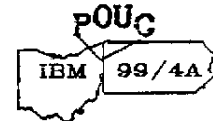
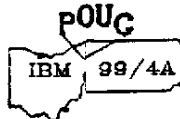




PENN-OHIO USERS GROUP
 71 ELM STREET
 STRUTHERS, OH 44471

The Floppy Copy

Newsletter of the Penn-Ohio Users Group
 Dedicated to the TL and IBM user



Pres: Ed Luptak 755-7691
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Volume 5 November 1989 Number 11

NEXT MEETING

November 13, 1989
 7:00 P.M.
 American Red Cross Building
 Fifth and Wood Streets

CREDITS

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INVITATION

Please take this opportunity to challenge yourself. Write an article for the newsletter. Send your copy to Ed Luptak, 71 Elm Street, Struthers, Ohio 44471 or, if you wish to send it via modem, call Ed at 755-7691 to make arrangements. You may write or type but the easiest to handle is an ASCII file made with your favorite word processing program.

DUES

Dues for the Penn-Ohio Users Group are \$15.00 per calendar year for an individual membership, \$20.00 per calendar year for a family membership and \$10 per year for

an associate membership. Dues go to the cost of newsletter publication and library expenses.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Well I hope that all will go well in putting out this newsletter I have had so many problems in the last few month I am almost afraid to start, but here goes so lets see what happens.

I guess I'll start by tell you of a TV Personality in our club. Gary Karas was greeted by his family and TV camera as he deplaned at Pittsburgh Airport after his unwelcome experience in San Francisco's Chinatown. That was were Gary was when the earthquake hit the bay area. We are sure glad to have you back in Ohio now if ve could just get to a meeting, just kidding. Gary has said in the past that he would like to have one of our meeting at the Water Treatment plant in Struthers, so he could not only show us his computer set up, but also show off his plant.

While I am on the subject of meeting other than the Red Cross I should mention that Doc. Krutter missed our last meeting, one of very few. He had a good reason, he was moving. We will be meeting at his place in the very near future. I guess we will be using the second floor ball room. I have not been there as yet but Herb said it was sure something to see. I guess we will be able to talk to Frank about it at this

meeting. Sure the goodies that you brings, but we miss you the most.

I Talked to Ron Baker last night and was told that the nominating committee will have a report at the meeting.

One of the demos for this month will be the use of the Logitech ScanMan Plus. We will be scanning both graphics and text and using a OCR program to convert the text into a useable file. So hope to see you all this Monday. The answer the letter "n" and "bookkeeper".

IN MEMORIAM

DR. GUY-STEFAN ROMANO

Dr. Guy-Stefan Romano, operator of the Amnion Helpline, died August 15 at his home in San Francisco, California. He was 57.

According to his wishes his body was cremated August 16 by the Neptune Society of San Francisco and his long time friend, David Kano, scattered his ashes in the Pacific Ocean on August 18.

Romano was born in France and educated in Europe and the United States. He was fluent in 17 languages. He held a Ph.D. in Romance languages, a Ph.D. in Germanic linguistics and a Masters degree in Chinese as well as a third doctorate in fine arts.

Most of his career was spent in education, particularly the teaching of languages. He began working with computers in the early 1950's when he worked with a mechanical translator for the U.S. Government, which he described as "something like a cousin to the ENIAC a house filled with radio tubes."

Romano began the Amnion Helpline in 1981 as a free service to TI users, before the founding of a users group in San Francisco. During its operation, he received inquiries from all over the United States and numerous foreign countries.

Romano also maintained a library of public domain software for the TI99/4A which he provided users for a small copying fee

p us mailing (our club library has Romano complete library.)

Kano says Romano would work "until 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning" on some occasion to help users. Recently the Amnion Helpline was expanded to help users of IBM compatible.

MINUTES & COMMENTS

By Frank DePinto

October meeting was called to order by Ed at 7:30. The first time that I was at the Red Cross Building before the meeting began. I guess miracles never cease to happen. Several topics came up for discussion after Ed read a letter from TI. They wanted to remind us that we haven't been forgotten, even if they discontinued making the TI-99/4A in 1984. The letter stated that service was still available by calling 806/747-1882. The letter also stated that sales of compatible products can still be made through third party suppliers. If you are interested, I can provide those addresses at the next meeting rather than take up space in the newsletter. Ed made a suggestion that if anyone is interested in TI products, one of the hamfests would probably be the cheapest place to purchase those items, even find a second-hand console rather than try to get your old one repaired. By the way, the supply of products (programs, games, etc.) has grown by leaps and bounds. It almost makes it worthwhile to stay with the TI-99/4A.

The next item on the agenda was to elect a nominating committee. There was a long discussion (about 1 minute) before Ron Kendra, Ron Baker, and Frank Krautter were unanimously elected as the nominating committee for 1990. CONGRATULATIONS GUYS!

Next up for discussion was to find a name for our newsletter and decide on possible designs for posters to advertise P.O.U.G. It was decided that all members were to submit a possible design for the poster at the next meeting. Here's your chance to show-off that creative talent that you have been hiding. Bring in your rough sketches or finished product for the November meeting.

Herb reported that with the addition of two new members, our balance was approximately \$117.51. An exact amount was dependant upon the interest from the bank. He also stated that postage for the newsletters to other clubs was \$24.30 every two months while the postage for the P.O.U.G. members' newsletters was approximately \$4.00 per month.

After his report, Herb told the club about File Express, & Express Calc programs would be available to club members at a special rate. It seems that File Express v5.0 will be available sometime in January, 1990. Our library presently has v4.3.

When all this was completed, Dave asked for possible names for our P.O.U.G. newsletter. After twenty some suggestions, we voted to call our newsletter "FLOPPY COPY". Catchy title for a newsletter about computer topics. It sounds like a title that can relate to both the TI-99/4A and the IBM compatible. After all, the newsletter is "copy of the information that is first stored on a "floppy". Very clever idea, Dave! Dave suggested that title. Its no wonder that he gets paid such a high salary for being the vice-president. After the meeting, Ed had a demo of a couple of neat programs. The first program provided a search of the four gospels of the Bible using words or key phrases. The second program was even better. It provided a few tasty morsels in the form of recipes. It contained recipes from all over the world, Italian, Chinese, French, etc. The program not only increased or decreased the ingredients according to the number of people invited for dinner, it also made up a shopping list right down to a wine list. The data base even contained a section for the kids. Thanks Ed, for another great demo!

In addition to the meeting minutes, I was given the following computer test by a colleague of mine. I thought you might be interested in finding out just how much you know about computers. Be honest! It is "The Official PC Owner's Computing Test" by Cliff Hauptman from "WordPerfect Magazine", July, 1989. It was submitted by Sam Rausch.

"Do you think you should be allowed to own a personal computer? Until now, the only requirement for ownership was to hand over a few hundred bucks. Competence was never a consideration.

"There is now a standard of competency for personal computing. For the first time, the rank novice and seasoned veteran alike can evaluate his or her proficiency against an impartial, objective norm. Now can be separated the chaff from the grain, the know-nothings from those in the know, the men from the boys and the girls from the panama."

"The Test:

- Which of the following is a bad-faced lie?
 - The problem is in the software.
 - The problem is in the hardware.
 - The problem is with the user.
 - The problem is with the dealer.
- A disk operating system is:
 - A new chiropractic technique.
 - A place selling pirated software.
 - A high-fi component.
 - A Frisbee user manual.
- Lost data is caused most often by:
 - Poltergeists.
 - Ignes fauti.
 - Banshees.
 - Haints
- True or False: Electronic spreadsheets are robots that change the linen in motels.
- The difference between a word processor and a food processor is mainly:
 - in the time it takes to clean up.
 - A matter of taste.
 - W vs. f and r vs. o.
 - There is no difference.
- In which of the following sentences is the term default used properly?
 - Default is in desoftware.
 - Default is in dehardware.
 - Default is in the user.
 - Default is in dedealer.
- The name hard disc comes from the fact:
 -
 -
 -
 -

- a. That they are harder to pay for than floppies.
 - b. They're harder to use for a coaster for a coffee cup than a floppy is.
 - c. That they are harder to get into those little sleeves than a floppy.
 - d. That they dent hardwood floors when you drop them.
3. RAM is measured in:
- a. Horsepower.
 - b. First downs.
 - c. Distance of the curl of a horn.
 - d. Proof.
9. True or False:
When in ROM do as the ROMANS do.
10. Computers are thought of as being "changeable" machines because:
- a. You don't know what they'll do next.
 - b. If you get mad enough you can always change it into a pile of wreckage.
 - c. They give you two tens for a twenty.
 - d. They change people into lunatics.
11. "Compatibility" refers to:
- a. Your ability to get along with your spouse after using your computer.
 - b. Your spouse's ability to get along with you after you've been using your computer.
 - c. While using your computer at work, your ability to refrain from using language best employed in private.
 - d. Your computer's ability to understand commands like "Drop Dead!"
12. Telecommunications software gives you the ability to:
- a. Double your phone bill.
 - b. Triple your phone bill.
 - c. Quadruple your phone bill.
 - d. Amass a fantastic collection of free, public domain software you do not need and that it is full of viruses.
13. If it takes two minutes to address an envelope with a typewriter, a novice PC user should be able to do it successfully by computer in:
- a. Three hours.
 - b. Six days.
 - c. two months.
 - d. It can't be done.

14. When a file is deleted, it actually still exists; it has merely been changed slightly by:
- a. Putting Groucho glasses on it so DOS no longer recognizes it.
 - b. Sending it to the cleaners where all its buttons are removed.
 - c. Recombinant genetic engineering.
 - d. Forcing it through a pasta machine.

15. A "byte" is:
- a. Worse than a bark.
 - b. Not as bad as a bark.
 - c. Two bits, four bits, six bits, a dollar.
 - d. A shave and a haircut.

16. True or False:
The term "menu driven" refers to someone who is addicted to restaurants.

17. The one thing you like most about owning or using a computer is:
- a. The sound it makes.
 - b. The way it warms your coffee.
 - c. Your reflection on the screen.
 - d. The software start-up graphics.

"And that's that.

To calculate your score, assign each "a" answer 97 points; each "b" answer 98 points; each "c" answer 99 points; and each "d" answer the number of points equal to your age.

Each "True" answer gets one point, and each "False" answer 0 points (naturally)

Add up the points and divide by the number of bytes in your hard disk (or if your system does not have a hard disk, by the number of bytes in RAM.)

If your score comes to 31.00769, you have witnessed a miracle and should not be using a computer."

Well, I thought that a bit of humor would help to brighten the world a little bit. Hope that you weren't bored. Anyway, I'll see you at the next meeting. Let's try to get are old members to attend also. The meetings are always exciting and as productive as we make them. Remember, we still talk TI, as well as PC compatible. Don't forget those posters and be at the

Red Cross Center on Wood Street
November 13 at 7:00 P.M.

**HAMFEST
ARE THEY REALLY KOSHER
???**

Hamfests!!! What are they.... & why should you attend one. If you are a computer novice you should attend a hamfest & if your an expert, hamfests are a must. The hamfest got it's name from those who dabble in amateur radio broadcasting. I know your asking yourselves how does amateur radio & today's computer mania connect. They are both electronic means of communication, thus amateur radio festivals, (hamfests) have a great many computer related vendors as well as electronic gadget vendors at their shows or fests. You will find everything from junk telephone systems, to TI 99 4/A computers, to software for just about any computer, to old cameras& even the latest in new and used clone compatible computers & accessories. Some examples of bargain basement prices are enhanced keyboard with built-in mouse and software \$75 - 85 (check some of the local so called discount hardware dealers & you will find the same keyboard for \$95 - 125). This great bargain was found by our new member Y. T. Chiu at the Cleveland hamfest 2 weeks ago. (I paid \$75 just 3 weeks ago for a Logitech mouse alone...) President Ed found a great priced Star color printer for his niece for a mere \$225, which is slightly less than prices quoted in Computer Shopper, but he also saved a \$10 - 15 shipping charge. Other assorted junk can also be found at these fests. Ron Baker, our resident junk collector, found a cable TV tuner switch box for \$15, (Ya know the box you use to tune n HBO etc.) Well I also bit on this deal & found out it would work for my second TV or I could hook it to my VCR so I could tape one show on one channel while watching another on my TV. Hamfests can be profitable & fun if you hear about one don't be afraid to go. Not all hamfests are the same. Some have fewer computer related vendors & more junk dealers, but you'll never know unless you go. An amateur radio operator, I know from Cleveland, told me that on the same day of the Cleveland hamfest there was a camera show on the west side of

Cleveland that was just full of computer stuff, (I guess everyone is getting in on the act.) My same Ham buddy also told me that in early spring, Dayton Ohio has a world wide hamfest, pulling operators and vendors from all over the world. Remember, hamfests can be kosher; there are interesting people, good products, & good buys.

For this month I bid you good-bye...
See you at the Nov. meeting Mon. Nov. 13
H. N. S.

**The Librarian's Review
by Ron Baker
IBM Section Librarian**

Since I missed the last meeting, and was not there to defend myself, I was informed politely by the editorial staff that there WILL be a Librarian's Software review for the newsletter from now on. So I will take this opportunity to spread the word on one of my favorite and most used pieces of software. As Librarian, I searched long and hard for the ideal Data Base to keep track of the POUJ programs and their descriptions. Each time I got everything squared away in a new data base, I would find another I liked better. Well now I have discovered the ultimate - YSSINDEX by Robert Babcock. Now it is available for all of us to use to keep track of all our disks.

Have you ever had to search through dozens of disks trying to find a seldom used program which you knew you had somewhere? Well here's the solution. YSSINDEX.EXE is a program for keeping track of MS-DOS files stored on floppy or hard disks. A database is created which contains, for all of your disks, the information normally available from the DOS DIR command, as well as optional comments and categories describing each file. The information in the database may be printed with various sorting options, or may be searched for specific file names with wild cards in case you don't remember the exact name of the file you are looking for. Additional functions include listing files without current backup copies and extracting directory information from

Library files. The program is menu driven and easy to use without referring to the documentation, but please read it once anyway.

What is it? WSSINDEX creates and maintains a database with all the information about your disks available from the DIR command, plus optional descriptive comments and categories. You can search the database interactively, or you can print it with various sorting and selection options. An auxiliary routine allows printing disk labels and disk covers. The most common use of the program is to keep track of files on a collection of floppy disks, but you can index anything which looks like a disk to DOS, including hard disks, RAM disks and some tape cartridges. One option allows hard disk users to make a listing of all files on a hard disk which do not have backup copies on another disk.

What hardware and software do I need? An IBM-PC or moderately compatible MS-DOS machine (versions for the Dec Rainbow, Texas Instruments Professional, and Wang PC are also available or under development), DOS-2 or higher and either a video board compatible with an IBM monochrome display or color graphics adapter, or support for ANSI escape sequences. If you lack all of these, the screen display will be hopelessly garbled; more details below. 256K or more of RAM memory is recommended.

How many disks can I index? There is a hard limit (set by the 64K segment size of the 8088 CPU chip) of approximately 16K files (or disks, or subdirectories), and a practical limit of 10-12K files if you have 640K of memory. Extended or expanded memory is not used, but DOS memory beyond 640K is used if your system supports it.

WSSINDEX finds, sorts, and prints its contents in any form you can dream up. It will even import descriptions of matching file names from a local BBS and match them up to your data files.

It is by far the greatest file cataloging program written and is available from our library. As with any worthwhile program, it should be tried, then registered like all Shareware.

To register or obtain the latest version, contact Robert Babcock, 4 Reeves Road, Bedford, MA 01730 USA

SIMULATED EARTHQUAKES H.T. CLOSE TO HOME

By Dan Gutman

"The building rocked and things fell off the bookshelves. We got a little shaken up," says Veronica Bower of Broderbund Software. "We were lucky."

Last week's earthquake hit smack dab in the middle of Silicon Valley, rocking the majority of software publishing companies in the world. Broderbund is located in San Rafael--10 miles from San Francisco.

Being so close to the earthquake capital of the world, it's not ENTIRELY coincidental that Broderbund markets a computer program called "Earthquake Lab" (\$40).

The program works with Broderbund's Science Toolkit (\$80), a hardware device which plugs into any Apple II computer. Basically, the lab readstremors and feeds them into the computer. These signals are then displayed on your screen. "Earthquake Lab" is patterned after mechanical seismographs. When the base of the lab gets jolted very slightly, a lever moves a shutter in front of a photoelectric cell. The change in light level is recorded on-screen.

The computer screen looks like a real seismograph and can be printed out on paper. You can record vibrations continually, or when any rapid change occurs. You can even set the lab to automatically start recording when it senses movement. It will continue recording for up to ten hours and save the data on a floppy disk.

This thing is no toy. Lauren Elliot, chief designer of "Earthquake Lab," claims it's as accurate as professional seismographs. In fact, if the earth vibrates a hundredth of an inch, "Earthquake Lab" will amplify that 2,000 times.

The biggest challenge in designing the device, according to Elliot, was, "trying to get a \$100,000 piece of equipment into about \$1.22 worth of materials."

MAN VS. MACHINE: KASPAROV TAKES ON A COMPUTER

By Dan Gutman

(Editors Note: Kasparov has beat the computer in 53 moves and again in 37 moves)

How long will it be before a computer can beat the best human chess player in the world?

It might happen at two o'clock this Sunday (Editors: Oct. 22), when world chess champion Gary Kasparov--for the first time--takes on the world COMPUTER chess champion Deep Thought.

"A computer will never beat a top grandmaster," Kasparov said in an interview several years ago. "It doesn't have the intuition."

Forget about Oakland versus San Francisco. Forget about Clark versus Canseco. This is man versus machine. THIS is excitement.

Deep Thought was designed by five graduate students in the computer science department at Pittsburgh's Carnegie Mellon University. Running on a Sun 4 host computer with two high speed chips, it plays chess by analyzing the strength of each piece, depending on where it is located on the board and what stage the game is in.

Taking these factors into account, the computer calculates the possibilities of 720,000 positions every second and projects 20 moves into the future.

Chess-playing computers have been around since the 1950s, but Deep Thought is the first one to achieve grandmaster status. Earlier this year, he (or she) won a tournament in Florida, played to a draw with British grandmaster Tony Miles, and defeated Danish grandmaster Bent Larsen, who is ranked the 96th best player in the world.

The International Chess Federation rates players on a point system. The average tournament player rates about 1,300, and grandmasters are over 2,200. Deep Thought rates 2,550 points. Larsen rates 2,580.

In the real world, it's pointless to sit around and wait for an earthquake (unless you live in San Francisco, I suppose). And if an earthquake DID strike, you'd have better things to do than stand around measuring it. Like staying alive. The real fun of "Earthquake Lab" is producing fake quakes at home.

The designers suggest "simulated earthquake" experiments. (Parents will particularly enjoy this). Stomping around the house in heavy boots makes for an excellent fake earthquake, or you can measure which member of the family has the heaviest footsteps.

You can also measure how much your house or school shakes when traffic goes by, or see what happens if you change the material under "Earthquake Lab" from concrete to foam rubber.

Science Toolkit doesn't only measure earthquakes. It's actually a complete at-home laboratory. It comes with a temperature and light probes, and other modules make it possible to measure speed, motion, heart rate and lung capacity through your computer.

By conducting experiments, students can learn to apply scientific reasoning by collecting and analyzing data. It's more interesting than simply reading about science in a book, and the computer can simulate things you can't duplicate in the real world--like earthquakes.

And while the San Francisco disaster's making headlines, this is a great way for kids to learn about quakes.

HOTLINE: They won't be racing in the streets of San Francisco anytime soon, but that's exactly what you do in Spectrun Holobyte's new computer driving game, "Yette!" You can go in reverse, make U-turns and even race against someone using another computer.

Spectrun Holobyte is located in Alameda, where 250 people were killed (Ed. as we know by now, this figure has been lowered) when part of Interstate 880 collapsed.

Two weeks ago, Gary Kasparov reached the rating of 2,795, making him the highest-rated player in the history of chess. So no matter HOW many calculations Deep Thought can run through in a second, Kasparov will be the heavy favorite on Sunday.

Feng-Hsiung Hsu, who designed the chips that make up Deep Thought, says it would have to be 100-1000 times faster to beat Kasparov.

Nevertheless, Kasparov was reluctant to accept the match. With nothing to gain and everything to lose, he turned down the first invitation. Chess expert Shelby Lyman, it seems, persuaded the champ to be a good sport about it and play the computer.

The two game match, which will be sponsored by a division of Nynex, will be held at the New York Academy of Art. Kasparov will be paid to play. Deep Thought will not.

Even if Kasparov wipes the floor with Deep Thought, most experts believe that one day the world chess champion will be a computer. Three of the designers of Deep Thought, in fact, are already working on its successor. The computer will be so fast, it will be able to calculate six million positions a second.

If Deep Thought pulls off an upset over Kasparov, what does it mean for chess? Is there any reason to play or watch the game anymore? Is chess dead?

For that matter, is the human race doomed? Have we finally created a machine so intelligent that it's smarter than we are?

Let's not get carried away. Deep Thought, after all, was created by analyzing 900 games played by human grandmasters. It is fortunate to have learned the tricks of the trade from the greatest human chess players who ever lived.

If anything, the success of a chess-playing computer is a CELEBRATION of the human mind, not the demise of it. Some people, in fact, believe that human evolution has reached such an advanced

level that the only way for us to evolve further is by creating machines.

It should be noted that cars can move much faster than people, but track and field didn't die out when the automobile was invented.

Besides, if these machines get too uppity, we can always pull the plug on 'em.

HOTLINE: You can't buy Deep Thought at your local ComputerLand, but "SPCS Chess" (For IBM, \$35) claims a rating of 1,800, which is good enough to beat 99% of all players. It's made by Scandinavian PC Systems (301-294-7450).

A few other popular chess programs you can play on your computer at home are "Sargon 3," "Sargon 4" (Spinnaker, all formats, \$20-\$50) and "Chessmaster 2000" and "Chessmaster 2100" (The Software Toolworks, all formats, \$40-\$50).

You can even play chess on your Nintendo with "The Chessmaster" (High Tech Expressions, 212-941-1224, \$50).

GAMES PEOPLE PLAY... ON COMPUTER By Dan Gutman

The sticker on the front of the package reads: "RECOMMENDED FOR MATURE AUDIENCES." Tipper Gore is even having an effect on computer software!

Knowing full well that "mature audiences" means the less mature you are, the more you want it, my trembling fingers ripped at the wrapper. Normally I toss new computer games that arrive in the mail into a big pile in my closet. This one, I decided, was worth examining further.

"Bar Games" (Accolade, 408-985-1700, for IBM, \$40) is the most sexist and tasteless game to come along since "Leisure Suit Larry in The Land of the Lounge Lizards." Personally, I loved it.

Basically, it's a disk filled with five games that traditionally take place in bars, where--the instructions read--"men are men and women are glad of it." You may want to start things off with "Pick 'Up Artist," which tests your wit and charm as you attempt to meet various

women and get three of them to go out on a date with you. Unfortunately, you can't type in your own pick up lines--you have to choose from among the ones offered. Your success is based on your ability to choose the right dialogue with the right woman.

Whether you strike out or score, you can then participate in that classic piece of Americana--the wet t-shirt contest. Here you drop buckets of water on the heads of the contestants (men and women) while avoiding the bowling balls and barbells that are being mysteriously dropped on YOU.

The more revealing your victims become, the harder it is to drench them.

Then there's "Last Call," in which you have to slide a beer mug down the bar so that it stops in front of the patron who ordered it--a skill we can all aspire to master.

Before stumbling home, you can play a little air hockey and a dice game against well-endowed, albeit computer-generated barflies.

"Bar Games" continues a long line of computer games that are compilations of little computer games. The first, and most successful, was "Summer Games" (Epyx, all formats), in which players would compete in swimming, diving and track and field events.

Epyx followed it up, naturally, with "Winter Games," which consisted of ski jumping, skating, biathlon and other cold weather events. Next came "California Games" (skateboarding, roller skating, dirt biking) and "World Games" (barrel jumping, iron pumping, bull riding).

Then things started getting silly. Mindscape offered up "Aussie Games," which featured typical Australian sporting events such as the beer bottle shot, boomerang toss, marlin fishing and a belly-wrecking competition.

Artworx gave us "Highland Games," where the hammer throw, weight toss, tug o'war and other Scottish games were featured.

I thought the trend might have reached its natural conclusion when Electronic Arts released "Caveman Ugh-Lympics." You can probably predict the events: clubbing, dinosaur vaulting, firemaking, sabertooth tiger racing and my personal favorite, "mate throw."

Where, when and if this compilation thing will end is anybody's guess. If picking up women and dropping water on their heads can be turned into a competition, I suppose ANYTHING is fair game.

HOTLINE: If you were truly born to shop, "Little Shoppers Kit" will get you started. This new program--a simulation of how a store works--was created by 1988 Massachusetts Teachers of the Year, Phyllis Kalowski and Liz Deila Paolera. A first grade class can use it, with each child taking a different job--cashier, bagger, manager, etc. The computer tracks cash, units sold and receipts. The program even comes with pay money, shopping bags and other necessities for going into business. "Little Shoppers Kit" (\$110) is available for Apple II from Tom Snyder Productions, 617-876-4433...

Electronic Arts has released "Lakers vs. Celtics and the NBA Playoffs" (IBM, \$50), a five-on-five basketball game with players that actually resemble Kareem Jordan, Bird, and Isiah Thomas.

HYPE-TECH SO WHAT'S TODAY'S REVOLUTION? By Dan Gutman

Fifty years ago, RCA president David Sarnoff switched on the first scheduled telecast and proclaimed television to be, "a new art, so important in its implications that it is bound to affect all society."

An overblown, hyped-up prediction, to be sure. But Sarnoff was right. Television changed the world.

Since then, the consumer electronics industry hasn't missed an opportunity to trumpet every little gadget and gizmo as the next revolutionary breakthrough that will make the planet a better place to live.

The computer field is particularly hype-happy. These are just a few of the

"revolutions" that journalists have been alerted to recently...

--"Compton's MultiMedia Encyclopedia" from Britannica, who boast: "Not since Gutenberg originated the method of printing from movable type has there been such a significant innovation in publishing."

Now, this encyclopedia on a compact disc IS an exciting development, but to compare it with the invention of printing is a little bit of a stretch, don't you think?

--The Anstrad Word Processor. "The greatest leap in consumer electronics since the hand held calculator," claims the manufacturer.

Come off it, guys. This is a word processor. It's not the first word processor. It's not the only word processor. It's just ANOTHER word processor.

--Personal Writer 15 (a device that allows computer users to write on a tablet and see the words appear on the computer screen). "The next computer revolution is at hand."

--NEC's Turbo Grafx video game system. "It's a quantum leap over and above any other entertainment system." A publicity person for NEC left that one on my telephone answering machine.

--Ricoh's new printer architecture. "Will revolutionize the development, use and marketing of laser printers," says Ricoh.

In the hands of a high-tech publicity department, ANY new product is "revolutionary," "a breakthrough" and "a quantum leap over and above everything that came before."

It almost seems like the LESS significant the product is, the more amazing it is touted to be.

Every day, my mailbox is stuffed with press releases announcing a few new "revolutions" that will change life as we know it. I think there have been about three hundred revolutions in the last few months. And that's a conservative estimate.

Who do they think they're kidding? Are reporters so dumb that they're going to fall for this stuff and print it as fact? Is the public so gullible that they're going to accept every new widget as the greatest thing since sliced bread? (Now THERE was a revolution!)

We've been blessed with a bumper crop of REAL revolutionary electronic products in the last decade. In six years, the compact disc has completely changed the way people listen to music, for instance. Last week I read that Phil Collins' new release will be the first album that will not even be manufactured as a vinyl record.

The fax machine is changing the way we live and work. So are camcorders, telephone answering machines, and, of course, personal computers. Someday we'll be telling our wide-eyed children and grandchildren about the "golden days" before we had these necessities.

It's easy to lose sight of the REAL revolutions when we're flooded with inposters on a daily basis.

TRICK OR TREAT SOFTWARE: "Don't Go Alone" (Accolade, for IBM, \$40) is a new role-playing game in which you have to prove that an old mansion is haunted.

You can also scare the daylights out of yourself with "Grave Yardage" (Activision, for IBM, \$35), an hysterical new football game where players use claws, knives, clubs and land mines to get into the end zone. It's all in good fun, but be certain to get your dead off the field before the next play begins.

Brain Teasers

1. What is it that occurs once in a second, once in a month, once in a century, yet not at all in a year or week?
2. A bookkeeper noticed there were two consecutive double letters in the word balloon. She found other examples, such as woolly and spittoon. Then she tried to think of a word with three consecutive pairs of double letters. She couldn't think of any. Can you? Answers are page 2 but you'll have to look for it.

