST-LEAST)/2)
270 GOTO 210
280 FOR J=N+1 TO D+2 STEP -1
290 M$(J)=M$(J-1)
300 NEXT J
310 M$(D+1)=ADD$
320 N=N+1
```

***** MORE TIPS FOR BEGINNERS *****

In the March 1984 issue of the Rocky Mountain 99'ers newsletter, TIC TALK, are a few interesting articles to help the beginner programmers:

1. To get the computer to read the CALL KEY input as upper case letters, even if the Alpha Lock is up, just use the key-unit 3 reference in a call key statement: CALL KEY(3,K,ST)

2. If you have the extended basic module, why not leave it plugged in and select the Extended Basic option even when you are programming Basic? This will allow you to type 5 lines per line number, and will still run in Basic (unless you put too many short items in a DATA statement). The Extended Basic option will accept input of your program lines much faster, especially when the program gets long. It also accepts changes and deletions much more quickly, and is especially useful when you want to delete a large number of lines. It will quickly tell you how much memory you have left with the SIZE command (but you'll have more in Basic) and will bring your rejected input back to the screen for correction (using FCTN REDO [8]). It will also run your program, if you stay away from character sets 15 and 16 and double colons!

***** CHANGING OF THE GUARD *****

At our next (May) meeting, new officers will be taking charge of the club. I know they are more than eager to implement changes for the better, and to keep the club going.

After the past year of being your President, I have seen our club grow and become stronger. A person cannot run a club (any club) by himself, cannot provide all the information that the membership desires, etc, and keep his/her sanity. It is very time consuming and demanding. I ask each and every one of you to help the new officers by volunteering your services for whatever is asked. You don't have to be a genious with the computer, and you don't have to know everything about programming. All that is needed is your energy and concern for the club's well being.

We have come a long way, but we also have a long bumpy road ahead. Since TI has left us high and dry, it will be up to us to find any and all information required to maintain our existance. We all need to work together if we plan on being a strong organization.

I wish the new officers the best of luck for the coming year. May their energy, understanding, and concern be our guiding light.

Chuck Moats
Past President

***** HARDWARE/SOFTWARE AVAILABLE *****

I understand that Deihn's in Waterloo has a large asortment of hardware (peripheral expansion box, etc.) and software available. In fact, too much to list here. If interested, make a trip----it's not that far.

Editor

For those of you who wanted the Extended Basic when the club made the last large purchase, don't despair. We have ordered six more modules. Those five members who didn't get it last time will have first choice.

Jim Green

Your User's Group is continually receiving mailings from companies wanting to sell equipment and software for the TI-99/4A. We have sent for catalogs from other suppliers, and these will be on display at each meeting at the rear table. Three of the best advertise in "Home Computer" magazine: Tex-Comp in California, Tenex in Indiana, and Unisource in Texas. Tex-Comp's new catalog, for example, says that they purchased most of TI's remaining inventory when TI recently stopped selling all home computer products. Look for their catalog at the next meeting. (TI LOGO II is available for $74.95.)

The latest nice surprise was a package from Cor-Comp, Inc. Rumors of a full expansion system and even a new "99/64 Phoenix" computer from Cor-Comp have been circulating for six months. Well, the expansion system is now reality, and the User's Group has been invited to purchase a system for evaluation at a reduced price. The Cor-Comp 9900 Micro-Expansion System is a small unit with RS-232 and parallel interface, 32K memory expansion, and disk controller (D.S.D.D.) for a $290 discount price. The unit plugs into the right side of the 99/4A, and may be purchased with only the RS-232/parallel card for $110. Any member willing to finance a purchase, on condition that the group gets to view the hardware in action, is asked to call Jim Green soon. We can only order one!

Jim Green

***** CALL JOYST (1, JX, JY) *****

Several of our members have mentioned that our library games would be more fun if they were played with the joysticks, rather than by pushing the arrow keys, for character movement. My answer is, "change the program yourself. You'll learn much faster that way!" Here is one method for using the CALL JOYST command that comes from the Nov. 1982 issue of 99'er Magazine.

First, recall that the command is written as CALL JOYST (1, X, Y). The items in parenthesis are explained like this: The first character may be a "one" or a "two", and refers to the specific joystick you want to "look" at. The second character, "X" in our example, is a dummy variable that tells whether or not the joystick is pushed to the left or right. The third character, "Y" in the example, is another dummy variable that tells whether or not the joystick is pushed up or down. If the joystick is pushed right when the computer executes the CALL JOYST (1, X, Y) command, then X is set equal to +4. If the joystick is pushed left, then X is set equal to -4. If it is not pushed sideways, then X will be set equal to zero. Similarly, if the joystick is pushed up, then Y is set equal to +4; if the joystick is pushed down, then Y is set equal to -4; if the joystick is centered, then Y is zero. The trick then, after "reading" the joystick position and getting proper values for X and Y, is to use X and Y to make something happen on the screen.

Thinking of the joystick control as an eight-pointed star, there are then nine possible positions (including the center of the star) for the joystick to be in. The following statement will assign values from 1 to 9 to Z, depending on where the joystick was during the CALL JOYST (1, X, Y) command: $Z=((X+3*Y)/4)+5$. Try all combinations of X and Y and you will get answers from 1 to 9 for the equation, representing nine positions on the joystick. Now you can use the statement "ON Z GOTO...." to direct the movement of the character in the game. You will need to find which line numbers caused movement in the original program (they follow a "CALL KEY" command), and then use

those line numbers in the "ON Z GOTO...." command, making sure the motion corresponds to the movement of the joystick. You must have nine line numbers in the "ON Z GOTO...." command, separated by commas (ie, "ON Z GOTO 560, 600, 520, 560, 900, 840, 560, 700, 750"). As long as you now take out the CALL KEY command and associated statements (ie "IF K=63 THEN 560"), the game should respond to your joystick. Remember, the ALPHA lock key must be up!

It's difficult to do a full description in a short space, and there is more than one way to code the joystick command. If you have trouble, call another member for help. After all, that's why we're in the user's group!

Jim Green

***** NEWSLETTER INPUTS *****

All club members are encouraged to input information into the club's newsletter. Caution should be used to ensure that any articles provided to the editor are not of a copyright nature. Articles should be legible and to the point. I will not have time to verify the articles or prove their authenticity. Any inputs should be provided to me no later than on the Friday following the meeting. All attempts will be made to get your articles into the newsletter, but due to postage weight requirements, limitations will have to be enforced. Any articles not printed will be held for the next newsletter. Articles can be sent (preferred) or called in (if not lengthy). All efforts will be made to continue making our newsletter informative. The newsletter will be sent to print by the 21st of each month so that it is in your hands no later than 1 week before the next meeting. Refer to the last sheet of this newsletter for my address and telephone number.

Editor

***** PROGRAM CHAIRMAN NEEDED *****

Anyone interested in becoming the Program Chairman should contact Jim Green as soon as possible. The position will require: scheduling presentations for each meeting; ensuring consoles, TV's, etc. are present for each meeting; and anything else that may arise due to Executive Committee input, etc. The job requires only 2-3 hours a month, and you don't need to be a computer expert.

***** PUBLICITY CHAIRMAN NEEDED *****

Anyone interested in becoming the Publicity Chairman should contact Jim Green as soon as possible. The position will require: providing exposure of our club's existance to those who do not know we exist (via newspaper ads and/or flyers); correspondence with local media; corresponding with other user groups, etc.

***** NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE NEEDED *****

Anyone interested in being part of the newsletter committee should contact either Jim Green, Bryan Hawkins, or myself as soon as possible. Since I have a word processing system right at my desk at work, I have volunteered to do all the necessary typing. We need volunteers to help with: finding interesting articles for our use; collating, folding, and postage of the newsletter; and anything else that may be required of us. The major task, getting the newsletter mailed, will only require 2 or 3 hours each month.

***** EDUCATION COMMITTEE *****

Anyone interested in being part of the education committee should contact Jim Green or Bryan Hawkins as soon as possible. The committee will be responsible for obtaining articles, literature, flyers, whatever, for the education of the club membership. This information will be provided to the membership via the meetings and/or newsletter. Basic and Extended Basic teachers are also needed.

***** BUY AND SELL *****

For sale: Want to sell terminal emulator II module or trade it for Parsec. Contact Dick Ferreter at 396-9411 after 6:00 p.m.

For sale: Securities Analysis for $8.00. Contact Ed Hayek at 366-4793.