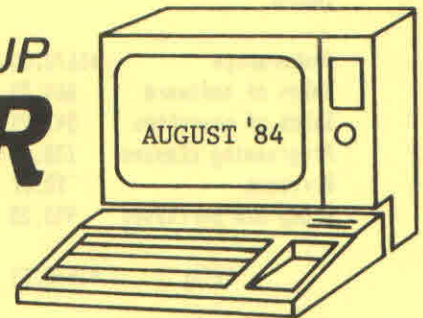


CEDAR VALLEY 99'ER USER GROUP

NEWSLETTER



NEWSLETTER TOPICS

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***** MINUTES FROM AUGUST MEETING *****

The August meeting was called to order by President Jim Green at 7:05 p.m. There were 33 members present for the meeting. Minutes from the July meeting were approved as printed in the July newsletter. The Treasurer's report was also approved as printed in the newsletter.

Jim Trainor volunteered his services as Education Director and was immediately nominated and seconded for the position. Jim also presented copies of an interpretive language which demonstrates some of the assembly language commands for anyone interested. He also recommended purchase of the new book by Compute magazine which has 33 programs in extended basic.

Chuck Moats again asked the membership for input into the newsletter. A discussion ensued as to how to get more input. No new ideas which were achievable resulted.

Several members indicated they were having problems with their speech synthesizers and asked for help. Other members volunteered to help them after the meeting.

Recent releases from TI which have been sent to user groups were made available to members with disk systems and applicable software. They included an Advanced Assembly Debugger, The Source Code for the Forth Language, enhancements for TI-Writer, and enhancements for Multiplan.

Jim Green gave the main program for the evening accessing several bulletin boards with the modem. This included the Chicago bulletin board which is run by a TI computer. Jim also demonstrated output to the printer of data received via the phone modem. Several local bulletin boards were also reviewed to show how much can be done locally with a modem. Jim Trainor assisted in an explanation of some of the terms used on the TE II when accessing a bulletin board.

Jack Hicks won the door prize for the evening. Jack will receive four programs of his choice from the club's library on cassette. The membership was informed that we will try to acquire module software as prizes starting with the October meeting.

After a general discussion among the membership and review of literature on the back table (it was up front, Ed, where were you?!@#%\$), the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

For The Secretary
Ed Hayek

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

***** WELCOME NEWCOMERS *****

We would like to welcome the following new member to our club:

Tina Daggett
Springville, IA

	THRU		
	JUNE 1984	JULY 84	TOTAL
INCOME			
Memberships	\$1672.00	\$ 10.00	\$1682.00
Sales of software	666.95	28.00	694.95
Sales of cassettes	542.95	18.00	560.95
Programming classes	130.00	65.00	195.00
Dividend	10.07	0	10.07
Group S/W purchases	953.25	0	953.25
TOTAL	\$3975.22	\$121.00	\$4096.22

***** FAITH IN THE TI 99/4A *****

We often hear complaints that since the giant Texas Instruments ceased production of the TI 99/4A we're left behind in a world of high tech advances. We have even had members move on to other brands of computers because of this perceived void. Consider the following gleaned from reading just a few publications aimed at the TI owner.

DISPERSALS

Receipt book	\$ 6.00	\$ 0	\$ 6.00
Meeting rent	137.00	0	137.00
Postage	276.68	25.00	301.68
Bank/Check charges	8.92	1.00	9.92
Cassettes purchase	661.94	0	661.94
Software purchase	64.00	0	64.00
Subscriptions	34.50	0	34.50
Class teacher salary	250.00	0	250.00
Class tuition refund	5.00	0	5.00
Address labels	24.18	0	24.18
Recorder purchase	109.19	0	109.19
System purchase	953.16	0	953.16
Advertising	71.80	0	71.80
Group s/w buy	952.75	0	952.75
TOTAL	\$3555.12	\$ 26.00	\$3581.12

CorComp's new Disk Controller card will support both single and double density disk drives. TI's version only supported single density.

Foundation Computing has unveiled an 80-column card to fit into the Peripheral Expansion System. TI supported a maximum of 40 columns in TI-Writer, Multiplan, and Editor/Assembler, finally going to 64-columns in the new language Forth.

Foundation Computing also claims to have a 128K Memory Expansion Card for the Peripheral Expansion System. TI offered a maximum expansion of 32K of memory.

ASSETS

Savings account	\$ 153.37	\$ 0	\$ 153.37
Cash on hand	24.00	121.00	145.00
Checking account	242.73	(26.00)	216.73
TOTAL	\$ 420.10	\$ 95.00	\$ 515.10
PROOF	\$ 420.10	\$ 95.00	\$ 515.10
	\$ 420.10		\$ 515.10

Dragonslayer ASC has an auto Spell-Check for those of us who can't spell. Utilized with TI-Writer or Editor/Assembler it will check your composition against the resident dictionary of 20,000 words. In addition, you can add words of your own choosing. TI never got around to offering this type of software which is extremely popular today.

Softmail, Inc. is offering a Terminal Emulator-1200 which permits sending and receiving data over modems from 110 to 9600 baud. The Terminal Emulator II supports 300 baud only.

Ed Hayek
Treasurer

Star Micronics has offered an addendum to its printer manual recognizing the large number of TI users out there who needed information specific to the TI 99/4A.

***** NEXT MEETING REMINDER *****

Due to a schedule conflict with JA, our next meeting will be moved to THURSDAY, September 13th. Jim Trainor (our new Education Chairman) will give a demonstration and explanation of disks and disk drives. A fantastic door prize will be given. You must be present to win. Mark your calendar for September 13th and we'll see you at 330 Collins Rd. N.E. at 7:00 p.m.

Left behind? It certainly doesn't appear that way to me. There are even brand new newsletters specific to the TI 99/4A coming out! The important thing is to support these new creative vendors. If we as TI owners don't support these people, they will soon go on to something else and we truly will be left behind. If we give our support, the TI 99/4A can live forever!!

Ed Hayek

***** USER GROUP BENEFITS *****

One of the benefits of belonging to a user group is the purchasing power of the group. We've used this in the past to order cassette tapes and diskettes.

At the last meeting we offered to get Home Computer magazine, which is not available locally, at very favorable rates. Only nine people actually signed up. In addition, we had a sign-up sheet for the products of Charles Dow who offers a 40% discount if the order is large enough. His products include the Dow 4-Gazelle, an Editor Assembler, and an Assembly Language Primer. Three people expressed an interest, not enough for a discount. We also had a lead on extended basic and offered to order it through the group, saving on shipping and handling. Two members expressed interest. Emerald Valley Publishing also offers other products including The Best of 99'er at a 40% discount if sufficient quantities are ordered. Jim Green mentioned the savings on the Expansion System if we could place an order for three. I'm sure there are other vendors who will also give us quantity discounts if we can decide on specific products.

Our first attempt with sign-up sheets was disappointing. It could be due to the small number of members at the summer meetings. Let us know what you want. Working together we can really do ourselves a favor. We'll be waiting to hear from you at the next meeting. The Officers are there to serve you, but we need your inputs!

Ed Hayek

***** ANOTHER BENEFIT FROM YOUR USER GROUP *****

As we noted several months ago, Myarc, Inc. is producing a full expansion system for the TI 99/4A. Dhein's Hardware in Waterloo now has the system in stock, and I have negotiated a special purchase price for group members. On condition that we send a group order of at least three systems, we can purchase the \$580.00 system for only \$500.00, a savings of 16%!

Myarc's expansion system contains 32K expansion RAM, two RS-232 serial ports, one parallel port, a single-sided, double-density disk drive, and a disk controller with TI's Disk Manager II cartridge. The box is smaller than the TI PEB, plugs directly into the side port of the console, and will accommodate two half-height disk drives. (Double-sided drives are available for only \$50.00 extra.)

Mr. Dhein has used the Myarc system with no apparent problems. He was able to run any program on the system, including TI-Writer and Multiplan. He reserved judgement on the system because it is too early to determine its eventual reliability.

We now have a choice of three expansion systems (TI, CorComp and Myarc), and the Myarc system is the least expensive at the group price. If you are interested in ordering one with me, please call or see me at the Sept. 13 meeting.

Jim Green

***** ANOTHER SOURCE FOR TI PRODUCTS *****

An article in "The Enthusiast", published by the International 99'er Users Group, led me to search out the Computer Corner while on vacation in Detroit this summer. The Computer Corner is a chain of four stores specializing in products for the TI 99/4A. It was a good feeling, given today's environment, to walk into a store with walls covered with TI command modules, third party software, and hardware peripherals. Unfortunately, they were having a sale that week, so I couldn't leave without spending some money.....

Computer Corner publishes a newsletter (we are now on their mailing list) and will accept mail orders for any products they carry. They are distributors for CorComp, and will soon have available the 99000 full expansion system. You may contact them at 25900 Greenfield, Suite 132, Oak Park, MI 48237 or phone them at area code 313, 968-0050.

One comment worth passing along from the sales person: Computer Corner does not expect to receive any more Extended Basic modules from their suppliers. If you want it and can find it, get it now, as the available inventory is quickly disappearing.

If you are visiting the Motor City, I recommend a stop at Computer Corner.

Jim Green

***** EDUCATION COMMITTEE NEWS *****

We now have an Education Committee, as Jim Trainor volunteered to be committee chairman at the August meeting. He welcomes help from anyone who wants to serve our user group. We need to start an Extended Basic class. Thanks for stepping forward, Jim!!

***** TRIVIAL FACTS DEPT. *****

Not all the Milton Bradley game cartridges require the MBX System in order to run! I recently learned that Sound Track Trolley, Honey Hunt, and Superfly are labeled for use with MBX because MBX contains a speech synthesizer and joysticks. Those of you who already own the TI joysticks and speech synthesizer have the tools necessary to enjoy these newer games.

The other three Milton Bradley games, Championship Baseball, I'm Hiding, and Terry Turtle do require the MBX system and its voice command capabilities.

***** UPDATE ON TIBBS *****

Those who attended the August meeting saw an informative demonstration on computer bulletin boards, and especially on TI-hosted bulletin boards. Those of you who own a modem and RS-232 interface will want to explore this new use for your computer. We have uncovered even more phone numbers for bulletin boards hosted on 99/4A's. (Software to set up a TIBBS is about \$120.00; in case we have a local volunteer.)

The following phone numbers are active 24-hours a day:

AREA CODE	PHONE NUMBER	CITY
201	929-8161	Tomis River
207	797-5690	Portland, ME
215	927-6432	Phil. PA
215	929-5348	Reading, PA
301	434-0117	Wash. DC
302	322-3999	Newark, DE
305	793-8050	W. Palm, FL
313	288-0530	Claison, MI
313	544-7788	Detroit, MI
316	681-3167	Wichita, KS
404	425-5254	Atlanta, GA
404	928-4278	Atlanta, GA
404	471-1283	Atlanta, GA
404	935-4054	Ringgold, GA
414	739-5380	Appleton, WI
414	649-TEAM	Milwaukee, WI
415	364-8517	Redwood City
415	355-3092	San Fran., CA
503	661-0408	Gresham, OR
515	842-2104	Knoxville, IA
518	765-4993	Albany, NY
619	276-3173	San Diego, CA
714	350-8583	Fontana, CA
716	837-6635	Tonawanda, NY
804	486-1484	Va Bch., VA
813	525-7998	St. Pete, FL
813	526-1265	St. Pete, FL
816	444-4163	K.C., MO
919	851-8460	Raleigh, NC

***** A BOOK REVIEW *****

With the thousands of computer books on the market today, and new ones being published daily, it is difficult to decide which books will help the computer owner. Last year the number of books written for the TI 99/4A could be counted on one hand. Today, these books occupy two shelves in many stores. These reviews are written to help you decide which of the books are worth your consideration, and which are not.

This month I'll review COMPUTE'S! Guide To Extended Basic Home Applications On The TI 99/4A by Christopher Flynn. The book is listed at \$12.95 and is available at B. Dalton Book Stores.

COMPUTE has always published well written books dealing with the more popular home computers, and this one is no exception. I get the feeling that Mr. Flynn has written this book for the computer users who have written a few trivial programs and know that somewhere, buried deep beneath the keyboard, is real computing power. This book lets that power surface!

The book has two major goals: the first being a quick review of Extended Basic, and the second; putting the computer to work. Both goals are well met. The section on Extended Basic will make a believer out of the most skeptical on its usefulness. He includes many examples and comparisons with regular basic. IF-THEN-ELSE statements and subprograms are two of the features he talks about.

From Chapter 3 on, Flynn's book covers some of the major tasks computers can take on in the home. Chapters on file management, electronic spreadsheets, computer graphics, card files, and appointment calendar have complete listings as well as detailed discussions on how the programs operate. These programs can be run as is, or included in your own projects. By the time you're done with these chapters, you will have a real good understanding of how to use Extended Basic as well as some excellent programs.

In summary, Home Applications is a good buy for anyone using Extended Basic, or anyone planning on getting it. Another fine book from COMPUTE!!!!

James E. Trainor Jr.
Education Chairman

(Thanks Jim, for a very fine review! Edit.)

***** PASSWORD *****

Here is a program that I changed to add more usefulness and excitement to using your TI 99/4A.

This program is called "PASSWORD", and it appeared in the Home Computer Compendium in Feb. 1984. (page 23). Thus, if you want to add security to one of your programs, this is a program that will work.

```
10 P$="YOUR PASSWORD"  
20 CALL CLEAR  
30 INPUT "ENTER SECURITY CODE":PW$  
40 IF P$(<)PW$ THEN 3199  
50 CALL CLEAR  
60 REM ENTER YOUR PROGRAM HERE
```

```
3199 CALL CLEAR  
3200 PRINT TAB(7):"SECURITY VIOLATED"  
3201 PRINT  
3202 PRINT  
3203 PRINT TAB(6):"PROGRAM ABORTED"  
3204 FOR I=1 TO 10  
3205 CALL SOUND(200,466,1)  
3206 CALL SCREEN(7)  
3207 CALL SOUND(200,1760,1)  
3208 CALL SCREEN(11)  
3209 NEXT I
```

If you have extended basic and speech, try substituting CALL SAY in lines 3205 and 3207.

Rick Emery
Cedar Rapids, IA

***** PROGRAMMING HINTS *****

You say you were on the last line of keying in that new "SPACE ZAPPER" program, but instead of typing "SHIFT +" you hit "FCTN +" (QUIT)? And, you didn't have a line of the program saved because you were anxious to zap an alien that looked like your mother-in-law?

Well, here's a neat little trick if you own the Extended Basic cartridge. This won't work in Basic, but before you begin to key in your program, try this one line statement before you do anything else. In the immediate mode type the following:

```
CALL INIT :: CALL LOAD(-31806,16)
```

This one line will kill the "QUIT" ability on the 99/4A and you can then type "NUM" and key in your program without the dreaded worry of hitting that "FCTN +" key.

You can also use these two statements at the beginning of a program by giving it a line number:

```
10 CALL INIT :: CALL LOAD(-31806,16)
```

When you add this to any TI Extended Basic program, along with the "ON BREAK NEXT" statement, there is no way that you can stop the program other than to complete the game or return to the menu that says "END". When you save this type of program under the optional "PROTECTED" clause, you literally have a program that is as intact as a solid state command module.

Michael Bonifazi
Anamosa, IA

(Thanks for the inputs, Mike and Dick. This is what we need, information for the newsletter by the members that can be used by all!)

***** NEW PRODUCTS, MAILINGS, ETC. *****

Every month we receive several mailings announcing new software, new hardware, special sales, group newsletters, etc. These are available at our monthly meetings for everyone to read. Be sure to look on the tables at the back of the room.

This month's mailings include:

TENEX	Complete catalog of hardware, software
INFORMATION ASSOC.	Hardware - Good prices
RESTON PUBLISHING	New books at U.G. prices
TACHYON SYSTEMS	32K memory expansion stand alone
THE MOTHER BOARD	New BBS (fee required)
BITS & BYTES OF ELECTRONICS	Printers, disk drives
COMPRO	Disks at U.G. prices
CYDEX SOFTWARE	New assembly language game
SUNDISK SOFTWARE, INC.	Sketch Master for video graphics, hardware

***** NEW SECRETARY NEEDED!! *****

The Executive Council last week regretfully accepted the resignation of our Secretary, John Elam. John has been involved in many outside activities these past months and feels that he won't be able to give the C.V. 99'er User's Group the time and attention it deserves.

Before the Executive Council has to start phoning for volunteers, we are asking you to consider the benefits of being the group's secretary. Duties are confined mainly to keeping minutes of the monthly meetings and sending letters to potential members. Benefits include early access to all the literature, ads, and newsletters we receive each month, having a voice in the direction of the group, and most importantly, the opportunity to serve 150 other computer amateurs.

Call one of the officers and become our secretary. Remember - it's easier to say yes than to make up a reason for saying no!

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

Wanted: Chess cartridge. Contact Rick Emery at 396-5463.

For Sale: Tombstone City for \$6.00, Securities Analysis for \$7.50. Contact Ed Hayek at 366-4793.

For Sale:

ITEM	QTY
1. TI 99/4A	1
2. Peripheral Expansion Box (includes 32K memory and disk drive)	1
3. TI Writer/Word Processor Command Module	1
4. TI Extended Basic Command Module	1
5. Mini Memory Command Module	1
6. Household Budget Management Command Module	1
7. Tunnels of Doom Command Module	1
8. Parsec Command Module	1
9. Tombstone City Command Module	1
10. Number Magic Command Module	1
11. Computer Math Games II Command Module	1
12. Touch Typing Tutor Command Module	1

The price requested for the above items is \$500.00 and does not include a printer or monitor. Contact Dean Helander at 393-3029 (home) or 395-3897 (work).

Wanted: Two or more members to place a group order for the Myarc Expansion System. Cost is \$500.00 plus tax and shipping. Contact Jim Green at 377-4073.

***** REM *****

The CEDAR VALLEY 99'er USER'S GROUP NEWSLETTER is published by the Cedar Valley 99'er User's Group in the Cedar Rapids/Marion, Iowa area. Members are encouraged to contribute articles. Opinions expressed are those of the writer and are not necessarily those of the Cedar Valley 99'er User's Group, its Officers, editor, or members. Other user groups may copy or use any article published in this newsletter without the written consent of the CEDAR VALLEY 99'er USER'S GROUP as long as credit is given to our group.

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