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THE HUGgers
HOOSIER USERS GROUP
 People Helping People

Officer's Corner

This newsletter is for the February, 1997 meeting despite the date on the masthead. We're now two newsletters behind with this issue. We will have to do them monthly until we get caught up. This issue is a bit of a hodgepodge as it was originally to have gone out in January (and should have been out the door last year), and now we've had to modify it for February.

MEETING

Our topic for the February will be databases featuring First Base by Warren Agee. Bryant Pedigo will demonstrate some of the things you can do with a database at the meeting

PLANNING

At the last meeting we heard that Ricky Bottoms was stepping down as President for the rest of his term. That left Bryant Pedigo and me as the officers. Recently we had a meeting to get ourselves organized and plan how we wanted to do things and how to run the club. We decided to try working as Acting Co-Presidents and divide the various management functions between us. It will be interesting to see how it works out. So far we only have a program for the February meeting, but plan to fill out the rest of the Spring schedule shortly.

PO Box

Another topic we need to think about in the near future is the PO Box.

Many other user groups have stopped using a PO Box. Last year it cost us \$58 and it has been going up a bit every year. The big question, of course, is whose address do we use if we decide to close the PO Box. As things stand, we have until the end of April to decide.

Newsletter

I volunteered to be the Newsletter Editor. We haven't had an official editor for years, which is one of the reasons our newsletters have been sometimes less than timely. In the past Bill Lucid was willing to act without portfolio, as it were, and get a newsletter out, but he's been too busy these days to continue. I feel it's really the officers' responsibility to see to it that things get done rather than wait for someone else to do it. I'll attempt to set up a deadline for articles and a schedule for production so that the newsletter will get to everyone when it should.

The newsletter should be the main organ for communications for the user group. It's been under-utilized in the past and we need to use it for this purpose more in the future.

Short Bits

Micropendium has a web page. It's at: www.io.com/~jkoloen/

I have the 5 disk C99 release 5 set from Vern Jensen that he put together for his new C99 column in Micropendium. The major change in Rel.5 is that it's designed for Funnelweb. I'll try to get it on the BBS soon. I'll

have it at the meeting too, but will be at a reception later that afternoon and will have to leave early.

-Greg Larson

In This Issue

January's Officers' Corner
 Charles Good's Chicago Faire Report
 Gary Cox's Chicago Faire Report (part 1)
 a Proposal from Bill Lucid

Meeting Agenda

Sunday February 16, 1997
 2:00-2:30pm Doors open, setup
 2:30-2:45pm Business Meeting.
 2:45-4:00pm Program (First Base)

OFFICER'S CORNER

This edition of the H.U.G. Newsletter is at least a couple months late. Between not having much news in the TI community and the fact that with the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays it has been hard to find time to do the newsletter. Anyway, we will attempt to have the newsletter back on a bi-monthly schedule. The biggest news item concerns this year's Chicago IT Faire. This year was the 14th year the Chicago Faire has been held. Our club had a table as we have had for the past several years. Bill Lucid and myself were there to run the table. While we made a some money for the club, the biggest value in going to Chicago was the opportunity to visit with other TI/Geneve enthusiasts, many of whom we have been acquainted with or known of since the early 1980's.

Editor's Note:

The following is an e-mail article from Mike Wright of CaDD Electronics - concerning PC-99 and adding emulation of the Myarc FDC to the PC-99 emulation package. Dated 12/5/1996.

We are in the process of testing the emulation of the Myarc FDC for PC99. One of the tests we ran was to generate a DSDD disk and then run the p-System. The p-System boot disk was in Unit #4, and the DSDD disk in Unit #5. After loading the Filer and zero'ing the disk in Unit #5, we proceeded to copy the four SSSD p-System disks onto the disk in Unit #5.

Then we switched the DSDD disk to Unit #4 and re-booted. At this stage PC99 hung.

We struggled for a couple of days through our code, but all seemed okay. Then, in a moment of weakness, we performed the whole exercise on a real 4A. To our surprise - and relief - it did the same.

We had been confusing using the DSDD disks running as DSK1 emulation under the HFDC. As a result, we were convinced that the p-System would be able to boot for a DSDD disk. Further investigation revealed that if we formatted the DSDD with the TI Disk Manager 2, which set the max number of sectors to 1280 (as opposed to 1440 by the 18-sector option of the Myarc DM), then the p-System would boot. So here is my question: Does anyone know if the p-System will boot from a DSDD 1440-sector disk? If yes, then what are we missing.

Speaking of Mike Dodd, both he and Peter Hoddle visited my house one night after a Boston Computer Society meeting. I had purchased PC Transfer and was complaining that it did not work properly.

Both were rather skeptical, but the failure was demonstrated. Between the two of them, there was no solution forthcoming. Their best answer was: "Oh it works on our stuff, there must be a problem with your hardware."

Now, many years later, their claim has turned out to be true, but in reality it's the fault of sloppy code in PC Transfer.


Again, as part of testing the Myarc FDC, we ran PC Transfer under PC99. Stepping through the debugger, we found that Mike Dodd runs a timing loop and does not wait for the controller to report that the end of a track is reached. As a result, he will send a command to the controller to switch sides, without checking that the current buffer is fully written to the last sector. In many cases a byte is left over that should be written to say, side 2, and that now ends up as the first byte on the new track on side 1. So yes, it worked on his hardware, but it didn't work on mine, and probably will fail on other machines as well. This is because of inherent timing differences in chips in the controller. The real problem was that he didn't write the code properly as mandated in the WD FDC chip manual. And that's the way PC Transfer still exists today.

The most interesting items shown were the new hardware items which are available in Germany from the System 99 User Group of Mannheim, Germany. Their projects include a "High Speed GPL Card" and a P-Box card that replaces the TI console and will be able to use a standard PC keyboard. For more on these items and the Faire in general see the extensive Faire review by Gary Cox which follows in this and the next edition of the newsletter.

Also, some of you may have seen the message posted by Bill Lucid on the H.U.G. BBs last month. Because of poor attendance at our meetings, lack of new hardware and software to discuss and show at meetings, and difficulty in getting people to volunteer to help run the club, there is some sediment that it is time to disband the Hoosier User's Group. While I and some of the other officers are in favor of continuing, I think it is time to seriously consider this. Bill's message is included in this issue for all to read. Please think about this and make your feelings known, either by mail or by leaving a message on the BBs. One thing that we are going to try to do starting with the February meeting is to have a set program, either a demo or help session on some aspect of the 99/4a or a major application.

Finally, Rick Bottoms, has had to at least temporarily step down as President of the club. We hope that he will eventually be able to resume that role....

*Bryant Pedigo
HUG V.P.*



This news letter is brought to you by the efforts of the officers & members of the Hoosier Users Group. **THE OPINIONS EXPRESSED HEREIN ARE THE AUTHORS', and DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THOSE OF THE PUBLISHERS.** MEMBERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO SUBMIT ARTICLES FOR PUBLICATION. -PLEASE! REMEMBER
This is **YOUR** user group too!

REPORT FROM THE 14TH ANNUAL CHICAGO TI FAIRE.

held November 9, 1997

by Charles Good

I just returned home from the Faire and thought I would put some of the show's highlights down on paper while they are still fresh in my mind. I think all of the following should be of interest to the TI99/4A and Geneve community.

Beery Miller of 9640 news was there. I haven't seen him at a TI show in several years. He was selling an IBM compatible CD ROM with lots of archived TI and Geneve software and text files. You can use this as the basis for a BBS download system or send the files over to your TI via a serial cable. Price is \$50. This is NOT the same product currently being sold by Kyle Crichton of Competition computer. Beery's and Kyle's CDs have different mixtures of software. Beery assures me that all the material on his CD is already in the public domain or that he has specific permission from the software authors to distribute the non public domain stuff on the CD. P.O. Box 752465, Memphis TN 38175. Phone 901-368-1169

Gerd Weissmann showed some PE Box cards for sale by Michael Becker and others in Germany. The card that interested me the most was the 80 column card. It produces, I think, 32K colors. You need a Geneve/Amega compatible monitor such as the no longer produced Magnavox 8CM515 to see all the colors. Gerd showed some highly detailed GIF pictures of earth globes and a picture of a hamster with each hair showing. Using the same picture he switched back and forth between 256 colors (the resolution of all other 80 column cards for the TI and the Geneve's resolution) and the card's maximum resolution. The difference was dramatic. This card works with a regular 99/4A sys-

tem or with the fast cpu/gram system that was also demonstrated.

The fast cpu/gram system consist of two cards that put the entire 99/4A inside the pbox. Gerd used a 99/4A keyboard (only) cabled to the fast cpu card and says that within a couple of weeks the eeprom that allows one to use an AT keyboard with the fast cpu card will be ready. There is already a jack on the fast cpu card for an AT keyboard. The gram card, which must be used with the fast cpu card, has lots and lots of gram memory. There are, I think, 16 banks of gram and most of these banks are in flash eeproms so they are very stable yet can be reprogramed. Some of the gram memory is in ram so that you can make alterations to your gram modules before loading the module into a flash eeprom.

These are expensive cards with unique features. As I recollect the price of the 80 column card is 380DM (\$1US=1.5DM). Don Walden of Occure electronics grabbed Gerd at the Chicago airport the day before the Faire and whisked him to Wisconsin to look over Gerd's hardware and probably to try and arrange to manufacture and sell the cards on this side of the Atlantic. Nothing at all definite had been worked out between these two when Gerd arrived at the Faire the next day. Gerd's address is Koernigstrasse 17-19, D-67655 Kaiserlautern, Germany.

Bud Mills was there. As some of you know Bud has done very little for the TI community in recent months and is way behind with repair and service work on products his company has sold in the past. The problem, as I understand it, is that Bud was making

long daily drives to help his brother take care of their dying mother. This included construction of a new downstairs bathroom. Bud buried his mother last week and now promises to get caught up with everything. He told me that his back log of repairs will hopefully be cleared up by the end of November 1996. I hope so. Bud has the seed money for another production run of Horizon Ramdisk series 4000 boards. New Horizon Ramdisks will soon be available. Pgram cards and memex (for the Geneve) cards are now available. Bud said in his seminar, "I'm not running out on you guys. I am here for the duration. As long as there is interest in the 99/A and in my products I will be here." That is very good news.

Bruce Harrison demonstrated an AMS version of his TI Artist slide show program at his table. The software popped a TI Artist picture up on the screen, displayed it for 0.1 sec, then put another up. With this kind of speed you can produce animation. At his seminar Bruce showed off the NEW Loadmaster. This is greatly enhanced compared to the version of Loadmaster I reviewed in Micropendium just a month ago. I was very impressed! It is now FAST, with assembly language support. It identifies just about every kind of file there is in the 99/4A world (telling you that the file is an EA3 program, a TI Base data file, a Page pro font, etc. etc.). From a Loadmaster disk directory you can directly run Extended Basic, EA5, and EA3 software and you can view text files. Running EA3 software from the LoadMaster menu is particularly user friendly, more so than any other way of running EA3 software including Funnelweb and the EA module. AMS Artist slideshow is commercial.

Bruce sells it for \$7. The new Loadmaster is shareware, with all donations shared equally between Bruce and Mickey Cendrowski, the two authors. Send me \$1 (P.O. Box 647, Venedocia OH 45894) and I will mail you the new Loadmaster. If you like it the title screen shows where to send your shareware donation. Bruce Harrison, 5705 40th Place, Hyattsville MD 20781. Phone 301-277-3467

Mike Wright (dba CaDD Electronics) demonstrated PC99. In my opinion this is the best, most flexible of the IBM emulators that mimic a 99/4A. It should be the best because the others are free and PC99 costs \$50. But, you get support! For example, Mike offers to convert your TI disks (SSSD or DSSD) to PC99 format on an IBM disk for only \$0.25 per disk. You can of course cable your IBM and TI together to do this, but Mike's service is so convenient why bother. The most interesting thing to me about Mike's demo was the availability of original 99/4A manuals on disk. Almost all the command module manuals, including the EA manual are available. What you get is an executable file on an IBM disk. No additional cost software

is needed. The file opens up to produce a facsimile of the original, complete with all original graphics. A table of contents has been added and any typos or known errors in the original manuals have been corrected. You can search for text strings and you can print the manual on your printer. These are legal copies of copyrighted TI products and part of the reason for the relatively high cost is that TI gets a cut. Most manuals cost \$2 (some \$3) if you supply the disk and return postage. If Mike supplies the disk and postage the cost is \$4 (some \$5) per manual. A list of what is available and exact costs is available from CaDD Electronics, 45 Centerville Dr., Salem NH 03079. Phone 603-895-0119.

Ken Gilliland was there with his bride. Ken talked about his plans for additional TI Casino games, including a version of poker in which one human player plays against three computer players. This isn't done yet but is well along. He also showed a new solitaire game that is available as a stand alone product or as an addition to TI Casino. I have a review of this game coming out in the next Micropendium.

Ramcharged Computers was there with lots of software from the old Asgard and Texaments companies. I purchased some oldies that I didn't have and thought I would be able to use. There has been some discussion recently on the internet newsgroup comp.sys.ti concerning the status of the old Asgard Software company and how this relates to Ramcharged Computers. As I understand it, this is how it works. Ramcharged, as a dealer, purchased from Harry Brashear all remaining Asgard software inventory. Harry still has the Asgard name with its rights and obligations. Ramcharged did not purchase any of the rights or obligations of Asgard, only a bunch of software packages with documentation. Ramcharged cannot manufacture additional copies of its Asgard products, but can sell what it has until its stock runs out. That is what Ron Markus of Ramcharged told me some time ago. So, Ramcharged is NOT Asgard, but they have a lot of Asgard stuff. If you want Spell It or other Asgard titles contact Ramcharged at... see if what you want is in stock. Phone Ramcharged Computers at 216-243-1244. You will be talking to Ron or Ada Markus.

Msg#: 452 *General Messages*
96/12/16 05:40:48 pm (Read 18 times)
From: William M. Lucid #1
To: ALL
Subj: HUG Closing???

Sundays Hoosier User's Group meeting, I made the motion that the HUG cease operation. Bob Stahlhut seconded the motion. So far, it is up in the air... The major reason I made the motion, there is NO ONE to the work in a reasonable time frame, be it newsletter, or following up motions made at club meetings and voted on. Look how long we have been trying to sell the copy machine (which does not work now). When I was doing the newsletter, I had call and beg to get help on... often at the convince of others. Trying to keep it on a regular

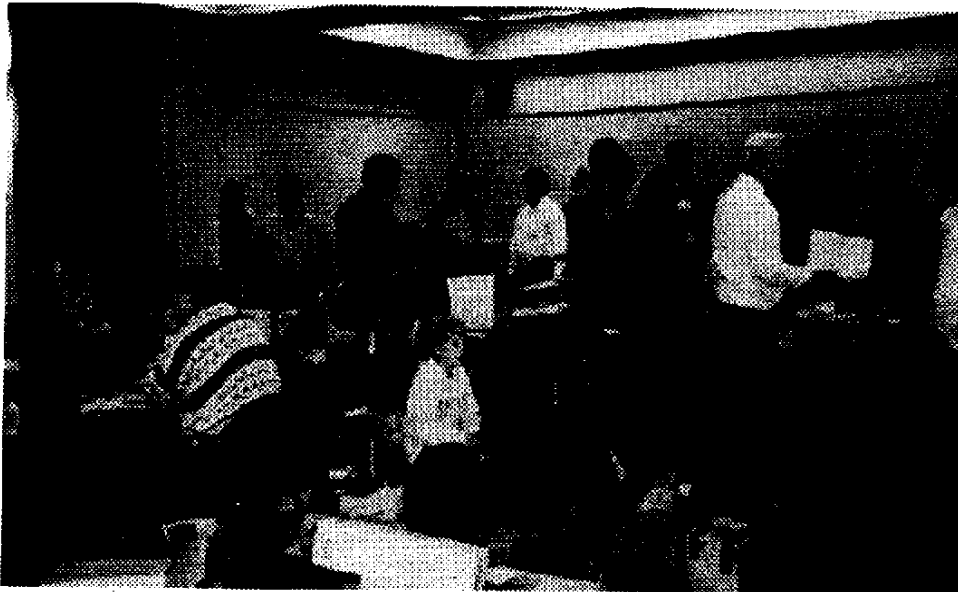
schedule... is impossible. A contributing factor to the reason, I no longer do the newsletter... be sides having more committments ow that I have a full time job.

Attendance of meetings is the same "core " group monthly, the talk "drifts" around the TI; however, the major topic is "big blue". I feel the time has come to "stop beating a dead horse". I made the suggestion that our treasury go to St. Anne... since we have not really done anything for St. Anne and St. Anne has provided a meeting place since the mid-eighties.

Being Christmas time, I felt this was time to bring this up to the membership, at a time it could be put to good use. ***** As usual this was left up in the air... oh, well ****

1996 CHICAGO TI FAIRE

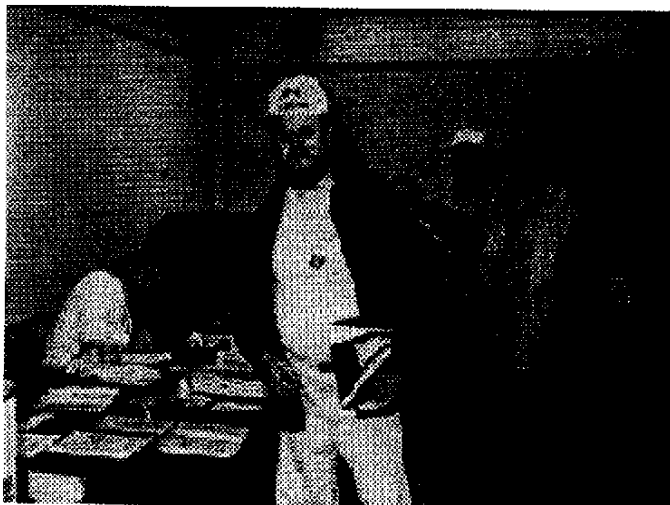
Review by Gary W. Cox



Main Floor

The 14th Annual Chicago TI Faire was held November 9th, 1996 in Evanston, Illinois! It's hard to believe that 14 years have passed since the beginning of the Chicago TI Faire, many people now in the computer field didn't even know what a computer was 14 years ago!

Hal Shanafield, Chicago Faire Chairman, once again did a great job organizing the event. Estimated attendance to the event was around 100 or so people although the floor seemed more crowded at times than last year. Vendor attendance was about the same but not quite as many items for sale this year as last. At the same time many new products were introduced as well as many user groups had a variety of products for sale.



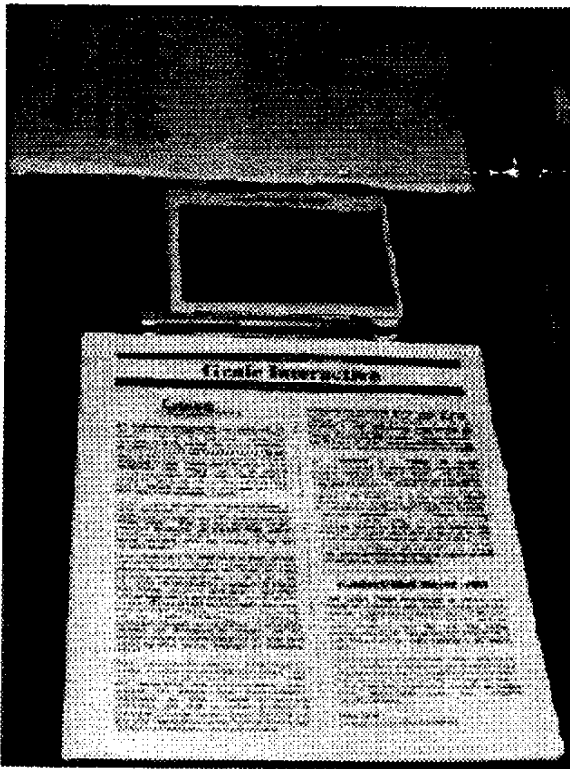
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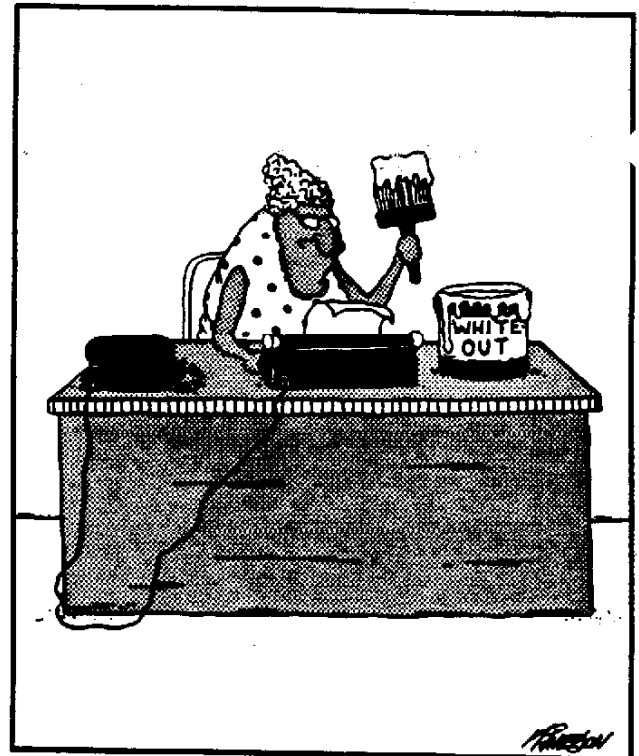
Hal Shanafield

One user group headed up by Michael Mickelson of the Windy City TI Users Group had the largest array of used software and equipment for sale of anyone at the event. My group, the Mid-South TI99/4a User Group, also had an array of hardware and software for sale with items such as consoles for as little as \$10 each! Other user groups had a variety of items for sale plus the usual promotions for their user groups. Dave Connery maned the Chicago User Group table with a variety of software for sale... Charles Good of the Lima TI Users Group had available for free copying the complete Jim Peterson library! William Lucid of the Indianapolis TI Users Group had a variety of items for sale as did the Milwaukee TI users group... Barry Harmsen of the Dutch TI Users Group from The Netherlands along with Gerd Weissmann, from Germany brought some interesting new TI hardware (mentioned later in this article)! Then last but not least the TI Users of Will County had a variety of items including flip strips for the TI console.

Someone who has not attended a Chicago TI Faire in a few years was Beery Miller of 9640 News. New from Beery is a CD-ROM containing the contents of TI and Geneve Public Domain and Shareware software. Most of the software was obtained from the Genie software libraries and the 9640 News BBS. Beery was also promoting the new Genie Interactive service which is a new internet based online service. The new interactive service can be accessed through any internet provider linking the user to much of the same information as is accessed through the regular online service...



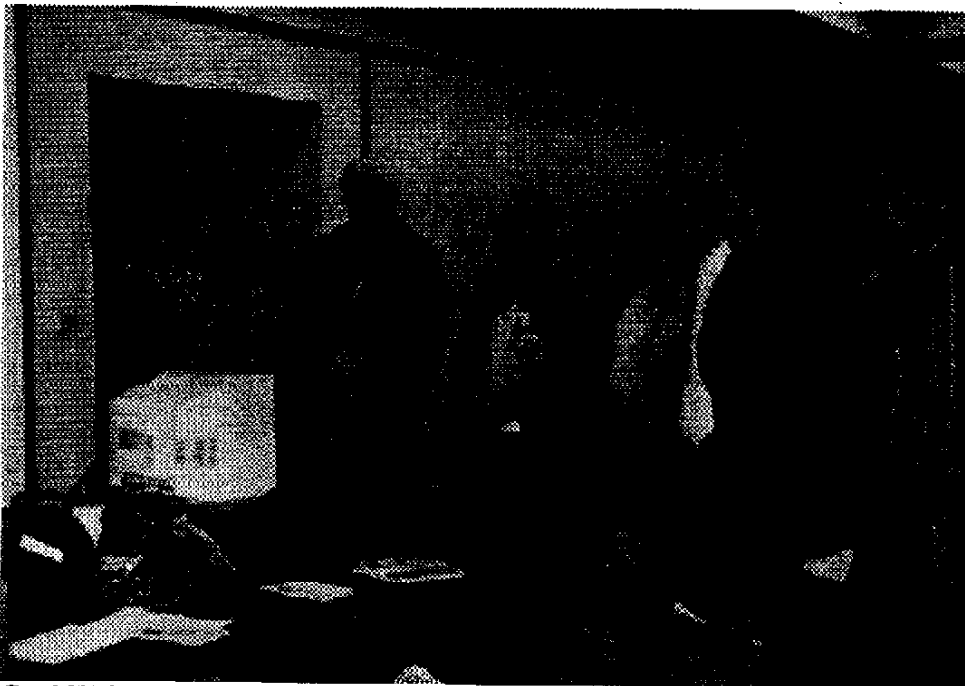
9640 News CD-RoM & Genie Interactive



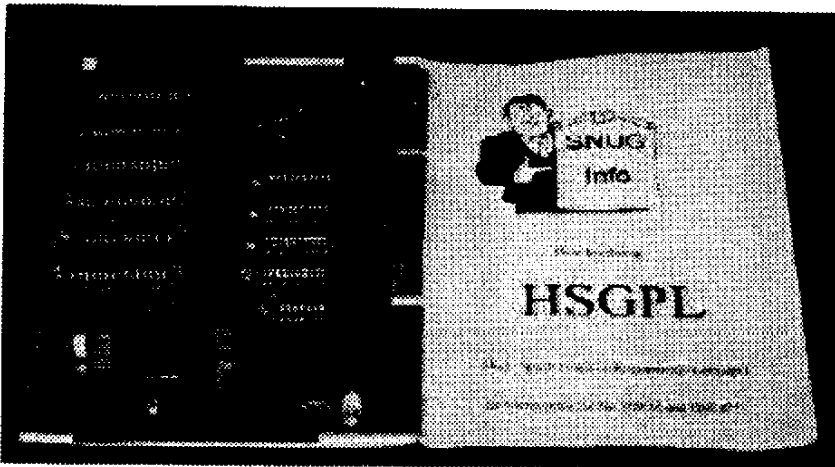


Bud Mills & Beery Miller talking

The most interesting part of the faire this time was a variety of hardware projects created by Michael Becker and demonstrated by Gerd Weissmann. One such product is the High Speed GPL Card for the TI PEB which allows the TI99/4a to run 8 times faster! A built on board EEPROM Programmer allows the storage of up to 16 modules! Also new was the SGCPU which contains the entire TI99/4a on a card. Right now a small TI99/4a Keyboard is needed to operate the device but soon an AT and option to use a AT Keyboard will be added. Gerd also demonstrated a 80 column card which operates at over 256k colors plus Michael also has available a DS/DD controller card... All these products are currently being made in Germany. Negotiations with a US supplier is underway to allow the products to be ordered from inside the USA. These are some really great products, which if they become available for sale from a US supplier, should be come a very popular item! Currently these items are available only for order from Germany. For more information contact: System 99 User Group (SNUG), Michael Becker, Diedesfelderstr. 12, 68308 Mannheim, Germany.



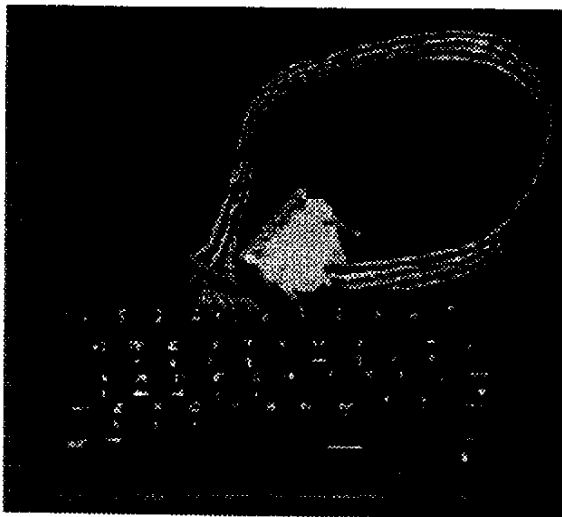
Gerd Weissmann demonstrating the new German products.



High Speed GPL card from Germany



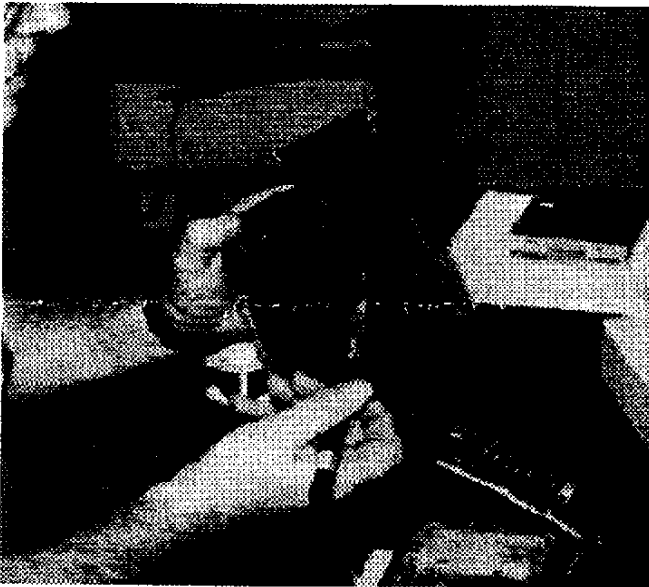
New CPU card



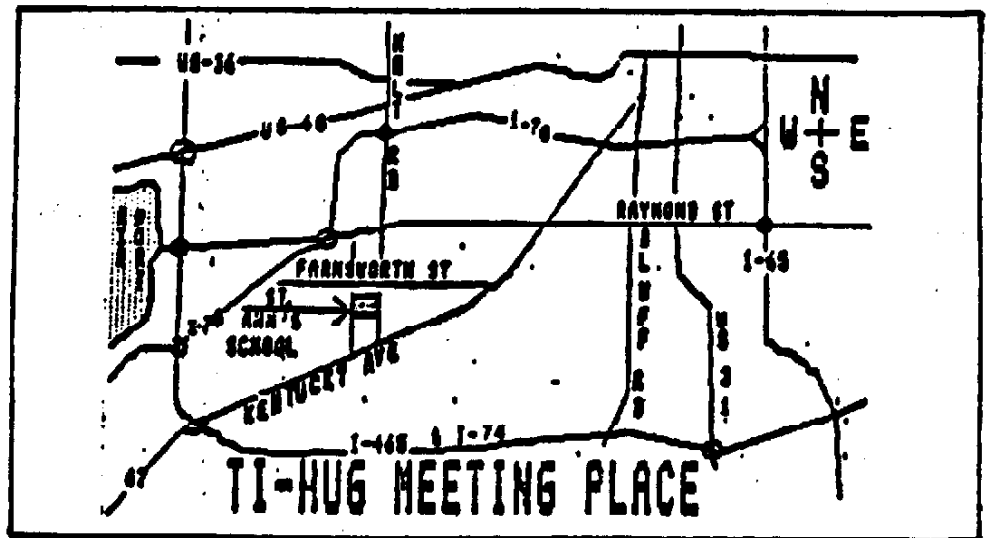
Keyboard that goes with the CPU card.

Mike Wright of Cadd Electronics was running version 3a of PC99 TI99/4a Emulator for PC's. Work continues on updates although no time schedule is being followed as to dates on the completion of updates... Mike, indicated the next release, version 4, of PC99 will hopefully contain Myarc Controller support as well as Speech... Mike is also placing a great deal of TI manuals on PC diskette complete with all original graphics. An executable program is included with the manuals so nothing additional is needed to view the documents plus a variety options are available including options such as printing the manuals or doing a search... Most manuals in the PHM module series have already been converted over to this online format with more on the way.

Bud Mills of Bud Mills Services was present with version 1.07 of the SCSI Eprom's for the TI and Geneve SCSI cards. Bud mentioned that they are one step closer to completion of all items promised on the SCSI controller. However, currently working with the SCSI controller is SCSI hard drives, Zip drives, Syquest drives and testing is underway with JAZ drives. A new version of the EPROM is currently being tested and should be available soon. Bud also mentioned he just completed an order of Horizon 4000 boards and thus the Horizon 4000 Ramdisks are once again available.



Bud at work on a SCSI card



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