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CHATTANOOGA TI99/4A USERS GROUP P. O. BOX 136, HIXSON, TN 37343

USERS UNITE

This newsletter will be different. Don't look for any new assembly language programs or tips on how to 60 508 or any of that programming "stuff". I want to take this opportunity to proclaim -- I am not a programmer. It seems that every conceivable task that I want my computer to do has already been programmed by someone else. Being somewhat practical, I see no reason to re-invent the wheel, so I utilize existing software. It also makes economical sense since it would take me days of computer time to develop, type, and debug the simplest of programs. I said all that to say this -- it's all right not to be a programmer. There are many hours of Pleasure and productivity without worrying about \$ and :. Have you ever stopped to think about where programmers would be without users. They would be like Shakespear without an audience. So all users come out of the closet, hold your head up high, and get back into active participation in CHUG. CHUG needs users as well as programmers. And believe me, you can use CHUG, too.

COMPUTER TIME

At a recent CHUG meeting someone asked, "What do you use your computer for?" The answers varied from complex telecommunication hook-ups with bullentin boards in remote locations like Topeka (or something like that), to simple uses like tuning a harmonica. What do you use a home computer for?

Since Candy and I are in school, most of our computer time is using TI Writer to type school projects. We also used TI's Multi-Plan to build exhibits to go with those projects. We also have used our computer to hook up with UTC's computer by use of a phone modem. That sure beats jumping into a car and driving to UTC every time you need to get on the school's computer.

quess I'll have to return Larry's module.)

Every now and then I take out my frustrations on spiders and scorpions by playing a little CENTIPEDE, and when I want to "Go where no man has ever gone before", I'll pull out STAR TREK and blast a few Klingons.

But of all the games and all the practical uses of the computer, the most enjoyable use of my computer has been ADVENTURE ganes, I've logged many an hour on the old TI while Scott Adams carried me to far off lands where I fought pirates, chased ghosts, surveyed a ghosttown, traveled the universe, and many things beyond imagination. If you ever get tired of ho-hum everyday boring routine, try on an adventure game, but watch out -- you might get hooked. If you look on the side of the box you will find -- The surgeon general has determined that continuous adventure playing over a period of two days without food or drink could be hazardous to your health. Enough plugs for Scott. I hope he sees this newsletter. Maybe he will send me the solution to Ghosttown. I just can't figure out how to make a fuse for my keg of gunpowder,

That's how Candy and I use our computer. How do you spend your computer time?

DRAGONSLAYER -- A REVIEW

I never realized that in going back to school to work on my Bachelor's degree in "Accounting" there would be so many "Marketing" term papers to write. (David and I work on HIS Marketing courses.) I knew many papers were going to be due and I was dreading all that typing, especially since we did not own a typewriter.

II Writer to the rescue. Boy, were we in luck. All we had to do was type the paper in II Writer and print it using II Formatter. Or that's what we thought. But sitting up until 4, 5, and even 8 o'clock in the morning correcting our mistakes wasn't exactly easy. Sure it was easier than typing and retyping. I decided that I could either go for accuracy or speed but not both. I knew that with same computer systems you could get a spelling-checker, but didn't realize one was offered for II.

DRAGONSLAYER American Software Company offers a 99/4A Auto

Spell-Check. This program is a single step approach to editor assistance. The program checks the test file against a set of dictionaries; incorporates identified corrections into your text; and provides for update of user-developed dictionaries.

Provided in the package are two diskettes. Diskette A contains UTIL 1, the spelling checker program; DICT1, part one of the main dictionary; SEEDGEN, for creating user dictionary seed files. Diskette B contains DICT2, part 2 of the main dictionary; and UDICT; seedfile for user dictionary.

To make it simple, DRAGONSLAYER will edit your text and locate any words not familiar to the main dictionary. It will "stack" the unidentified words. The user then reviews each bad word and either corrects the word, adds it to the dictionary, views the word in context, or disregards the word.

After the review process, the UPDATE begins. First the text will be updated and then the user dictionary. You will be ready to reformat your text, read through it once again, and print it.

The instruction booklet that accompanies DRAGONSLAYER takes you step-by-step through the editing process. We were well pleased with our first use of this software because of the time-soving element.

Now David can wait until the night before class to write his paper, and I will still have time to get some sleep before work. If only I could get him to create his paper on the screen instead of on paper.

HELPFUL HINTS

Since the past newsletters have provided some helpful facts to help programmers in developing or debugging their programs, I guess I need to come up with some helpful hints for us users. Let's see now. First, always plug up your computer before you turn it on. If you turn on your TU and you see Gomer Pyle instead of the TI Menu Screen, you must have done something wrong. Well that's it for my helpful hints. Happy Hacking.

WHAT'S IN A GAME?

In talking with fellow CHUGGERS at the last meeting, it

became apparent that many were having difficulty in deciding which programs to select from the library. We thought it would be nice if there was some way to know something about the program you wanted to check out. It was decided to write a one or two paragraph review of the programs in the library. This will not happen overnight, but we will be plugging away over the next few months. If you have a favorite program or game that you would like to review, write a brief description, and it will be put with that program in our expanding library. Before long, our library will be bulging at the seams. These reviews will make choosing a program much easier for all CHUGGERS.

I suspect that some, if not all of these reviews, will also be included in future newsletters. To give you an idea of what we are talking about, I am going to review a few games already in the library.

ESCAPE FROM MARS (Extended Basic)

If you are not familiar with the Scott Adams' adventure series, this is the program for you. The game does not require the Adventure Module. It accepts two word commands—— a verb followed by a noun (i.e. Go South, Look Window, Take (lub). Typing is made easy by only having to type the first two letters of each word in your commands. The instructions are straight-forward and easy to understand.

A couple of hints to help you: Keep a pencil and paper handy to draw maps and write down clues. Also, by typing INVENTORY, you can find out what you are carrying.

For the Scott Adams' fanatics, (like us), you will find this program a little slower to respond to your commands, but remember, good things come to those who wait.

PAKMAN (Basic)

You would never guess what this game is based on. That's right - our old buddy PACMAN in a version best described as the tortoise vs. tortoise. We're talking sloppow. Graphics are quite nice, and the instructions are clear, but the action is very slow, especially for advanced PACMAN'ers.

I will confess I did play the game for about an hour during preparation for this review. I was determined to clear the board at least once. This game should be popular with the younger crowd, especially those without quarters.

ROBOT CHASE (Bosic)

This one hooked me. The graphics are good, instructions are

clear, and the game habit forming. The object is to dodge robots until they crash into various pillars randomly placed on the game board. Your have the ability to transport to a different area of the screen when cornered, but only if you ate a transformer pill.

The only gripe I have about the game is it starts off slow (too much graphics I suppose), but speeds up as more and more robots are destroyed. A word of warning— although you can only move horizontally and vertically, those pesky robots can move horizontally, vertically, and diagonally.

This program would be an asset to anyone's home library.

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE SIMON KIND (Basic)

This has to be one of my all time favorite Basic programs. It is based on the musical game SIMON, where you try to match a series of musical notes. The graphics are superb, the sounds excellant, and the enjoyment continuous. This one is a must for every CHUG member. (Be prepared for a big surprise when you make it thru ten notes.)

TIGERCUB--THE CAT'S MEOW

If you missed the last CHUG meeting, you probably don't have the latest "Tips From The Tiger Cub". Jim Peterson is nice enough to share many programs he has developed or obtained from others, at no cost to many user groups. But even though Jim is a nice guy, he's not dumb. It costs money to mail out his newsletter, so he sells programs to help pay his expenses. In the last few newsletters, Jim has stated that if he does not begin to sell more software, he will be forced to stop sending "Tips".

Anyone interested in buying some of Jim's programs, just mail \$1.80 (which is deductable from the first order) for TIGERCUB's latest catalog. The catalog contains over 130 "absolutely original quality programs" in both basic and extended basic. Each program costs \$3.00 each plus \$1.50 per order for cassette or \$3.00 for diskette. In passing along this information, CHUG does not assume responsibility for processing your order, or the receipt thereof, nor warrant the merchandise wither expressly or implied. All orders should be mailed directly to:

TIGERCUB SOFTWARE 156 Collingwood Ave. Columbus, Ohio 43213

MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

MONDAY, JUNE 10 AT 7:00 PM ROOM 214 STUDENT CENTER CHATTANOOGA STATE TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

COME A LITTLE EARLY IF YOU WISH TO GET SOFTWARE FROM THE LIBRARY.



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