REMarks® — EXPANDING 99/4A HORIZONS

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Enclosed along with this newsletter is the complete revision of our Owner Written and Translated Software Catalog including a large expansion. The catalog expansion consists of over one hundred and fifty new or substantially revised programs. These new programs have been added to the end of each section of the catalog. As usual, the overall quality of the expansion is very high as is the level of sophistication. In addition, the entire software catalog has been rewritten and updated. This includes the deletion of many unavailable or unsatisfactory programs. As a result of these changes, we ask you not to use any catalog prior to the 11/1/83 update that you have just received.

As a reminder, we would like to point out that the inside back cover now has information printed on it. In addition to carefully reading the front cover, we recommend that you carefully read the back cover. The information supplied on the inside-front and the inside-back covers will give you instructions for cassette and diskette software loading, tips to make loading easier and a large number of problem solvers. In addition, there is information on the policies of The 99/4A Program Exchange, Inc.

We have completely revised our Promotional Offer. Apparently, there has been some confusion about the Promotional Offer Form. This form is **not** to be used to order software. Use only our Owner Written and Translated Software Order Form for the purpose of ordering software. Only use the Promotional Offer form if you find a new member that hasn't joined up yet. In the event you find a new member and therefore use the Promotional Offer Form, write the codes for the four free programs of your choice in the blanks provided on the form. Otherwise, there is no purpose for the Promotional Offer Form.

Finally, I would like to mention the latest advances in our service: **1) A receptionist will answer the telephone 24 hours a day. 2) Even speedier service with metered mail. 3) For your convenience, a photocopy of your order form will be included with all cassette orders. 4) More rigid packaging for diskette orders. 5) Disk catalog print-outs will be provided with all diskette orders.** All this coupled with our complete catalog revision, fast service and high quality recordings make The 99/4A Program Exchange second to none.

PROMOTIONAL OFFER UPDATE

The Promotional Offer is very simple, you find us a new member, and we'll send you four free programs! Enclosed along with the rest of your literature, you will find a form that was designed specifically for the Promotional Offer. Remember, the Promotional Offer is optional and you do not have to participate. However, if you do find a new member, there are several guidelines that you should follow carefully while using the Promotional Offer Form:

First, all required information must be filled out. The only information that is optional is whether the person applying for new membership is paying via check or money order, or credit card. Everything else, including signiture, is required.

Second, the membership fee for the person applying for membership must accompany the form unless payment is via credit card, in which case the account number and expiration data are required.

Finally, only use the Promotional Offer Form enclosed with the literature. Do not make photocopies of the Promotional Offer Form.

Title: Bridge Guard
Author: Mark Smetana
Catalog Number: 1315
Language: Extended BASIC
Type: Arcade Action

GRAPHICS

The graphic setting for this game is very tasteful. The screen has a light blue sky, a white hill scape and a blue river below. Right above the river an intricately designed black steel suspension bridge spans the entire screen. Flying at varying heights across the screen are delightful red airplanes. Periodically, meteors fall from the sky to destroy the bridge or disentagrate in the river. When destroyed, they produce an interesting explosion. When the game is lost, the entire screen goes haywire and changes through several colors as the airplanes zoom to destruction. With speech, noise, and erie music you have an interesting effect.

OPERATION

The game is easy to operate. Instructions are clear and concise. The skill level is determined by the speed of the falling meteors. You may choose any speed from 1 to 50. 1 is super easy and 50 is impossible. The object of the game is to save the bridge by opening the trap doors thus allowing the meteors to fall into the river to destruction. You control the trap doors by the number keys on the key board which correspond to the bridge in the vertical columns. When an airplane hits a meteor, you earn points, but more important gain time to concentrate on the next meteor and what trap door to operate. Good hand-eye skill and coordination will make you a winner.

COMMENTS

This is a game for all levels of skill, thus all members of the family can play and enjoy this game. All players can find success and or a challenge and still maintain a high level of interest. Engrossent is high, graphics are excellent and scoring a challenge expecially if competing for high score. Unquestionably one of the best programs in our catalog.

Title: Rear Assault
Author: Alan Meiss
Catalog Number: 1297
Language: Extended BASIC
Type: Arcade Space Game

GRAPHICS

The graphics are great, definitely third-party quality. We find our space ship in dark outer space with colorful stars and a quarter moon racing toward us. Below is the white horizon sand scape with 3-D black and white buildings. All in all this background, moving all the time, gives the effect of a real arcade game.

From the right of the screen alien ships appear one at a time and streak across the screen at varying angles. The ships come in different sizes, shapes and colors and are tastefully designed. Periodically larger 3-D space ships appear on the screen in front of your ship. These are Electro-Magnetic fighters of the aliens which are programmed to draw your ship into them. You must avoid hitting them and destroy them. All of the space craft have rocket power graphics and your craft fires a double round of yellow missiles.

OPERATION

The game play is quite simple. You use the up and down arrow keys to maneuver your spacecraft away from the rear attacking alien space craft. You use the Q key to fire your missiles at them as they go by. The game is rather fast, especially when Electro-Magnetic Craft appears. You are rapidly drawn towards it and must either destroy it or avoid it. The operation of the game is well programmed so that novices and experts can enjoy the game. There are twelve levels of background speed as well as twelve levels of difficulty to choose from. Each game allows the player three space craft, and a running score is kept.

COMMENTS

The overall quality of this program is very high. Great graphics, great operation and excellently programmed. The player will have many hours of fun playing this excellent game.

PROGRAM REVIEW

Title: Super Fly
Language: Extended Basic
Type: Educational Game

GRAPHICS

Super Fly has super graphics. The program starts with tastefully designed numbers and letters randomly flashing through the screen in colorful fashions, finally proclaiming the title Super Fly. Graphic demonstrations of elementary addition and subtraction problems including carrying for addition and borrowing for subtraction are shown in a very clear, sound, format. During the program the small twirling French Fly will transform into flamboyant, racy Super Fly, or at other times into Skull Man. Through out the program there is rather extensive use of graphics and color.

OPERATION

The concept of this program is to reward the elementary student with delightful colorful graphics, sounds, and music for answering all four problems correctly. The program first gives a demonstration of an addition problem which includes carrying to the next column. Then a subtraction problem is demonstrated with the concept of borrowing. After the teaching demonstrations are completed, the screen gives 4 problems to solve. If they are solved correctly, the reward is flashing graphics and sounds showing the champion Super Fly flash across your screen.

If you miss any of the four problems, French fly turns to Skull Man and a rather bizzare screen, sounds, and noises are emitted. The problem is crossed out and then the correct answers are displayed.

COMMENTS

It's fun to practice basic addition and subtraction problems and be treated to a variety of rewards for success and bizzare emissions for failure. This approach is fun, colorful and tasteful. We highly recommend this program for the primary grade student. What would normally be hours of wrote drudgery are transformed into computer learning fun that works.

ADDRESS CHANGE FORM
ALSO USE IF WE DO NOT HAVE YOUR CORRECT CURRENT ADDRESS

PRIOR ADDRESS — PRINT NEATLY

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY:_____ STATE:_____ ZIP:_____

NEW ADDRESS — PRINT NEATLY

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY:_____ STATE:_____ ZIP:_____

PROGRAM REVIEW

Title: Projectile Problems
Author: M. Wade
Catalog Number: 4036
Language: Basic
Type: Education/Physics

GRAPHICS

Nice graphics displayed for the four types of missile problems the program presents and teaches. For ground to ground problems we see two race cars a two lane race way and a finish line. Two dimentional ground to ground problems are accompanied by a cannon and a distant target. Balloon to ground problems display a balloon and a ground target. The fourth type of problem, building to ground, exhibits an elevated cannon and target. The graphics are excellent.

OPERATION

Projectile Problems starts off with an excellent set of instructions and a concise description of the necessary elements necessary to solve the problems. The following areas are listed: acceleration, horizontal range, velocity, displacement, maximum height, time of flight, and degree or angle.

Helpful formulas are also reviewed, listing the following:
1) $VF = A * T + VI$
2) $VF^2 - AI^2 = 2 * A * S$
3) $S = (1/2) * A * I^2$
4) $S = V(AVE) * T$

You choose the type of projectile problem you plan to practice and answer the questions the computer generates. If you answer successfully, you are rewarded with a clever complimentary statement. On the other hand, if your answer is not within an acceptable range of proximation, the computer lets you either try again or get the correct answer.

COMMENTS

If you're a physics student or a person who relates to math formulas and projectiles, this program is for you. We feel the program is quite sophisticated, well formated, and utilitarian. With excellent graphics and clever responses, the user can not only learn but enjoy it with the computer's ability to enhance the subject.

PROGRAM REVIEW

Title: Color Logic
Catalog Number: 1325
Author: Lynn Atkinson
Language: Extended BASIC
Type: Logical Deduction

GRAPHICS

The screen fills with a colorful game board excellently designed. A large question mark or arrow helps direct the game. Color combinations are neat and attractive. The graphics are simple, yet well organized.

OPERATION

The game allows you to select either a mode to play against the computer or a mode in which two players compete against each other in solving the computer's secret selections. You are given a set of very complete and concise instructions and rules. You select any combination of colors for your choice, and in the meantime the computer chooses its secrets. Now it's time to use your logic and duplicate the computers secret selection.

There are three levels of difficulty [i.e., the time the computer allows you to figure out and enter your selections] - easy, tough, and impossible. Even the first level, is a super challenge because the computer is so good. After entering your choices, the game board indicates the correct number of colors and positions. Now its the computers turn! After several turns you notice numbers flashing as the computer computes and selects its choices. The numbers represent the number of possible answers left - what sophistication! Meanwhile you rack your brain and try to beat the computer. You had better by your 4th try or good by the computer will.

The game board indicates the cumulative score of both players based upon the number of guesses made in order to solve the puzzle.

COMMENTS

If you like logic games, this game is the one for you. The sophistication presented by this program with its great graphics and superior format lends itself to a super high engrossment level. You'll never tire, you'll always be challenged.

GAMES FOR HEALTH

Although many people believe that playing games on a computer is merely for children, there are many advantages to this, not the least being that its good for self-improvement.

Unknown to most users, computer games now well exceed the simple arcade programs found in the arcades. With a greater capacity for memory, home computer games have become more complex in both graphics and scenario. Because of this, the arcade game is rapidly becoming obsolete. Users have found that home games are far superior, and thus, there is no need for the other type.

However, the question that has arisen is, why are we all wasting time and money playing games? After all, there is only so much value for a game as a means of entertainment. What is beneath the obvious enjoyment partaken by game playing?

Many educators as well as psychologists believe that game playing develops a logic and problem solving ability that would otherwise become quite rusty from misuse. Another great advantage is that of a learning tool for children. Computers provide a colorful, attention-getting method for which kids will undoubtedly have a more positive reaction than that of more conventional means. However, beneath the glitter of the computer, is the fact that people play for the various reasons that affect the user as an individual.

Perhaps the most appealing reason for playing computer games is its competitive aspect. In today's society, many people are confined to watching others battle on television, such as Sunday afternoon football. However, computers are a way for these armchair warriors to relieve any aggresive behavior that could otherwise have to be directed elsewhere.

Others enjoy computers for its ability to take the user into another world of fantasy. "Getting away from it all" is supremely achieved by the computer as you can travel through time and space to situations undreamt of.

A more practical use for these games is that they infinately improve the concentration of the user. This is a definate advantage in real world computing where a single error becomes quite costly.

In conclusion, we can assume that games are not merely for entertainment but also as a means of self-improvement. In a day and age where every person must seek any advantage for financial success, the computer is an immense aid for accomplishing this goal.

SOFTWARE REVISIONS

For those members of The 99/4A Program Exchange that program and are interested in Program Exchanging, we have a suggestion. How about taking a mediocre program and polishing it up? You can improve instructions, add fancy graphics, make it more colorful, include animation, zest it up with musical scores and sound effects, improve speed of execution and much, much more. Imagine how fun it would be! There are many programs in the catalog just begging for improvements and sophistication. Remember, all substantially revised programs are eligible for the Five for One Exchange feature. So go for it!

ECONOMICAL EIGHTS

As of this newsletter, all previous Economical Eight packages are no longer in effect. However, Economical Eight packages will return in the future pending analysis of the policy.

MORE MEMORY FULL

If after using CALL FILES(1) you are still unsuccessful RUNning a program loaded from a diskette [i.e., receiving a MEMORY FULL IN nnn error], you must do the following: 1) SAVE the program to a cassette. 2) Turn off the computer and the Peripheral Expansion Box. 3) Turn on the computer only. 4) Load the program from the cassette and RUN it.

By leaving the P.E.B off, the computer will retain the maximum available memory and therefore run the program without a problem.

MASS STORAGE

Many people consider a reliable data storage device to be the most important part of any computer system. "Mass Storage" systems, as they are commonly called, are absolutely that when the computer is closely examined. After all, without data storage, source code would have to be re-entered every time the user wanted to use a program.

Every computer contains built-in memory, or RAM, that is extremely limited. The capacity of the computer, or amount of characters it can hold at one time, is generally measured in kilobytes. Just as the name suggests, one kilobyte equals approximately 1000 bytes. Therefore, a computer with 16K memory will handle approximately 16,000 characters. However, the computer's memory is but a temporary one and when the computer loses power, it also loses its memory along with all inputted data. In light of this, some form of external data storage is essential.

For most users, the cassette tape recorder provides the ideal data storage device. Most people work with minimal amounts of data as they use their computers for such things as arcade games, household budgets, and other such applications not requiring immense mass storage. Also, the cassette is as inexpensive as it is reliable. However, because access to information can only be in the same order as that of which it was saved, the cassette proves to be much too slow for tasks requiring random memory access.

Therefore, for the serious user, there are several different options for data storage. The most common are the hard and floppy disks. Both are much faster than the cassette and also immensely more expensive. However, where speed is more important, disks are better than cassettes.

The new development for mass storage systems is the stringy floppy [or Wafer Tape.] Resembling the cassette, this tape is superior to the cassette in speed and capabilities but still slower than a disk system. However, the system does cost considerably more than the cassette and again is only for those who need the extra speed.

The last system is that of the disk emulator. This computer installment is in actuality a circuited memory board. They are able to allow the same approximate storage space of the floppy disk at twice the speed and half the price of the hard disk. At first glance, the emulator seems to be the best system for the serious user. However, its major downfall is that a loss of power again makes for a loss of information. Disk emulators are just for temporary memory expansion.

Here it must be noted that this article is merely meant as a basic introduction to some of the more extensive storage devices available. This is not to say that as a user, the best thing to do is buy a grossly unaffordable system just for memory expansion and speed increasement. While the necessity for a permanent data storage device is unmistakable, the correct one for a certain system is not necessarily the most expensive. Most 99/4A owners use their computers to work out such things as household budgets and mailing lists, and use them as recreational and educational tools. Nearly all programs can be handled efficiently with the simple cassette recorder. Therefore, the bottom line is 'Don't buy what you don't need.'

DEFECTIVE TAPE OR DISK

If you receive a defective cassette or disk [very unlikely] do not return it to us. Simply write a letter explaining the occurance and enclose a copy of the order form. If a diskette is defective, enclose the print-out of the diskette catalog which was included with the order. Keep in mind that having problems loading programs is not an indication that the cassette or diskette is defective.