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IMPACT/99
by Jack Sughrue

BLUE RIBBON II

Last time in our IMPACT column we presented Asgard Software with the 1988 Blue Ribbon Award for outstanding commercial support of our 99 and for the upgraded Geneve 9640 from Myarc. We wrote about some of the games (LEGENDS, HIGH GRAVITY, BALLOON WARS, etc.) that would satisfy most game enthusiasts (like myself) and promised to complete an overview of the company's excellent products produced by some of the most prominent programmers and artists in the TI community.

However, most grownups prefer the utility software to games these days. In a way, that's too bad: we don't want to take the FUN out of computing because people might mistake us for IBM owners.

There is a way out of this dilemma. Asgard. Some of the utilities are so much fun you feel you are playing games or solving puzzles instead of working at tasks.

Let's peek at a few.

TOTAL FILER, for example, is my favorite data base. It's free form and written entirely in extremely fast c99 (though it can load and run through XB, TIW, or E/A). I also like and use CREATIVE FILING SYSTEM and PR

BASE, two extraordinary Fairware data bases. But I use TOTAL FILER more often for more reasons. It is quick. Nothing difficult to load and be forced to figure out peculiar keyboard patterns for a pile of menus. TF is designed for the user. It is simple, easy, quick, clean. Though it has been promoted as a way of putting all your TI Writer files into easily-accessed electronic index cards (the kind of program writers dream of and is done better by TF than by ANY data base for ANY computer, believe me), I still prefer it for those normal kinds of files one uses about the home or work. I use it for all the filing I need to do with my 5th-grade class. I use it for my collection of P.G. Wodehouse books and all my audio and video tapes. I have used it for collections of these IMPACT articles, as well as for poems and essays I wrote when I needed to pull them together for books. This makes my FUNNELWEB (or whatever TIW you use) a lot more potent, too. There is no limit to the number of files serviced by TF. You don't have to worry about sorts. In seconds, TF'll find anything you've key-worded when creating your file. Let's say I created a

Wodehouse file and listed JEEVES AND THE TIE THAT BINDS. I keyworded the following: Jeeves, Bertie, Madeline, Dahlia, Runkle, politics. I also had a small write-up on the book with publication dates, etc. I can call it all up with the title. Or I can (if I forgot the title) remember that Madeline was in it or it was about politics or that Bertie was staying at his Aunt Dahlia's. If I type any of those words above, the DISK would be IMMEDIATELY read for all instances of, say, Dahlia. I could then key through all the Dahlia books until the right one popped up. Runkle, however, is only in this book. If I keyed that in, the stuff would be standing before me on the screen. There are so many things you can do with TF (including printing out the individual entries or a master listing) that I don't wish to take up this somewhat generic overview review with all the ways one could use it.

There are little specialty programs put out by Asgard, too: STAMP MANAGER (for stamp collectors); RECIPE WRITER (now updated for serious cooks) with volumes of recipes in the ELECTRONIC GOURMET package; PRE-SCAN IT! (to speed up and reduce XB programs even if you aren't a programmer); MUSIC SYNTHESIZER (for the novice to create music on the TI); TUNNEL OF DOOM EDITOR (which lets you create your own TOD games, including weapons, monsters, graphics, text); SCREEN SCROLL PACKAGE (for adding all kinds of assembly items to XB even without knowing assembly); and so on.

Two outstandingly versatile and useful programs are the old (but updated with all kinds of new features and speed) SCHEDULE MANAGER and the new EZ-KEYS.

The former, an integrated appointment book, is filled with so many easy, instant features that you'll wonder how you ever existed without it before. This

is a lot like using a typewriter and discovering wordprocessing. You can have up to a full screen of appointments or comments on each day of a 4-month calendar (which updates). The famous Asgard pull-down menus let you access any part of the program. SM also features a 30-page notebook for names, addresses, phones, and so much more.

Probably the utility blockbuster for XB programmers and novices this year will be EZ-KEYS. It's simply an astounding piece of software. When I first heard the name I thought it was another program to make command macrokeys. And that was it. Lots of hype, little value. Was I wrong! Although this program makes macrokeys of EVERYTHING, it is just one of the unusual things it does. It does, however, bring macro-ing to the State of the Art by being able to define 55 keys to contain the commands you use that kind of program for, but you, the user, can put up to 671 characters of utilities, keystroke combos, program code, WHATEVER, on every single one of these keys and - get this - chain them together for further combinations! EZ gives you full cursor control. The secret word is FULL! You can also change screen colors while programming and more and more and more. EZ will sit behind most programs (I've found none that it doesn't, including hybrids with assembly.) so you can pull into that program any of the EZ features for direct use or permanent customizing. Imagine what this can do for your most-often used programs! Excellent documentation, the hallmark of Asgard, is hardly necessary because of the ease of use and clarity of intent. Remarkable!

Asgard has become the unquestioned leader in graphics and electronic publishing in the TI world. If you combine the Public Domain MAX-RLE and the latest Fairware FUNNELWEB with the stuff from Asgard, you can

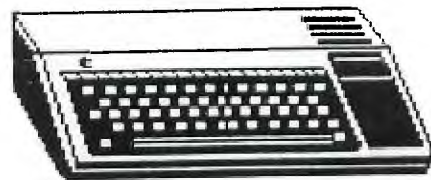
practically create a complete standard of all the TI industry's graphic design out there. Desktop publishing has come of age for us all. The big program from Asgard in this area is FONTWRITER II. With it you can do flyers and signs and reports and letterheads and anything your imagination will let you do. You can combine text with pictures (even on the same line) right out of a TI Writer file. There are almost 200 typefaces available in TI-Artist and CSGD format (some with this disk) and FONTWRITER can use them all! The image-creation flexibility is enormous. Asgard also puts out volumes of ARTIST FONTS (for TI-Artist or FONTWRITER); ARTIST INSTANCES (by subject matter - Hooray!) featuring animals, holidays, home, people, computer, etc.; ARTIST ENLARGER which lets you enlarge or reduce or stretch or squeeze in any direction any font or instance to use with FONTRWRITER or TI-Artist. Asgard also has four packages of GRAPHX COMPANIONS. Hundreds of fonts, cliparts, borders, pictures, animation sequences, and so on for people with GRAPHX (or to a more limited degree MAX-RLE, but preferably both for easy conversions) to become part of this electronic publishing. GRAPHX SLIDESHOW by Paul Charlton will display a full disk of RLE or GRAPHX pictures in manual or automatic settings.

Whew!

What has happened is that Asgard produces and distributes software faster that it can be reviewed in a column like this. This is not a complaint. The programs continue to get A ratings from MICROpendium and many newsletters. It's a company worth investigating. Mr. Bobbitt promises some really exciting new software "that'll knock your socks off" coming up soon. I, for one, can't wait.

For free catalog and price list, write to Asgard Software, PO Box 10306, Rockville, MD 20850.

Tell 'em Impact sent you.
Enjoy!
[Jack Sughrue, Box 459,
E.Douglas MA 01516]



MOONMINE module:

Q: How do you pick up objects-
eg water?

A: When the object appears at the bottom of the screen, hit SPACE. See that new little man? Walk him over to the object and press FIRE and he picks it up! To return to the ship you must first destroy that monster lurking on the screen!

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UPCOMING EVENTS

TACOMA 99'ERS USER GROUP ACTIVITIES FOR 1989

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL
5 MEETING	2 MEETING	2 MEETING	6 MEETING
19 MEETING-OFFICERS NOMINATIONS	16 MEETING	16 MEETING	20 MEETING
MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST
4 MEETING	1 MEETING	6 MEETING	3 MEETING
18 MEETING	15 MEETING	20 MEETING	17 MEETING
SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
7 MEETING	5 MEETING	2 MEETING	7 MEETING
21 MEETING	19 MEETING	16 MEETING	21 MEETING

REVISED: 01/16/89

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FOUR4-A/TALK
Random ramblings
about things TI.

from
Bill Gaskill

January 1989

SOFTWARE SURPRISES:

A quiet revolution seems to have taken place in TI-99/4A software over the last year that threatens to vault 4A productivity into the 20th century. It started in Canada when an unknown programmer named Charles Earl suddenly appeared with TELCO, a telecommunications program for the 99/4A that had no business looking and acting like it was written to run on an IBM, but it surely did. Then Dennis Faherty, partners in the famed Inscebot Inc. software house that brought us TI-Artist, came out with a dBase-like information manager, complete with a command language and all sorts of disk management features built right into the program. While we weren't watching another virtual unknown named Jim Reiss delivers Typewriter 99, an elegantly crafted yet alarmingly simple tool to turn the 4A into a typewriter, complete with on-screen display of boldfacing, underlining and more. Wow! Now, well-known data base guru Warren Agee has released a data base program called FirstBase that has the potential to handle 32,767 records in a single file, with 720 bytes per field and 75 fields per record?! Incredible! To top things off, Charles Earl is also promising to deliver a word processor that can do columns and act like it is a TI-99 version of Word Perfect. I love it!

Released in February of 1988, Telco is already in V2.3 as Charles Earl struggles to keep up with the demands of users, his own ideas for improvement and those who find that occasional bug in the program. Much to my dismay, I have not been able to get a copy of Telco working properly with my system. The Myarc HFDC doesn't seem to like it. I sure hope that something changes, either in the card or the program, because I seem to be missing out on the premier telecommunications program available for TI owners.

If you are a MICROpendium reader (if you aren't, WHY NOT?) you will know about my love affair with TI-Base from Inscebot Inc. This is the best data management program available for the 99/4A without exception. It is 100% assembly language coded, it is absolutely feature packed and it is pure fun to use. Try it. You WILL like it.

Jim Reiss's TypeWriter 99 is a superb program that has only one limitation that frustrates me. Since I use the Horizon Ram Disk to hold all of my "everyday use" programs like DM1000 and TI-Writer, I also wanted to put TypeWriter on the HRD. Well, that can be done, but with some limitations on program performance.

Apparently TypeWriter 99 is written with an absolute origin address or something, because it only works properly with the Editor/Assembler module. Neither option 3 from the Horizon Ram Disk, Barry Boone's E/A5 Loader from Extended Basic nor the FunnelWeb loaders fully support it. What happens is that the program will still type, but all letters are

in upper case, both on-screen and at the printer, and none of the boldface nor underline inverse video shows up on screen. Tab keys also don't work. That's really too bad because I never use the E/A module and I hate to do module swapping anyway. So, I rarely use TypeWriter 99 as a result. I really think that such a program needs to be readily available to be really valuable. As it is, I can boot my ram disk version of TI-Writer in 1-2 seconds, so I am not going to want to take the time to swap modules and then load the program off of a floppy disk. I hope that Jim Reiss reads this and is able and willing to make some adjustments to the program. I really like TypeWriter 99 but since it is designed to be a convenience tool, it really needs to be useable from Extended Basic, which is the module most users always have in their consoles.

Warren Agee's FirstBase program will be reviewed in MICROpendium. Keep your eyes peeled for it. If you are considering FirstBase for your data management needs you will want to find out what I have to say about it in order to make an informed decision.

NUTS AND BOLTS AND STUFF:

Ever hear of Jim Peterson? How about TigerCub Software? If you haven't heard of either, then you haven't been a member of the TI community very long. Well, about four months ago I ordered a whole slew of programs from Jim (TigerCub) because I wanted to have the information on what he had to offer so that I could include it in an indexing project I was working on. Besides that, I read that he had the stuff on sale, and I'm a sucker for a sale. What I got was a surprise, a whole bunch of neat programs and a delightful horde of information that will keep me busy for months.

TigerCub Software sells three disks that are called Nuts and Bolts that contain over 300 XB subprograms and/or routines that you can merge right into any existing XB program. The scope of the routines runs from screen displays to file manipulation and they are awesome! Nuts and Bolts 1,2 and 3 are a virtual anthology of a programmer's life at the keyboard of the 99/4A. There has to be years of labor involved in these gems because (1) there are so many of them and (2) they are so clever.

The utility of the Nuts and Bolts disks provides the XB programmer with an instant library of routines that will save you countless hours of trying to figure out how to program things like screen fade-ins and fade-outs, how to get ACCEPT AT to take more than 28 characters, how to justify text on screen, how to create graphs (including bargraphs and 3-D graphs), sorting, searching, string segmentation, all manner of character redefining, joystick routines, program debuggers, calendars, financial routines and so much more. The Nuts and Bolts libraries are unique in the TI community. No one offers anything like it except Jim Peterson. If you program in XB, Nuts and Bolts 1,2 and 3 are a must. Contact Jim at TigerCub Software 156 Collingwood Rd. Columbus, Ohio 43213 for more information.

Bill Gaskill
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Until next time...

DESK TOP PUBLISHING ON YOUR OWN - PART 1

This article will be but one of a series of three or four to follow in the coming months. All will be on the same theme: How to do your own Desk Top Publishing.

Because of our limited RAM capability a complete sophisticated Desk Top Publishing package seems unlikely; however, we can come close to duplicating much of the same output of an IBM or MACINTOSH. Granted, we may not do everything they can do, and we may have to "jump" through a few more hoops to reach our goal, but we CAN accomplish much the same; and at a much lower cost!

My ultimate goal is to demonstrate how such products like TI-ARTIST, FONT-WRITER, GRAPHY, PICTURE IT, and others, can be used separately or in union with one another to produce an attractive finished product.

For the first of my series, I will explain how I put together the BOOK REPORT form (see sample) I use for my class. A colleague of mine owns a

MACINTOSH. He created an attractive book report form that impressed me. I quickly said to myself, "How can I do the same?" After some thought, I began duplicating (no, improving!) his form. Our forms were identical in text, layout, and graphics, with the exception of the row of book ends at the top and bottom, and horse graphic.

Here's how I started: The TMS books and book ends are actually TI-ARTIST fonts. The name of the font is BOOK_F. It is on the TRIO+ SOFTWARE Data 3 disk of fonts and graphics. I booted the font into TI-ARTIST, typed the special character for the front book end, then "TMS", and finally, the end book end. I saved the TMS message as an Instance.

For the "reading horse" graphic, I had to first convert it from an RLE picture to an Instance. To do this, I used the Artist Enhancement option. After saving my newly created Instance, I decided it was too large for my

purpose; so I used ASGARD'S ARTIST ENLARGER (which also has a reduction feature) to reduce the Instance. I now had two saved "horse" Instances: the original and the reduced one.

I loaded my second horse Instance into TI-ARTIST, entered my font, and typed my title. I then saved this as a picture file. The two boxed in graphics were created and saved as ARTIST Instances. The fonts came from GENIAL FONT PACK 11 and 2. The fonts in this package are well suited for work like this, because of their size.

The borders came from ARTIST BORDERS 11 by ASGARD.

Now, here is how I put this all together. I created my TI-WRITER text file using the FONT-WRITER recognized dot commands. After saving this file, I ran it through the FONT-WRITER formatter. (See print-out of actual file below).

If you haven't used FONT-WRITER much, make sure all your files (text and graphics) are on the same

disk. FONT-WRITER will now print everything for you. I know all this may sound like a round-about way of doing things, but it's not really that bad. The hardest part is knowing exactly what you want to do first!

As you study the actual TI-WRITER file, you can see that the heart of the entire form was the creation of one Artist picture and 5 Instance files. The last Instance file was a saved Instance of my name in script. If you are wondering why my file starts with the page length (.PL) dot command of 999, it is because the page length default is 66 lines. If the bogus 999 length were not used, the paper would have formed the next page and finished printing the information on the second sheet!

Next month, I will show you how to use PICTURE IT, TI-ARTIST, and TI-WRITER to produce a very professional looking document. Until then, HAPPY TI-ING!
JIM LUQUE

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.PL 999
.IR DSK1.BRENDS_1
.IP DSK1.BKRP1LG0_P
.TX → .TI
YOUR NAME _____ DATE _____

THE TITLE OF YOUR BOOK: _____

THE AUTHOR OF YOUR BOOK _____

TOTAL NUMBER OF PAGES _____
.GK
.CE
.II DSK1.BYTYPE_1
.
.TX → .TI
In 75-100 words, write what your book was about; include the name(s) of the
author character(s), SPELLING, GRAMMAR, CAPITALIZATION, AND PUNCTUATION WILL BE
CHECKED. WRITE YOUR SUMMARY ON THE BACKSIDE OF THIS FORM.
In your summary, be sure to give some personal feelings -or views- of what you
read (or learned); tell why you chose that particular book, and why you rated
the book as you did.

.GP
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.II DSK1.RATEDW_1
.IP DSK1.BRENDS_1
.CE
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BOOK

REPORT



YOUR NAME _____

DATE _____

THE TITLE OF YOUR BOOK _____

THE AUTHOR OF YOUR BOOK _____

TOTAL NUMBER OF PAGES _____

Circle the TYPE of book

Adventure	Mystery
Romance	Animal
Science Fiction	Myth
Bio/Autobiography	
Other _____	

In 75-100 words, write what your book was about; include the name(s) of the main character(s). SPELLING, GRAMMAR, CAPITALIZATION, AND PUNCTUATION WILL BE CHECKED. WRITE YOUR SUMMARY ON THE BACKSIDE OF THIS FORM.

In your summary, be sure to give some personal feelings -or views- of what you read (or learned); tell why you chose that particular book, and why you rated the book as you did.

Rate Your Book
 Circle if it was a
 "winner"
 or a
 "DUO"



Mr. Luque's 6th Grade

THIS QUIZ APPEARED IN THE QB MONITOR NEWSLETTER (DATE NOT NOTED)
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BRAIN TEASERS

This test does not measure your intelligence, your fluency with words and certainly not your mathematical ability. It will, however, give you some gauge of your mental flexibility and creativity. In the three years since we developed the test, we've found few people who could solve more than half the 24 questions on the first try. Many however, reported getting answers long after the test had been set aside, particularly at unexpected moments when their minds were relaxed; and some reported solving all the questions over a period of several days. Take this as our personal challenge.

INSTRUCTIONS: Each question below contains the initials of words that will make it correct. Find the missing words.

Example: 16 O. in a P. 16 Ounces in a Pound

- * 1. 26 L. of the A. _____
- * 2. 7 W. of the A. W. _____
- * 3. 1001 A. N. _____
- * 4. 12 S. of the Z. _____
- * 5. 54 C. in a D. (with the J.) _____
- * 6. 9 P. in the S. S. _____
- * 7. 88 P. K. _____
- * 8. 13 P. on the A. F. _____
- * 9. 32 D. F. at which W. F. _____
- * 10. 18 H. in a G. C. _____
- * 11. 90 D. in a R. A. _____
- * 12. 200 D. for P. G. in M. _____
- 13. 8 S. on a S. S. _____
- * 14. 4 Q. in a G. _____
- * 15. 24 H. in a D. _____
- 16. 1 W. on a U. _____
- 17. 5 D. in a Z. C. _____
- * 18. 57 H. V. _____
- * 19. 11 P. on a F. T. _____
- * 20. 1000 W. that a P. is W. _____
- * 21. 29 D. in F. in a L. Y. _____
- 22. 64 S. on a C. _____
- * 23. 40 D. and N. of the G. F. _____
- * 24. 3 B. M. (S.H.T.R.) _____

Ed. Note This article has appeared with a promise that the answers would appear in the next one but I have never been able to find the answers. The ones starred I have come up with plausible - possible answers. I have had this quiz in my possession for about 3 years and thought of 3 while keying in this article. I will give you my answers next month. The person who can give me the most answers will get a free program.

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