

Wordplay

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NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Al Kinney 640-5860

HEY! LOOK AT THIS!!

Now that I have your attention, thought I would fill you in on what's going on this month.

First, as most of you know, we have the Supercart kits available for \$15.00 each. This comes with everything you need to build a Supercart, except the module and Editor Assembler GROM. If you would like one of these babies, just bring an unused module that has foil "fingers" on both sides of the plug in board (TI-Invader) to the July meeting. We will have soldering and desoldering stuff as well as a few tools to help you construct your very own Supercart.

Editor Assembler GROM's will be available for \$3.60. Hopefully the library will have its disk of Supercart programs available for its normal fee. So here's your big chance in the 'Computer Hardware Customization' market. (No AI, how many times do I have to tell you, it's the other end of the iron you grab).

Second, as was implied above, we did receive our GROM order. If you ordered any of these things, they will be at the meeting. We currently have about twenty extra Editor Assembler GROM's. If you ever wanted an E/A module without spending the bucks for one, you can turn any old module in an E/A for \$3.60. *What a deal.*

OK, now for the money part.

Beginning balance	\$404.51
June expenses	470.42
June income	318.42

Current balance	\$252.51

That's it. See ya at the meeting.

OH, WHAT SHALL WE DO?

BY AL KINNEY, WORDPLAY EDITOR

DILEMMA: According to my Funk & Wagnalls this is a condition which causes ulcers by presenting numerous options, while not offering any CLEAR choices.

Well, maybe Funk & Wagnalls didn't say that, but, nonetheless I think it describes the condition we TI'ers are currently facing. Suddenly, after a long drought we have many options for expanding our system hardware, in particular, memory boards. Of course, you probably already know all of this, unless you've been in prison, or have been living under somebodys porch for the last couple of months.

Even so, I'm going to muddy the water a little bit more by trying to discuss some of these options. First, there have recently been released a number of memory boards that would provide functions such as RAM disk and/or print spooler operation. The companies are diverse, including **MYARC** on the East coast, **CORCOMP** on the West coast, and **NEW HORIZONS** in the Central states.

As if that were not choice enough, consider that there are still lots of **FOUNDATION** 128K cards still banging around, a few **MORNINGSTAR** 128K cards and maybe even a few of which I'm unaware.

Then, add in the special boards like the one being marketed by **RYTE DATA** that will add RAM and GRAM, the **GRAM KRACKER** from Miller's Graphics, and you have a real Mulligan stew brewing.

Then, just when you think you may have made a selection from this plethora, you have to take into

account future compatibilty. This may be **THE** most important issue to consider based on the recent "formal" announcement by **MYARC** of their new addition, the **GENE'VE**.

This computer-on-a-card system will add 640K of operating memory, with the option of adding another 2 **MEGABYTES**. The only hook to this nifty deal is, *apparently* the only memory options it will work with, are those manufactured by **MYARC**.
[NOTE: See the accompanying article]

In the past, I have made some noise about this issue, but I think the approach **MYARC** has taken for memory expansion is a reasonable one. They seem to have gone to considerable effort to allow the use of **TI** and **CORCOMP** disk controllers, and **RS-232** interface cards, as well as their own. I *suspect* the reasons for requiring the use of their memory board are technical, based on their particular technology. Or at least, I hope it is. In a market that is as fragile as the **TI** based home computer one is, I don't believe we can tolerate several different standards for hardware. The only foreseeable result of demanding brand specific purchases would be the driving out of future purchasers to a less restrictive market (i.e., **IBM** or **APPLE**.)

But, back to the issue at hand, which if you will recall, was how to choose from among at least four or five memory add-on boards that promise to do different things for you. First, consider your particular requirements.

For instance, do you do a **LOT** of programming and hacking or do you primarily use your system for productivity things like using **Multiplan** and **TI Writer**?

Or maybe you just like to do a variety of things like all of the above and play a few games, and do some telecommunications.

If you are really into programming and breaking the TI's operating system, you will probably have already decided which option fits your needs best, and that might be the GRAM KRACKER or GRAM KARTE. If, on the other hand, you are more of the multiple use group, you might want to consider one of the boards that will provide RAM DISK and PRINT SPOOLER utilities. MYARC, CORCOMP and NEW HORIZONS all fit the bill, with the variations appearing to be primarily the software that accompanies the boards.

Now, I can see it coming, I'll get the heck kicked out of me for oversimplifying it like that. But since I haven't had my hands on EITHER of the three, I really can't speak from experience, only observation. The one memory expansion board I have had my hands on, has been the MORNINGSTAR 128K. This is built and sold right here in the Portland area, and Scott Swenson, the President of MORNINGSTAR Software donated one for the use of the PUNN Bulletin Board. Although the board is not *currently* bundled with any software, the potential uses are enough to stir the imagination! In the period of time that I've had the board in my system while developing the new BBS software, Mike King and I have conceived of and created about 30 routines to take advantage of the additional memory (I ask and Mike creates.)

While the actual implementation is still pending, you'll be able to see some examples of those techniques at the next meeting. The main thing I wanted to point out, though, was that

the construction and use of this card is such that it should be totally compatible with *ANY* other boards that will work in your P-Box.

Whatever your ultimate choice is, talk to some of the knowledgeable people in the Users Group before you make your purchase, and maybe you'll pick up some valuable ideas before plunking down your hard-earned cash!

THE PUNN PROGRAM FOR JULY

By Martin Crommie

The PUNN program for July will be a discussion by our own Al Kinney on the ins and outs of Extended Basic programming, using subroutines, assembly language routines and other whizzy things with an emphasis on the new PUNN BBS program. We will see some of his and Mike King's innermost programming secrets. **DON'T MISS THIS ONE.**

Look for a new Terminal Emulation program from Paul Charlton (of FAST-TERM fame) due out soon.

If anybody wants one, there is a 99/8 to be had, but make sure that your offer is above \$1000.00

A new version of a disk-copy type program due out soon. The new version will have selective copy option.

MYARC GENE'VE 9640 FAMILY COMPUTER

[Editor's Note: Although this really begins to sound like a commercial message, I felt the news value was worthy of coverage. This information was downloaded from COMPUSERVE, and is *reportedly* the specifications for the MYARC computer. The information that was downloaded also contained information about where you could order such a product, and stated that the retail price planned for it was \$495.00. However, if you were a member of the COMPUSERVE TI Forum, the price was only \$415.00! Not a bad discount, I'd say. Now if the product really does make it...]

The following are the capabilities of the new Gene've computer as written in the Myarc literature:

- * 99/4(A) compatible. Runs over 100 existing TI cartridge programs.
- * 99/4(A) compatible. Runs over 95% of all assembly language programs & utilities.
- * Basic 3.0
- * TI-Writer & Multiplan will have a full 80 column displays.
- * Faster, by at least 2-3 times.
- * *Larger, Standard 640K RAM, 2 Megabytes addressable RAM, Myarc memory card compatible with Myarc 512K card, supplies 1.1 Megabytes RAM.*
- * IBM Type keyboard included.
- * Phone type cable, replaces old Hex Bus cable.
- * Mouse Support.
- * Separated Function keys.
- * Incredible graphics capabilities.
- * Composite video output as well as RGB Output.
- * 40 /80 column display.
- * Joystick port.
- * Compatible with existing peripheral cards:

Disk controllers:

Myarc, TI, Corcomp.

RS232 Cards:

Myarc, TI, Corcomp.

- * Myarc memory expansion cards add directly to RAM (modification required)
- * *Two megabytes addressable memory.*
- * 128K VDP RAM Memory
- * True hardware utilities for Sprites, Fills, Lines, Data Moves.
- * TI 9995 Processor Chip - *Running at 12 MHz*
- * 256 Bytes ULTRA High Speed on Chip RAM.
- * Pre-fetch on instructions
- * Post-store on instructions
- * Sound compatible and expandable
- * Speech included

CRICKET'S CORNER

BY Cricket Raybern, President

I was recently accused of using my computer for something USEFUL! I must admit, it is true. However, it is also true that I have been using my computer for several just plain FUN things as well.

It is almost impossible to keep up with all of the new programs which have become available these last few months. If you haven't been coming to meetings and using our Bulletin Board you are missing out!

If you don't have the hardware to use the BBS, the files which have been uploaded to the Board are available from the PUNN library. I challenge each of you to try something NEW this next month. If you don't have a full system the library will put programs on cassette tape for you. There are many programs which don't require a full system. If you do have a full system...what new programs have you tried lately?

Whether your pleasure is graphics/digitized pictures, cataloging all of your discs, music, games or hard-core programming... we have new programs just for you in our PUNN library. Come to the meeting to LEARN and SHARE, that's what PUNN is all about...we NEED and WANT you!

Hope to see you on July 1,

%^% Cricket %^%

GENIAL TRAVELER

{From the Cleveland Area 99/4A Users Group}

Have you ever wished that the TI had a magazine on a disk, just like the "big boys"? We DO! And it only costs \$5 per issue, instead of the \$12-15 you see at the magazine stands. It is called the GENIAL TRAVELER, and is published by Barry Traver, who is noted throughout the TI world for some of his innovative programming. He is also a sysop on COMPUSERVE.

Two issues have been published, and 2 "bonus" disks have been sent with apologies for his being unable at this time to meet a regular publication date. It should be noted that Mr. Traver is publishing this diskazine as a *project*, so, irregular publication dates should, in no way, be compared to other "commercial" publications, with which we are all too familiar.

You can obtain a 6-issue subscription for \$30.00. Each issue consists of a "flippy" with both sides packed with tutorials, general information and programs. The first bonus disk contained the programs MASTER CATALOG, TK-WRITER and FAST-TERM, which came with the first issue in the latter part of December. The second issue came in March, and the second bonus disk came the end of April, which contained FUNLWRITER and DM1000, V.3.1. Many of you already have benefitted from this bonus disk as these programs were immediately made available to the librarians.

The address is:

GENIAL TRAVELER
835 Green Valley Drive
Philadelphia, PA 19128

Artist's Companion

A winner for TI-Artist fans

By R. PETROCONE

Recently Insebot, Inc. released version 2.0 of their TI-ARTIST drawing program.

Along with many added features were options to utilize instances and to load and display different character sets. Instances are sections of larger pictures which can be saved or loaded independently of the master picture, similar to the clipboard of GRAPHX, with the exception that an instance in TI-Artist can be of any size unlike GRAPHX which has four set sizes. The alphanumeric entry options allow you to load character sets of any size or content. Once a character set is loaded a print text option allows you to enter text and display it anywhere on the screen.

Artist's Companion allows you to benefit from these two powerful functions without having to do any work beforehand.

Performance: Artist's Companion comes on five single sided/single density diskettes and consists of 25 character fonts, 30 large instances of varied sizes and 160 40x40 pixel instances of everything imaginable from houses to teddy bears.

The first two diskettes are occupied by the character fonts. The character fonts vary in size from 7 pixels to 32 pixels high with the average in the mid twenties. All character sets have upper-case and most have punctuation and numerals. Two character sets have a lower case.

The character fonts are really excellently done and have a good variety of styles. These are worth well the entire purchase price by themselves. There is Far East, Script, Tech, IBM, 3D and many more very useful styles. Also included are two very novel styles, Cho Cho and Plane. The Cho Cho font includes a steam train engine, caboose, and cars with the different letters on them. The Plane font has a plane with letters which form a banner pulled by the plane.

Review

Report Card

Performance A
 Ease of Use.....A
 Documentation A
 Value.....A +
 Final Grade.....A

Cost: \$17.50 (\$1.50 postage)

Manufacturer: Texaments, 53 Center Street, Patchogue, New York, 11772.

Requirements: Console, monitor or television, expansion memory, Editor/Assembler, Mini-Memory, Extended BASIC, TI-Writer, CorComp manager, or Myarc Disk Controller; disk system; TI-Artist Ver 2.0; joysticks and printer optional.

The instances are stored on the last three diskettes with the third having the large instances and the fourth and fifth having the smaller standard sized instances. The large instances on the average fill about a quarter of the screen and as with the rest of this package are beautifully done. Some of the instances include a horse, clown, bird and even Dumbo and Mickey Mouse.

Most of the final 140 instances, while not as intricately done as the larger instances, are obviously well thought out objects that someone might require when drawing a picture, an amazing array of pictures that any amateur artist might need. You name it, it's there, a house, car, cat, bicycle, computer, flower, several trees and many more.

Ease of Use: Both the character fonts and instances couldn't be easier to use. For instances all that must be done is to type in the filename and then move the window. Text printing is done the same way except that you must enter the text you wish to have printed. This entire process is tho-

roughly explained in the TI-Artist instruction manual.

Documentation: The documentation is included on two pages and is mainly a reference document. It lists the disk number and filename (what the character set or instance is) and for character sets it lists its height in pixels and the characters included in the set. The author of each character set or instance is also listed. The documentation also gives the manufacturer's warranty which allows for the replacement of any diskette within 60 days for \$2 with original diskette and dated sales receipt.

Value: Each diskette works out to cost only \$3.80 each including postage. The amount of work which goes into each of these diskettes can go without saying. And their usefulness, well, if you're using TI-Artist for anything they can't help but be helpful. Definitely one of the best values on the market.

(Since writing the review, Petrocone has joined with Dave Rose, author of Artist's Companion, in producing Artist's Companion #2 for Insebot.—Ed.)

User groups may buy videotape on Miller

The Front Range 99er Computer Club of Colorado Springs has made a VHS tape of Craig Miller demonstrating and discussing products from his company, Millers Graphics.

According to Joe Nuvolini of the group, Miller demonstrates the Millers Graphics' Explorer, GRAM Kracker, Night Mission and DISKASSEMBLER and discusses his new keyboard interface.

Nuvolini said the videotape is available to other users groups for \$15 plus \$2 postage and handling, payable by certified check or money order.

Orders may be placed with the Front Range 99er Computer Club, P.O. Box 9572, Colorado Springs, CO 80932.

THE ELECTRONIC INTERLOPER

The innocuous box sitting in the corner can sometimes tear families and marriages apart

By CYNTHIA F. MITCHELL

THE OTHER WOMAN — or man — of the 1980s is short and squat. But my, how seductive—able to enrapture spouses for hours on end.

Unlike most home wreckers, this paramour takes up permanent residence right there in the living room, or even the bedroom.

Known to most as a personal computer, this seemingly inanimate object almost wrecked Miki and Paul Jaeger's 10 good years of marriage. Bree James had to hurl objects at her husband, Michael, just to get him to look up from his little PC AT. The machine even comes between parents and children: Linne Wilson started setting a kitchen timer in her home office to roust herself off the computer after her daughter's pleas of "Mommy, when are you going to come out?" sunk in.

"It was just so irresistible," Ms. Wilson says.

As computers become more common in the home, more families are finding that in addition to the joys of juggling investments or typing term papers, computers are bringing new hostilities and resentments into the house. Marriage and family counselors report that increasing numbers of couples and families are complaining that computers—not in-laws, golf or booze—are tearing their families and marriages apart.

"In a household, you have a finite time to spend with family, chores, etc. You don't delegate time for a computer. So if one comes into the home, something else has to give," says Nicholas Vitalari, a professor at the University of California at Irvine's business school, who conducted a two-year study of the social effects of computing in the home.

Often, he says, what gives is "quality time" with the family. Many find the intellectual challenge of rooting out an elusive program "bug" more stimulating than what they find across the dinner table. Awkward adolescents may retreat to a keyboard and a screen for hours on end, finding the acceptance and confidence they may not be getting elsewhere.

"What a great way for people to ignore each other, a way to avoid intimacy," says Jim Lomax, director of psychiatry at Baylor University's medical school in Houston.

A two-month fling with the new computer isn't anything to worry about, counselors say. If it continues, however, it's probably symptomatic of other problems—a communication gap, too much stress at work or an emotional need that isn't being met by the spouse or family.

But the experts don't advocate tossing the computer out the window; pinpointing the deeper prob-

lems and solving them usually makes the computer just what it is—a non-threatening, two-foot cube of plastic that can be quite useful. In fact, several families say the computer can provide an incredible bond—something that husband, wife and kids all have in common and can discuss over the dinner table.

When Carlyn and Richard Hobbs of San Jose, Calif., were struggling with marital problems and his high-stress job at failing Osborne Computer Corp., he started spending an inordinate amount of time at the computer. "For a while there, that's what he was using the computer for—to block out feelings and problems," she recalls.

A new job, and marriage counseling to work out their other problems, reduced the resentment the computer was causing.

Still, Mrs. Hobbs says, she can use her husband's computer time as a barometer of his state of mind.

helped the parents figure out that love and attention from them could go a long way toward boosting their son's self-esteem.

Sometimes, the conflict is as simple as family battles over who gets to use the computer. Ari Friedman, a 15-year-old ninth grader from Bethesda, Md., says that after his father bought him a computer as a gift, Ari lost more than a few nights' sleep. His father, a family therapist who was writing a book, often used the printer at 3 a.m.—in the room above Ari's bedroom.

Worse yet, Ari recalls, "I'd wake up in the morning and (the computer) would be gone; my father would leave a note that it would be back at dinner. Then on the weekends, it started to disappear altogether."

His father finally bought one for himself.

Sometimes the most frustrating aspect for spouses and children is that the person using the computer is in sight, yet unreachable. "Younger ones five and under just don't understand why Mommy's not there for them," says Kathleen Christensen, a City University of New York professor who studied the effects of home-based computer work on families.

No one has yet suggested warning labels on personal computers, and there's no Computerholics Anonymous. So far, couples and families are tackling the problem piecemeal—on their own or with the help of counsel-

ing. When the novelty doesn't wear off, some families have set schedules, with timers and all, to limit computer use or have scheduled regular "family times" to ensure they keep in contact.

The most common and effective solution does seem to be to get the whole family involved with the computer.

Before Miki Jaeger did that, she recalls slamming doors and storming through their two-bedroom apartment to snag her husband's attention. She'd blow up because she found herself saddled with both her chores and his—plus a nine-year-old son who wasn't sure why his dad wasn't paying

much attention, even though he was right across the room.

"He was having another relationship with his computer, and I was in competition," she says. "It would have been easier to compete with another woman. Then you can at least be self-righteous."

Rather than chuck a 10-year marriage, they went to a marriage counselor for several months and worked out a lot of compromises—one of which was to buy a computer for her. Now, their main source of contention is arguing over who gets to use the printer.

Bree and Michael James headed off their marriage problems that way, too. Once Bree learned to use the computer, she quit throwing things at her husband when he was using it.

And, at the suggestion of their marriage counselor, they also figured a way for Michael to immerse himself in the computer and still handle his share of watching their two-year-old daughter—they attached a rear-view mirror to the computer. ■



Kimberly Bulcken Root

For children who use the computer as an escape, it can be a vicious circle, says Jerald Kay, an associate professor of child psychology at the University of Cincinnati. The computer is an accepting "friend" and a confidence-booster; at the same time, shunning human friends for the computer halts the social growth that the teen-ager so desperately needs.

"Besides, the parents are sometimes so grateful that it's not drugs or vandalism that they don't dare interfere," he says.

Dr. Kay worked with one family who came to him worried that their teen-age son was too withdrawn and didn't have enough friends. He also spent a huge amount of time on the computer.

"It allowed him not only to avoid feelings of conflict with parents and his siblings, but it gave him a unique sense of feeling special—an extraordinary talent that the other family members didn't have," Dr. Kay says.

He counseled the parents and child separately and

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***** NEXT MEETING ***
JULY 1, 1986 7:00 p.m.**