



THE NEW FEATURES OF CERTIFICATE 99 v2 and its companion disk.

by Charles Good

Lima Ohio User Group

The original version of CERTIFICATE 99 was reviewed in the Dec 87 issue of Micropendium and in the Feb 88 issue of BB&P. Many of the shortfalls of the original have been corrected in v2 of this fine sign and certificate making program, and additional fonts and graphics have been made available on an extra cost companion disk. Read on for the details.

It is no longer necessary to flip the disk during the loading process. You use the system disk to boot CERTIFICATE 99 either as DSK1.LOAD from X8 or as UTIL1 from EA#5. After you press <ENTER> from the title screen you are asked to insert the COMPANION disk, if you have it, into DSK1 and then press <ENTER>. The COMPANION disk has on it all of the font, border, and graphics files that are on the system disk, plus some additional fonts borders and graphics. After you insert the COMPANION disk in DSK1 it is not necessary to use the system disk again. If you don't have the COMPANION disk just leave the system disk in DSK1 and press <ENTER> to continue the loading process.

If you have the COMPANION disk and have DSSD or SSDD capacity you can put all the necessary files onto a single backup working disk using file by file copying from the originals. Although the system and COMPANION disks are said to be copy protected, I had no trouble using DM1000 to make this backup. To boot CERTIFICATE 99 v2 from X8 as DSK1.LOAD and have access to all needed system disk and COMPANION disk files without having to change disks, put these files on your DSSD or SSDD backup:

BORDERS01	BORDERS02
BORDERS03	BORDERS04
CDATA00	CDATA01
CDATA0A	CDATA0B
CDATA0C	CDATA0D
CDATA0E	CDATA0F
CDATA06	CDATA0H
CDATA0I	CDATA0J
CDATA0K	CDATA0L
CDATA31	CDATA32
CLOAD	GRAPHICS01
GRAPHICS02	GRAPHICS03
GRAPHICS04	GRAPHICS05
LOAD	UTIL1
UTIL2	

After the program is fully loaded you are prompted "LOAD A CERTIFICATE (Y/N)". The default (you get this by answering "N" at the beginning of a CERTIFICATE 99 session) is file CDATA00, and this should be left on the system disk configured as a blank certificate. If you answer "Y" you may specify any file name you want for the text, graphics, signature, and border of a previously saved certificate.

Next you are offered a choice of fonts, with samples displayed on the screen. Twelve text fonts (A-L) are available if you use the COMPANION disk and only six (A-F) are available with just the system disk. The screen display of these fonts does not adequately indicate which have both upper and lower case lettering and which have only upper case. I think it is strange that only some of the fonts have lower case available. Also, the screen display doesn't indicate which of the fonts have letters that almost overlap when used in single spacing. The samples of these fonts that accompany this article are shown here in both large and small letter size and in both upper case and lower case. It might be a good idea to xerox these samples and attach them to your CERTIFICATE 99 v2 documentation. For general use in signs I like font C the best.

You are next asked to load a border file. There are 2 of these files on the system disk and 2 additional on the COMPANION disk. Each of these files has 6 borders and you can cycle through and see a screen display of each. If you don't like what you see on the screen sample after you load a border file, you are given the opportunity to load another border file. With COMPANION, you get your choice of 24 borders. I find the Christmas border on file BORDER03 particularly interesting.

The next step in creating a certificate is to load a graphic file. Each file contains 12 graphic pictures. There are 2 such files on the system disk and an additional 3 graphic files on COMPANION. These files have been compressed using JOY PAINT'S PAL v2.1 into PROGRAM files of between 9 and 13 disk sectors, and cannot be viewed using MAX-RLE nor easily modified using the usual "artist" programs. Apparently you need JOY PAINT'S PAL v2.1 in order to alter any of these pre-defined graphics. You can, however, create your own screen of 12 graphics from scratch using any "artist" software that saves screens as 25 sector PROGRAM files. DRAW 'N PLOT, and TI ARTIST will make such files. These 25 sector PROGRAM graphic files will successfully load into CERTIFICATE 99 v2.

A DEMONSTRATIONS In ROOM 160

10:00 JACK SUGHRUE-DEMO OF PLUS!
 10:30 GENEVE COMPUTER ON A CARD
 11:00 BUD MILLS-HORIZON RAMDISK
 11:30 PAUL WHEELER-SOFTWARE DEMO
 NOON "THE FUTURE OF USER GROUPS"
 1:00 BLIND PERSON USING 99/4A
 1:30 JIM PETERSON'S NUTS&BOLTS
 2:00 GENEALOGY WITH GENE III
 2:30 99/4A OUTPUT TO A VCR

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 2:30 99/4R OUTPUT TO A VCR

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Finally you are asked to pick a signature, or no signature. You are offered the same choice of predefined signatures that were available with the original CERTIFICATE 99. The COMPANION disk does not provide any additional choices.

After positioning your text and printing out your certificate you are given the opportunity to "SAVE CERTIFICATE (Y/N)". If you answer Y, you can then save using any file name you want the text, border, graphic, and signature in a 4 sector data file. This data file can be loaded again whenever prompted to "LOAD A CERTIFICATE (Y/N)". When these certificate data files are later loaded, you still have to go through the entire routine described above for loading border and graphic files. However, the default file name is displayed on the screen and the border or graphic file is loaded by just pressing <ENTER>. Also, when using a previously saved certificate data file, the desired border or graphic is the first to be displayed on the screen after the default border or graphic file is loaded, and can be selected by just pressing <ENTER>. Thus, when you load a previously saved certificate you can print the certificate by just pressing <ENTER> at each prompt until the printing routine starts.

Other minor changes:

1- You are no longer asked to specify screen foreground and background colors after each and every certificate is printed. A lot of time was wasted in v1 of CERTIFICATE 99 doing this.

2- The v2 hardcopy docs have printouts of all the borders and most of the graphics for you to see all at once. I like this. The docs also have samples of each font, but these samples are the same as the on screen samples and are of limited value. The font samples that accompany this article are much more useful.

CERTIFICATE 99 v2 is available for \$19.95 and its COMPANION for \$9.95 from TRITON, TEX-COMP, other TI dealers, or directly from Great Lakes Software, 804 Grand River Ave, Howell MI 48843. Great Lakes Software charges \$1 per disk for shipping. Owners of the original CERTIFICATE 99 can get a special price on v2 and on its COMPANION by returning the original directly to Great Lakes Software. The exchange price on the v2 system disk is \$9.95 (+\$1) or you can exchange for both the v2 system disk and its COMPANION for \$14.95 (+\$1, yes only \$1 shipping for both disks). If you get a chance to visit a TI faire, such as next year's Lima Multi-User Group Conference, you might be able to get CERTIFICATE 99 v2 and COMPANION at a lower price. Great Lakes Software sometimes offers discounts on their software at such shows.

I updated from the original to v2 and am glad I did. I recommend the updated version, particularly as an easy to use sign maker.

DONE

**Replacing the Gram Kracker Lithium Battery with a NiCad Battery
by Mike Richardson
Lima Ohio User Group**

NOTE: Proceed at your own risk. You assume all responsibility for decisions to modifying a Gram Kracker. The memory chips (6264) in the Gram Kracker are sensitive to static electricity and are easily damaged. If you are not adept at modifying circuitry, seek help from a users group who may be able to assist.

The average life of the lithium battery in my Gram Kracker is about 6 months. After opening it about a half dozen times to replace the battery, the pins between the two mother boards have become bent. I decided to install a NiCad battery in the Gram Kracker. This article documents the procedure I followed.

MATERIALS REQUIRED:

- 1 Yuasa #3-51 FT-P 3.6 Vdc 50maH NiCad battery with wire leads.
- 1 1N4001 diode
- 1 10 ohm 1/4 watt resistor, SEE NOTE BELOW

SOURCE of Battery:

You may order the battery from All Electronics Corp., P.O. Box 567, Van Nuys, CA., 91408. This company has treated me fairly in the past when I was not satisfied with an order.

Catalog # NCB-3.6PC
\$1.50 each
10 for \$12.50
S/H \$3.00 per order
Phone # 1-800-826-5432

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Study the schematic and board layout before beginning.
2. Open the Gram Kracker according to the Operators Manual.
3. Momentarily place the NiCad battery behind the center switch and between the two CMOS ram chip banks (6264). Visually inspect and confirm that the battery will fit within your version of the Gram Kracker.

DO NOT PROCEED UNLESS YOU ARE CONVINCED THAT THE BATTERY WILL FIT!

4. Remove the lithium battery.
5. Observe the polarity markings on the lithium battery holder. Now carefully unsolder and remove the holder. Using an ink pen, mark a small + and - sign symbol next to the printed circuit (PC) traces that the battery holder went through.
6. Using a pair of side cutters, gently cut the top row of leads off the center switch (Gram 1-2 / TI BASIC). The top two leads of this switch are not electrically connected to any circuit on the board. Now unsolder and remove the other end of the cut switch wire leads from the board.

NEXT PAGE

**MORE ABOUT RIP OFFS AND HOW TO AVOID THEM:
GIVE THE HELPLINE A CALL BEFORE BUYING.**

by Charles Good

In August 1987 Micropendium carried two full page ads from a dealer called "Innovative Programming". These ads were mainly devoted to the GrandRam of DataBiotics, with delivery promised in September 87. "Innovative Programming" is a one man operation in the form of Mr. Galen Read. Mr. Read took in over \$10000 from these Micropendium ads including \$4000 from several southwestern user groups. That was the last anyone ever saw of this money. DataBiotics never received any money from Galen Read and potential purchasers will probably never see their GrandRams or their money.

This should never have happened. The tip off that something was wrong should have been Innovative Programming's unwillingness to accept credit card orders even though they operated a toll free phone line. As I have said in a previous article, paying by bank credit card guarantees that you will receive the paid for items. If not, you can get your bank to cancel the charge.

But, the fact is that most of the T.I. market these days is based on very small "ma and pa" software and hardware companies that do not want to be bothered with the expense of processing credit card orders. This includes well respected names such as Genial Computerware, Bud Mills Services, and Asgard software. How then can a potential buyer protect against being cheated and not receiving goods paid when sending money through the mail for advertised TI software and hardware? There is a way. Check with the HELPLINE first before purchasing. This free, non-profit, non-affiliated phone service is available Monday-Saturday 9-4 California time at 414-753-5581 and is the closest thing in the T.I. community to a "rumor central".

When you call, the person who answers will be Dr. Guy Romano. He has seen an advance copy of this article and approves of its publication. If a dealer or manufacturer has any previous history of less than honest business practices Dr. Romano will probably know. He reads all the newsletters, regularly talks to many people in the T.I. community, and is the best single source of T.I. information I know. In September 87, one month after the Innovative Programming published its GrandRam ads Dr. Romano warned me to stay clear of Innovative Programming and asked me to pass this warning on to members of my user group. Galen Read had previously done business under another name, according to Dr. Romano, and left many less than satisfied customers.

Dr. Romano has also in the past told me what he knows about Gary Kaplan of Home Computer Magazine fame and some of the stuff he has pulled. It seems Gary has a previous history, prior to publishing 99er Magazine, of publishing

special interest periodicals and then abruptly ceasing publication and leaving long term subscribers with nothing. If I had known this prior to the time I subscribed to 3 years of 99er Magazine I could have saved myself alot of trouble. I have also learned from Dr. Romano of the terrible reputation of RYTE Data. He is the "highly respected and well informed source" I cited in my November BB&P editorial comment about RYTE Data as having knowledge about someone in England who paid \$300 to RYTE Data and never received the paid for items. Recently RYTE Data has circulated a statement to the effect that the negative comments in Micropendium about RYTE Data are only due to a business disagreement between the two. Micropendium is said to have altered an ad sent to them by RYTE Data for publication, so RYTE Data is refusing to pay for the ad. Well, all of this may be true, but I can assure you that RYTE Data's problems are not limited to Micropendium. A member of the Lima User has been cheated out of both money and his disk controller by RYTE Data and may never see either the money or the controller again. RYTE Data has failed to respond to a letter from me about this situation, a letter that specifically requested a reply.

Of course Dr. Romano cannot guarantee you that you will get what you pay for. However, if a dealer or manufacturer has any previous history of less than ethical dealings he probably knows the details. Dr. Romano can also give you his opinion of the QUALITY of a specific piece of software and hardware that you might wish to purchase. He has read most of the newsletter reviews and has personal experience trying out much of what is available for the T.I. and Geneve. I don't always agree with his opinions about specific hardware and software items, but I have found most to be quite accurate. For one man's knowledgable opinion about quality, and for the latest info about who is honest and who isn't, give the HELPLINE a call before you purchase. All it costs is your long distance phone time. 415-753-5581

****DONE******CHEAP JOYSTICKS AVAILABLE AT RADIO SHACK**

Radio Shack stores have available new surplus Colecovision (Adam Computer) game controllers for only \$2.99 each. These units are designed to be hand held and include double fire buttons activated by the thumb and forefinger of the holding hand, and a small umbrella-shaped joystick knob operated by your other hand. The controllers will work unmodified on Commodore and Atari systems and require an adapter (available from most TI dealers) to work properly with the TI99/4a. My kids and I have all found that with such an adapter they work just fine as joysticks. Each unit also has a numeric keypad, but this keypad does not respond when used with the 99/4a. These controllers are available in limited quantity, and when they are gone they are gone. Radio Shack's catalog number is 270-1711.

****DONE****

SEEING IS BELIEVING
USER GROUPS ARE ALIVE AND WELL

Saturday May 21, 1988 was truly a day to remember for the OHIO VALLEY AND SURROUNDING AREAS. The day started before 8:00 a.m. when the first guest to arrive was a couple from Cleveland, Ohio. Shortly after that, Harold Hott from St. Louis, Mo. arrived with his wife. Before long, the doors were propped open to the exhibit area so that L.L. Conner of Lafayette, In. could bring in his truckload of wares including cables, Rave 99 keyboards, software from almost everyone, peripheral cards and a assortment of connectors and chips. Before L.L. Conner was set up, members from TI Chips and Northcoast 99ers from Cleveland, Ohio had their tables set up with X-10 powerhouse systems and a bulletin board especially set up for the Lima conference. John Sturman and Jim Meekel had hardware and software for sale.

EDU-COMP from North Ridgeville, Ohio had the GENEVE on display and were called upon at the last minute to put on a demonstration in the demo room. With no hesitation, the fine people from EDU-COMP moved their system into the room and ran the machine through its paces. They also had a very good selection of anything for the TI computer.

Mr. Tigercub, Jim Peterson was at his table showing off his fine collection of tips and programs. Jim answered a lot of questions and sold his software.

Jack Sughrue came in from Boston on Friday so that he could show off his PLUS disk that can be used with FUNNELWEB. If you have not seen this disk of utilities you are missing a fine piece of software from your collection. Jack also represented ASGARD SOFTWARE, NUTMEG TI 99ers, GENIAL TRAVELER, and MISSILE WARS by John Behnke.

Two young men from GREAT LAKES SOFTWARE of Howell Michigan shared a booth with MICRO-SERVICE of Ft. Loramie Ohio. GREAT LAKES demonstrated JOYPAINT 99 and CERTIFICATE 99. They had quite a show to see. MICRO-SERVICE demonstrated a STAR NX1000 PRINTER with JOYPAINT 99 and CERTIFICATE 99.

THE GREAT LAKES USER GROUP from the Detroit Michigan area was making FLIPIPIES for everyone with a neat machine that lines everything up and punches notches and holes all in one punch. They also had misc. items for sale or trade.

THE FORT USER GROUP from Fort Wayne Indiana was present showing their library and membership information. They also had a good selection of hardware and misc. for sale.

THE CIN-DAY USER GROUP was well represented at their table. They were running multiple systems showing off some fine graphics on the monitors. They also had their library and membership information available.

C.O.N.N.I. Columbus, Ohio user group also appeared to be here in force. Their group had a home made keyboard on display along with a variety of things for sale or trade. Irwin Hott, one of their members, gave the most impressive demonstration of speech synthesizers. Irwin is blind and used speech to list output. I was lucky enough to see his demonstration and I swear he had his computer talking to itself.

Bud Mills of HORIZON RAM DISK was there despite the fact that his family was having a retirement party for him the same day. Bud put on a demonstration of his HRD+RAM and answered many questions from the floor. I think Bud sold all the cards he had and was taking orders for more.

As the day came to a close it was apparent that this was going to be the 1st. annual multi-user group conference. Everyone had a good time and enjoyed the company of over 320 fellow TI hobbyist.

I want to thank all of you for your participation and support.

SEE YOU NEXT MAY!

Dave Szippel
Lima TI user group

SOME PERSONAL COMMENTS ABOUT
OUR MULTI-USER GROUP CONFERENCE

by Charles Good

Because I spent so much time running around greeting people and trying to see that everything ran smoothly I didn't actually get a chance to see many of the demonstrations and displays. Elsewhere in this newsletter is a better description of all that went on. Virtually all the individuals I talked to said that they had a good time and hope that the Lima Group will do it again next spring. All of the dealers present said that they did well financially and they too wanted to return. Based on the number of name tags we used (everybody was supposed to pick up a free name tag) and based on three independent and very close counts of the people who did not wear name tags we estimate that total attendance was 320. This is probably a very accurate estimate. Considering the fact that there are only 15 local families that are members of the Lima U.G., this attendance figure was beyond our best expectations.

Will we do it again next spring? In all probability we will. We have a unique situation in our relation to the Lima Campus of Ohio State University which allows us to run our Conference at NO COST to anyone attending, and this is probably why we were able to get such a large attendance. The only circumstance I can foresee that might make us not want to have a repeat Conference is if another Ohio area user group wants to organize their own Spring 1989 Conference. If that happens the Lima U.G. will attend. Otherwise, lets plan on getting together in Lima again next Spring.

****DONE****

FREE VIDEO TAPE OF OUR MULTI-USER GROUP CONFERENCE

At our recent Multi User Group Conference we videotaped all of the demonstrations. These demonstrations included, in addition to those listed in last month's newsletter, world premiers of the new features of FUNNELWEB v4.1 (as yet unreleased), the new features of DISK UTILITIES v4.1 (also as yet unreleased), and Norman Rokke demonstrating his "1000 Words" which converts TI Artist graphics into files printable out of the TI_Writer formatter.

A COPY OF THIS 3 HOUR VIDEO IS AVAILABLE FREE to any user group (not individuals) just for the asking. Send a blank good quality video tape and a postage paid return mailer to the Lima User Group at the newsletter address. We have been slow in delivering copies of this video to those who left tapes and postage with us at the Conference and for this we apologize. A sudden death in the family of the person responsible for copying the video is the main cause of this delay. We hope to get your tape in the mail soon. Please bear with us.

****DONE****

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* Published by Lima OH *
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*
* ADDRESS- P.O. Box 647 *
* Venedocia Ohio *
* 45894 *
*
* Published monthly except *
* July and August *
* ----- *
* GROUP OFFICERS *
* President-David Szippel *
* 419-228-7108 *
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Disk Drive

TEAC

360K Memory
Double Sided/Double Density
5 1/4" Floppy Disk Drive
Fits IBM PC, XT & Compatibles
Installation Required
Ends Constant Program/
Storage Disk Changings

Our Low Sale Price
\$79⁹⁵
UM 8199

This ad was found
in the Spring 88
catalog of Comp-
utor Direct of
Barrington IL

We are not sure
whether it
refers to a very
thin disk drive,
a drive that
uses very tiny
floppy disks, or
both.