CHICAGO TImes The Newsletter of the Chicago TI Users Group **APRIL 1996** 

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CHICAGO TI USER'S GROUP

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The Chicago F199/4A Users Group is in no way affiliated with Texas Instruments. We meet at the Evanston Public Library, on the first Saturday of each month, with the exception of July and August. The meetings begin at noon and last until 4 p.m. Annual Lues are \$21. We welcome everyone who has an interest in Computers. Our newsletter is supposed to come out ten limes a year, except for July'and Angust. We maintain an extensive library of disk and cassette software, available at very modest Charge, We are always seeking articles for our newsletter, which can be mailed to our P.O. Box, or can be suploaded to the "Articles" section of our BBS. All correspondence should be sent for

Chicago TI Users Group P.O. Box 7009 Evanston, IL 60204-7009

MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE \$21.00 PER YEAR

This includes a subscription to the Chicago Times, the library, and access to the Group BBS.

Where to find it this month....

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Group's BBS #: (708)862-0182

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# Genny Support Article (Revisited)

It has been some time since I have last done a "Geneve Support Article," and since that time, some significant developments have taken place. I shall herevith attempt to deal with most of them: .

### M-DOS, UNLEASHED, UNCHAINEDIII

The most important development is that of a virtually bug-free operating system. Ever since the release of M-DOS version 2.0, we have had an operating system that does essentially all of the things that are listed in the Myare Geneve owner's manual. (I might also mention that we also have some additional command options available to us, which were not forseen by the original developers of the 9440.) We now have an operating system that allows the Geneve to do the things which we were promised that it would be able to do. I therefore feel confident that any subsequent releases of M-DOS will be versions that provide more extended support for additional devices; a good example of that is version 4.0S. This version provides complete support for SCSI and \*PFM\* and \*PFM\* PLUS. Still, the primary thing to remember is it that we have an operating system that actually works the

#### UPDATE YOUR E-PROMS!!!

In order to take advantage of the current operating systems, you really need to make sure that you have the latest R-PROM installed on your Genny board. If you are using the original one, which came out quite a few years ago, you will have significant problems trying to run the current operating system and various programs. (I believe that the latest version of this software is version 0.98.)

in addition to having the above mentioned E-PROM, you also need to be aware of a persistent hardware problem on the Genny: I am referring to the problem of heat build-up. The most frequent hardware problem with the Genny has related to the over-heating of the voltage regulators. The ones which came with the original boards were not sufficient for the number of transistors and chips that they were supposed to support and protect. More efficient, low voltage versions are now available. In fact these newer versions will allow any Myare, Texas Instruments, CorComp, or RAVE card to be used either in a standard PRB or in a PRB or tower case with a switching transformer. By using the low voltage voltage regulators, you don't have to worry about "smoking" a card that was modified to work in an AT case or a tower case. They are available from Cecure Electronics, inc.

## MODS TO GENNY BOARD MAKE FOR A SEXT MACRITE!!!

On a Genny board, it is possible to install 32R of no-sait state RAM, by "piggy backing" an additional chip sate your board. It

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is also possible to have an additional 192K of VDP RAM on your board by 'piggy backing" a series of small chips onto your Genny board. I would recommend that you have these modifications made, though you can more or less get by without them. They are not terribly expensive, and they tend to make Genny into the sort of dram machine that we have always wanted her to be.

I consider all of the above hardware modifications to be rather essential for any serious Geany user/owner, and they can be quickly and efficiently done by Don Walden, of Cecure Electronics. The emergence of Cecure Electronics as the sole repair facility for the TI-99/4A and for ALL Myare products was a welcome bit of news for our community. It means that you can get your Genny repaired in a few days rather than menths or years, as it literally came to be for some of us when Myare was still in business.

It should also be mentioned that Cecure is the source of a modification which I would not want to be without; I am speaking of \*PFM\* and \*PFM\* PLUS, (\*PFM\* stands for Programmable Flash Memory.) I know that it isn't necessary or required to own this modification, but it surs wakes Genny into a sery little machine when you do have it. (Please refer to my review article on this modification in an earlier edition of this newsletter.) When you are dealing with a new operating system, \*PFM\* is slicker than whale feces on an ice floe (and that's sliek!). I know of nothing that wakes booting easier or faster. I just love my \*PFM\* PLUS modification!

One other bardware modification or device which I really feel is essential to the Genny user is the addition of more memory. This can be done by acquiring a Myarc 512K or 128K memory/RAM card. This card can be modified, by Cecure Etectronics, Inc., to become a memory expansion hoard for Genny, so that it will provide additional RAM. (This RAM can be used for a larger print spooter or internal RAM disk.) If you don't own or can't find a Myarc card, Bud Mills Services sells a pard called MEMEX, and this card is designed with Genny memory expansion in mind. (I personally don't care for the GENMOD, which is necessary to provide more than 512K of memory expansion to your Genny, but this is really a matter of a personal choice.)

#### HEAT KILLS!!!

In the past, heat build-up has been a significant problem within our community, and I, at one point, had made significant modifications to my PEB so as to better dissipate the heat off of the various cards. A better solution for this problem is the use of an ibm tower case. Though the other hardware modifications, which I mentioned above, would be better left to the experts at Cecure electronics, the tower case is a project that can be reasonably attempted by the hobbiat who likes to tinker. If you conject Mite Maksimik (#611) on the users' group's bbs, he can give you what information you may need to do this project. A

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Den't make my mistake yours!

# HARD DISES ARE ESSENTIAL FOR POWER COMPUTING!!!

tower case can make your life so much easier. In the years which I have had mine, I have never had a heat or power related lock-up

or shutdown of my system. It has performed flawlessiy and quietly for me under the hottest of conditions, and that is a

very heavy statement to make. Please seriously consider placing

On the subject, of hardware, we should consider the Myafe HPDCC. (I consider this card to be rather integral to the Geneve, but t must admit that if you don't own one and you aren't able to find one, a SCSI card will probably take care of your hard disk needs.) In order to use this card to its best use, you must make suce that you have the latest E-PROM installed on this board. (1 believe that the latest HFDCC E-PROM is version 11. Please contact Cecure in order to make sure that you have the latest E-PROMs on both your Genny and HFDC cards.) It should also be mentioned that the latest versions of M-DOS now support 1.44 meg drives with the HFDCC only. If you are using a Myare FDC a TI FDC, or a CorComp FDC, you are still unable to format the high density 1.44 meg disks. (I am not sure how floppy usage is with the SCSI card. I believe that it will alton up to 2.88 meg high density floppy disks. I also believe that you would be able to read other 3.5 inch (loppy disks, which were generated within our community. I need to acquire some more information on this

# PLOPPY DISE DRIVES ARE BASIC....

Speaking of floppy drives, I recommend that you have at least one 3.5 inch high density drive with your Myare HPDCC: These drives will be able to read 3.5 inch disks done on other Ti of Genny systems, and you could also generate disks which others in our community would be able to read. In this way, you remain compatible with other members of the TI/Geneve commentty. I do not recommend having a 5.25 inch 1.2 meg disk is your system. This drive would not read anything other than other 80 track disks, and it would not be able to generate disks for the 40 track drives which still abound in our community. In my own system, I therefore own a high density 3.5 inch drive and a 40 track, 5.25 inch, DS/DD drive. This keeps me compatible with disks which I generated at an earlier date and with other people's systems while allowing me the opportunity to use high density disks. (I might also mention that some people find the 1.2 meg 5.25 inch floppy disks to be somewhat unreliable.)

Speaking of unreliability, I have lately had some problems with blown disks. In both cases, they were disks which had directories written to them. I don't know if I'm doing something wrong, as I have not heard of anyone else having this problem. I therefore just warn you to be careful. If you must create directories on your disks, just make sure that the disks are backed up. I have lost some work files by not having done this.

#### SCSI FOR GENNY

Thanks to the work of Mr. Michael Malsimik, we now have a version of M-DOS that contains SCSI support. This means that SCSI works for Genny HOW! This is currently not the case for the 4A, as the 4A maghine will require an E-PROM on the SCSI board. At the writing of this article, this E-PROM is not yet available, though it seems that it will emerge any day, but this is not a problem for the Genny owner/user. If a Genny user/owner runs version 4.05 of M-DOS, he/she will have full access to any SCSI devices attached to the SCSI card. At this time, I am using that version of M-DOS with as ill effects and/or limitations. As it seems to be working well, I can recommend it. This version has full support for apply and apply Plus. Currently, my only SCSI device is an 80 wer SCSI hard disk. I purchased it for the expressed purpose of backing up my two NFM hard disks. 1. 30 policy

#### MORE ON HARD DISKS

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It is virtually impossible to find new MFM hard disks. know, we are currently unable to use either RLL or IDE hard drives.) Almost any that you find will be reconditioned or used units. If you don't have a hard disk yet, you would be better off first getting your drive(s) before you decide whether you wish to get a HFDCC or a SCSI card. If you wish to purchase a HFDCC, contact Don Walden at Cecure Electronics. If you wish to purchase a SCSI card, contact Bud Mills at Bud Mills Services. Though you will probably be satisfied with either a SCSI or a MFM drive, the SCSI drives seem to have some advantages which the MFM hard disks don't, according to Mike Maksimik. A HFDCC will control only two hard disks and up to four floppy disk drives. (High density disk drives are supported.) A SCSI card will also support three hard disks and (I don't know how many) floppy disk drives. It will also support a CD ROM player, a SCSI tape backup drive, and many other SCSI devices. If someone gets around to writing the necessary code for them, there are many SCSI devices which may eventually work their way into our community. At this time, we can only use SCSI hard disks and CD ROM drives for the playback of audio disks only. Mike Maksimik is currently at work on software for SCSI tape backup drives, but there is no idea of when he will finish this work.

John Johnson, a fine programer in our community, has said that "Winchesters" tend to drop sectors at will, usually in a directory, causing the loss of an entire directory or volume. (This has happened to me also,) John surmises that the problem is with the EFDCC. Maybe it is, and maybe it isn't. One possible reason is the way in which the drives were being formatted; we need a good formatting program for MFM drives. Therefore, if you already have one or more MFK hard, drives, you aced Mike Mekrimik's fine program CFORM. The only purpose of this program is to formet your MFM hard disks. This program

seems to do this job much more efficiently than MDMS does, as it will give you more sectors available than MIMS will. It is also faster, and it seems that drives formatted with this program have fewer crashes and other problems related to inefficient formalting. Markey Carry

### AVOID USING MIMS!!!

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I recommend against anyone continuing to use MDMS. If you use Clint Pulley's fine program, Directory Manager, you will be able to do all of your copying of disks and files very easily. It will also allow you to create directories on both hard and finppy disks. It is a fine program that will take care of virtually all of your computer housekeeping needs. Mike Maksimik's CFORN will take care of your hard disk formatting chores more quickly and more efficiently than MDM5 will. The program BACKUP MISEL will allow you to back up your hard disks to floppy disks. (With this program, the only thing that I wish is that it would support the use of high density disks for backup purposes. At this time, if you use high density disks, you won't have any more sectors available to you than if you used quad density disks.) There is another program, of which I have only heard, which will do string (title) searches on a hard disk. With the programs which I have mentioned here, you can easily do without MDMS, and this is what I suggest to you. It seems that this program causes more problems than it is capable of solving.

### TELECOMMUNICATIONS

with regard to this subject, I would suggest that you use nothing less than a 2400 band modem, and if you can get a faster one with FAX capability, I suggest that you get it. I say this because of the fact that. Tim Teach is currently working on a new terminal emulator program called PORT, and this program will support all of the above color ANSI graphics and more.

#### SOFTWARE

At this time, Barry Boone's EXEC is probably my most used program. It is most used because it is the one small file that allows me to do 98% of my computing work in native M-DOS mode, and this is the way that I feel Genny should be. (the GPL environment exists only to allow Genny to emulate a 4A.) MY-Word emains my most used program. After this, 1 use MY-Ford, PAIMDOS and SPELL-IT! I use all of these program in native I-DOS mode, and I am very happy with how they perform. I also ise PR-BASE, but I am unable to run it in M-DOS. (This is also he case with MULTIPLAN and I believe that this is also true of I-BASE.) I will occasionally use Page Pro. My most used tility programs are Directory Manager, DISKU, CYA, and Archiver. occasionally use MEM-TEST, and I am currently using XCOPY quite lot. I also use the program REMIND RET almost every day. 1 ill use other programs on an as-needed basis. As you can see, I ave total use of those programs which are most important to me,

#### Page 8

and I don't really NEED any others, though I do enjoy cuiting into nice new utility programs. Speaking of stility programs, I wish to speak about CYA.

I think that you are silly if you don't invest in this program. It is the best thing since sliced bread, and it allows you to protty much do without an AUTOEXEC file, or if you do use one, you will only need about three or four lines in it. This one program gives you more utility with your chosen version of M-DOS than does anything else, and it's super cheap! ( )

#### WHICH VERSION OF M-DOS TO USE17?

I recommend that everyone use version 4.05 of M-DOS. If you have a SCSI card, you must use this version. If you have limited or slow storage for the operating system which you will boot, and you do not have a SCSI card with any SCSI devices, then you can do very well with version 2.2 of M-DOS, but version 4.05 is for everybody who has the storage and speed to use it. It is the most debugged version of M-DOS around, and it is the version with the greatest range of support in our community. I also urge you to configure your chosen version of M-DOS with CYA. Anything else that you may choose to do will be harder.

#### DON'T FORGET THE HORIZON RAM DISK!!!

I would not want to forget this sexy little device. It has long been a favorite device of mine, and it still finds unqualified acceptance from me. It is a fine product and a great device to have in your system, and thanks to Jim Schroeder, It can be formstied into a 3.2 meg storage device, if you have the appropriate number of memory chips on board. (You can have TWO 3.2 weg RAM disks on board, if you have a single 4000 Series HRD! I wight also mention that the 4000 Series board has RAMBO already built into it; you don't need a separate board for this.)

Some ask why I choose to maintain my infatuation with this device now that I have a SCSI hard disk, which is, admittedly, quite fast. The answer is related to my usage. I have two RAM disks, and they are both on a single board! The 1000 series Horizon allows you to do this; you can partition your 1000 series board into two physically discreet RAM disks, and each can have up to 3.2 meg of RAM memory. (This is the reason why 1 chose to go with the more expensive 512K chips rather than the changer 128K chips. It will cost me more, but I have a greater memory potential in using 512K chips.) When I am working on a project, such as this newsletter. I am constantly saving to one of my RAM disks. I just happen to prefer using a RAM disk rather than a hard disk when I need to save out a lot. It means that I am using electronic storage rather than mechanical storage. I know that the SCSI hard disks and floppy disks are fast the but they Page 9

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still aren't as fast as my Horizon RAM disk. I really love this device, and I have seldom had any corruption on either of my RAM disks. I can highly recommend it.

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Now is the time for all Genny users/owners to ask themselves the questions, (What am I looking for in a computer??? What do I want my computer to do for me??? What is my current usage and what is my expected usage???" Asking these questions will allow you to better decide what you need to do to upgrade your Genny or whether you need to get rid of it sad pop for a 'klone." When you are looking for a computer, you should first find the software that does the job that you need to have accomplished. You then find the machine(s) that will run your closen software. (The music software that I chose to purchase determined the machine which I needed to acquire in order to run that software.)

Genny is a fine machine that is capable of doing all of my computer related work, with the exception of my music production work. I have no intentions of dropping Genny, though I must curtail my general computer related activities. This is one reason why I shall not write any more "Geneve Support Articles." Another reason for this decision is the fact that I don't feel that there is a need for further Geneve support. Cenny is alive, well, healthy, and kicking. I began writing these articles at a time when people who had already chosen to leave the TI community in favor of the "klone kommunity" were constantly attacking Genny for the most specious of reasons. They plied their excrementally exquisite arguments on various bbs's and in the group's newsletter. Eventually, they left to form their own groups. In spite of their attacks, Genny survived and prospered. It is very clear to me that Genny is the worthy successor to the T1-91/4A.

The 4A is a good machine, but it is a limited machine. Its limitations are built into it, in terms of speed, 40 column display, CPU RAM memory, VDP RAM, heat problems, a limited keyboard, a "fire hose" interface that is a source of program lockups, limited video resolution, etc. Various methods of overcoming and working around these built-in limitations have emerged: we have devices such as the RAVE speech card, the Horizon RAM disk, the Myarc memory/RAM card, the RAVE keyboard, the RAVE ibm AT case, TIM, SOB, various 80 column cards, and diverse hardware projects to include 32% of RAM in the consule, increase the computer's speed, etc. In spite of these various means of overcoming the 4A's limitations, they are mable to do one important thing: They are unable to change the fact that when you get finished with all of your modifications and additions, underneath it all, you still have a 4A with the same limitations. Genny was designed with the idea of climinating most of those problems and limitations. We are therefore talking about a new generation of computers. As she didn't have the 44's built in limitations, the was therefore free to deal at a higher level of operating efficiency. This is why I chose to go with Genny, and

I'm glad that I did.

It is clear that interest in Genny is a major reason why our community has remained alive. Few if any programs are being written for the 4A at this time while a considerable number are being written for Genny. Projects such as the SCSI card project were able to generate compatibility with Genny well before that same compatibility was achieved with the 4A. In fact, the accomplishment of the compatibility of the SCSI card with Genny proved that such compatibility is possible with the 4A, and it was the successes with Genny that provided the inspiration and motivation to continue and finish the code for compatibility with the 4A. From my perspective, Genny is the only way to go in our community. It has the greatest potential, and it provides the treatest practical challenge.

I still love the 4A, but given the choice of machines, I vould choose Cenny. For this reason, I would continue to advocate the support of the 4A within our user groups, but I would oppose the treating of 4A asers/owners as second class citizens. At the same time, I would recognize that Genny is the future of the 4A/9640 community.

#### FAREVELL. . . . . . . . . . . .

Well, I guess that that's it for me. It's time for me to more on to other things and into other areas of life. I never promised to stay here until I died. There comes a time in every man's life when change is called for, and this is that time for me. I will maintain my association with the Chicago Users' Group and with the TI/9640 community, but I doubt that I will be doing much or any more writing. It's time to pass this responsibility on to others. As Porky Pig says at the end of the movies, "That's all folks!"

-endit=

SCS1 FOR GENNY ....

Genny in completely compatible with the Bud Mills Services's SCSI card. Using the version 4.05 of M-DOS, you will have SCSI capability. Regarding what you will have, I am including here some comments, on SCSI by Mike Maksimik. It was Mike Maksimik who single-handedly wrote the necessary SCSI routines for M-DOS. He then released the first versions of M-DOS with SCSI support. Regarding SCSI, as with many other aspects of our community, we have a lot to thank Mike Maksimik for Here are some of Mile's comments, as he stated them on our users' group's bbs:

Here is a summary of what has been going on lately with SCSI:

-Brad Snyder released "SCUZZY", a formatter and sector editor for WHT SCSI interface, and any SCSI hard drive. At last, you can now FORMAT and TEST your hard drive attached to SCSI card. NO EPROM REQUIRED! This is freeware to all SCSI owners. It also polls and identifies other SCSI devices on the SCSI bus.

-Bud Mills will be relesigning the SCSI cable to allow connection to Macintosh-compatible external SCSI devices, such as CD ROM drives. Also will be adding additional connectors and headers to the cable to allow for more devices.

-CD ROM audio playback is a reality. You can take any audic CD, put it in a CD ROM drive, plug your headphones or amplifier into the headphone jack on the CD ROM drive, and through the SCSI interface, play back any AUDIO CD. The CD does NOT play back through the computer monitor speaker, and once the playback is started, it runs independent of the computer, so you can listen to digital music while you work. Requires a CD ROM drive (SCSI interface) and WHT SCSI card, no EPROM required. Again, the music plays through the headphone jack on the CD player, not the computer or monitor speaker; don't be confused by this. It is STEREO compact disc digital audio, with a TI in control.

The CD audio playback program is being enhanced to allow selection of tracks to be played, and a catalog of the disc (table of contents) Once this is done, it will be available to the II and Geneve community. Work continues to progress on the SCSI EPROM, and substantial progress has been made during the weekend of the (1894) Chicago and Milwaukee faires. Updates will be posted here as they become available.

I didn't realize how easy od rom would be to implement under C and assembly language. I just added support to allow a selection of which tracks on a cd to play. The progress now displays the available tracks on a compact disc, and then prompts you to enter the track to start playing, and it begins to play at that track. Next, I would be adding a pause/still function to pause playback if needed, and of course, a stop function to halt playback. Again, I am NOT using an EPROM on the SCSI controller, I am controlling the 53080 chip on the SCSI card DIRECTLY, not requiring the EPROM at all. Be sure to note: The sound from the CD Player does NOT require a MIDI keyboard. Many people were confused on that issue! The CD Player has it's own A/D converter built in and has it's own filters to generate sound. No additional peripheral is needed to play audio compact discs! You need: a NHT SCSI card, a CD Rom drive, a Geneve or TI with 32K, and a disk system; that's all. I think wost people are confused because they see "multimedia" systems, and believe that the TI or Geneve can now be "multimedia" like a windows PC can.

A multimedia PC can display real-time broadcast quality acreens and intermix text and graphics with video frames, and also play music and synthesize speech, or just digitally playback recorded speech. An example would be a multimedia encyclopedia. A

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gentleman in Milwaukee asked if he could have a multimedia

- 1) The CD ROM capability is there. We can read the data on the disc; and we have a chance of at least reading the database on the encyclopedia.
- 2) We have music and speech capability: Speech Synthesizer (Ti's), Digiport or Polyport, and the MIDI interface. We also have the CD ROM's own audio capabilities.
- 3) Graphics: Well, two out of three isn't really bad, but there is not going to be any real-time brodeast video on the TI. It just physically can't be done. With the 9938/58, you can get better video, but for a television quality picture, we need more analog color range, higher resolution, plus the ability to use a finer VGA monitor. Quite possibly a video board for the TI based on some new programmable video system can do, but it will be a chore getting it compatible with GPL. Take you pick..do you want GPL or do you want VGA?
- 4) Memory: Well, 32K is not enough! Consider upgrading NOW!

#### Subj: scsi backup

I have a small C program which will backup any HFDC hard drive (MFM) to a SCSI hard drive of equal or larger size, by doing a direct sector read/write. It needs some polishing, but it is a necessary step to completing the tape backup software. I need a safe, quick method of backing up the system storage to a safe derice while I test backup and restore operations. The SCSI hard drive is reliable and is auto-parking, and since there is no EPROM I can rely on the integrity and isolation of the data until I want to restore the drive. I have successfully transferred every sector of my main drive (44 meg) to the 48 meg SCSI drive, and I was able to read every sector with Brad Snyders SCSI utility program. All this while the CD ROM played music!

BTW, I have enhanced the CDREAD program, to extract contiguous sectors off the CD ROM. I was using it to read pages from Grolier's Acedemic American Encyclopedia. It was all in ASCII, not graphical data, so it was displayed clearly, with indexes and lookup tables clearly visible and readable. The code is dispustingly simple. I am suprised that no one has done this before. It really is easy to read a CD ROM drive (and very fast, too! (Faster than my HFDC hard drives!)

I completely backup up my hard disk to the SCSI hard drive. I wrote a simple variation to the CDREAD program to do a generic data transfer to/from any SCSI device, then I added a sector read function to access MDOS device sectors in blocks of 128 sectors. It took about 40 minutes to copy the 44 meg drive (HFDC/MFM) to the 48 meg drive (SCSI/RLL) and the SCSI drive worked as fast as a RAM disk! This is necessary, as I am beginning testing of low

level save and resotre operations involving the tape drive software, I need a good copy of my hoot hard disk drive, safely tucked away on the SCSI drive where nothing can touch it. The program runs in MDOS (SCSIBACK) and backs up any device, including RAM disks and floppies. For now, it will be available to the development team, but I wanted to let everyone know that the SCSI hard drive (Seagate STI57N) works like a charm, and it FAST!

=========

A word about the SCSI floppy controller board. I have been able to interface (successfully) several types of drives: 1.44 meg 3 1/2", 720k 3 1/2", 1.2 meg 5 1/4" drives, bul I am having some trouble with the 360K drives, which do not support pin 34 connection; they may not be compatible. (Pin 34 is a "disk change" indicator, which is a positive test to see if a drive is attached and a disk is in the drive, Many older drives do not support the standard.) All current 3 1/2", 5 1/4" (1.2 meg) drives do, and will work. It is possible to attach a small circuit to the drive which would simulate a disk change line, Basically, disk change is +5volis if a disk is not in the drive, and after a disk is inserted, the drive waits until it is selected and a stepper pulse is sent, thereafter the pin 34 (disk change) drops low. It remains low until a disk is removed. In fact, it can remain low and you can force it low, but that initial "high" state is needed to indicate to the controller that the drive is attached.

The above comments were those of Mike Maksimik. I feel that they describe what SCSI can do for us, at this time, as well as anything that I could say,

I also wish to mention that progress is taking place on a CD RDM project for the TI/9640 community. A certain individual is merely collecting programs and files that are runnable on the 9640 and/or the 4A. I must here emphasize that this is all that he is doing. He is not writing any code which would allow for these programs to be run from a CD ROM drive. In order to run these files, it will be necessary to first copy them to a RAM disk, hard disk, or floppy disk, (I feel that Genny's internal RAM disk will be a good space for this type of operation.) Please don't acquire this software with the expectation that any of it will be able to directly run from the CD ROM drive!

As of the writing of this article, the E-PROM for the SCSI card, which will allow if to be compatible with the 44 has not been released yet. I have been told that progress on this software continues and its release is immisent, but if you own a Genny, all necessary SCSI routines are contained within M-DOS version 4.05 and above.

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# THE OHIO MIG COMPERENCE

It may seem odd to be writing a post facto report on the Ohid Multi User Group Contenence, which was held in Brow Fart. Ohio, on May 24-25, 1996, in the April 1996 issue of the Chicago [Image, but we are running a little lute this year, and all things are possible.

For many years this event has been hosted by the Lima II User Group, headed by Dr. Charles Good. This year, in order to give Charley a respite several neer groups in the Cleveland area offered to host the show. II-CHIPS and the Northcoast 99ers combined to organize the event and Glero Bernasek was the

I was originally planning to attend the MUG with Mike Maksimik, just as we have for the past several years, but at the last minute Mike's company informed him that he had to work in New York that weekend. Fortunately, Peter Krause, president of the Will County TI User Group came to my rescue. He offered make the trip this year. It turned out to be a great arrangement.

Pete and I set out very early Friday morning, and at first it looked as if we would never get out of Chicago. Once we cleared downtown things improved greatly, and the driving was smooth after that. I had been over the same route just the week before, as far as Toledo, where I had attended a veteran's convention, and I had picked up my very first speeding ticket in 36 years behind the wheel! We were therefore on our guard as we crossed the Indiana-Dhio line, and it was as well we were. I have never seen as many cops patrolling a road as we saw that day. Pete is a careful driver, and we had no trouble. The journey took us about eight hours, but it was 99% highway niles. We found a room at the "Comfort Inn" just down the road negoiate on the room rates!

After moving in we took a ride up to see what was happening at the MUB site. We arrived in time to learn that there would be a social get-together at the Middleburg Heights Recreation Center for everyone who was attending the MUG. We went over and found a lot of old and new friends. They provided lots of tasty food and soft drinks, and the opportunity to sit around and talk to other Il'ers from all over. It was a very pleasant way to unwind after a long trip. The fact that everything ran so smoothly was evidence that the preparation.

The next day was a busy one for all of us. Pete had brought a full system in order to copy disks from the Lima Group, which graciously made their library available, as they do each year. Pete experienced technical difficulties that made it impossible to copy as much of the library for the Will County Group as he wished, but he still got a great many. I was able to attend many more seminars than I can during the Chicago TI International World Faire, and I took advantage of my opportunity.

Bruce Harrison has been providing us with all of his programs for a humber of years, and he gave us the latest versions at the PUG. I have been reviewing some of his

programs during the past couple of months, and I will continue to do so in the future, along with any other programs I come across. There is a lot of stuff being written, and much of it is of extremely high quality. Don't let anyone tell you differently A case in point is Mickey Cendrowski's Loadmaster program. Mickey calls it a work in programs because she is constantly adding new features, although she releases new versions on a regular basis. I don't want to go into too much detail right now since I am planning on reviewing it soom, but suffice it to say that it is a program that I use, just as it is, quite a bit these days as I try to bring some semblence of order to the hundreds of disks I possess. Mickey gave an excellent seminar on Loadmaster, past, present and future. She was also Captain of the Cola Police, noting and reporting on the choice of visitors. I made some that I Brank only Pepti in her presence (grin),

It was nice to be able to have funch right in the show. A number of ladies, among them Ada Markus and Nina Hoffman labored long to provide all the attendees with hot meals and snacks at very reasonable prices. The profits went to help offset the cost of the event, which was borne by the participating organizations, since the whole thing was free to those in attendance. There were a number of vendors, and even a few User Groups we don't see in Chicago. I was scurrying around, trying to interest them in coming to our faire, and some of them are planning to come. Dave Connery tad our library there, along with a number of items he was selling for himself.

the of the items that I purchased in Cleveland was the AMS cand, manufactured by the Southwest 99er User Group. Jim Erych, one of the original design team that came up with the card for Asgard, was a very effective salesman. Again, I am planning on writing a much longer review of this piece of hardwere, and its accompaning software in the future, but I will say that it is a very exciting portent for the future of the IP99/4A.

the Jim Peterson Awards were presented at the end of the MUG. Unfortunately, out of the room at the beginning, and only got a partial list of the winners. These were people selected by ballot by their fellow members of the TI/9649 community. The awards were designed to bonor the late Jim Peterson, who wrote literally hundreds of public domain programs for our computer. His "Tips from the ligercub" articles were carried by almost every TI newsletter at one time or another.

At the end of the show we all helped clear the tables and then we were treated to a pizza party. It was a nice way to end things, and has come to be a traditional part of the Lima show. Glenn and all those who had a part in putting on the Ohio MUG are to be commended for a job well done. The whole thing was well organized and well run. I think I can speak from a little experience when I say that the vast majority of the work that goes into a show like this is never seen by nost of those that attend, but it is essential to the smooth function of an undertaking of this magnitude. I hope that all those who attended, or who helped put it on will consider coming to the Chicago Faire, where they can relax and enjoy our hospitality.

As a final word, I also want to say that Pete and I gct up

early next morning and took a quick look around Cleveland. Forget all the Jokes you have heard. Cleveland is a neat place! We drove through downtown, through the "flats" and all along the lakshore and thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. We both agreed that it is somewhere we are looking forward to returning to!

--Hal Shanafield

## NOTES ON THE FAIRE.

The 14th Chicago TI International World Faire will take place at the Evanston Public Library, on November 9, 1996. The Faire, as in years past, will feature lots of vendors, soft and hardware debuts, seminars on a wide variety of TI themes, and all the good fun and fellowship that these get~togethers always produce.

The biggest problem we had last year was finding affordable housing in Evanston. Some people ended up staying fifteen miles from the site of the Faire, and that's a long way in Chicago traffit. I am working a getting us a hotel a lot closer than that, and at a price that is more in line with what is aveilable at other venues, but the fact is that Chicago in understand that hotel costs represent the majority of expenses for those who come to the Faire, but there are certain facts with which I have to deal. Monetheless, I think I can promise some rates less than those available last year.

The Library has raised the rates for the use of the rooms in which we have the seminars and the Faire itself, but we have been fortunate in that we paid just before the increase went into effect. Next year we will have to deal with next year. There seemed to be enough space for all the vendors last time, although some of the user groups seemed a little cramped. Some of the vendors who have been absent for the past few Faires have expressed some interest in returning to Chicago, and that's a good sign.

By the time you read this plans will be underway to make this year's Faire the best ever. In addition to four years experience running this event, recent trips to the Chic NUG and feet West have given me some new ideas on how to improve on an already mood product. Contracts will be going out to the vendors shortly. New lower prices for table space should make it a little easier for those vendors caught in the usual II market squeeze. If anyone has any suggestions, or (gasp!) would like to volunteer to help with any part of the Faire process, I can be reached at (847) 864-8644 at all reasonable hours. We all want to see a roble tradition continue.

~-Hal Shanafield

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