YESTERDAY'S NEWS

30 Years Ago...

Historical Information taken from Bill Gaskills TIMELINE

July 1990:

MICROpendium publishes V7N6 consisting of 40 pages.

PRESS, the long-awaited word processor from Asgard Software, via assembly language wizard Charles Earl, is declared officially dead. Earl gives up on the project after failing to discover the source of several bugs in the massive program.

TI-Base 3.01 is released to address several bugs discovered in the V3.0 release.   YN
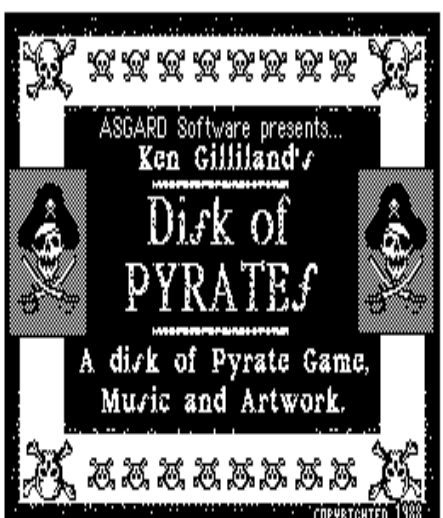
By
Steve
Mickelson

9T9
User Group

"Sixteen men on a dead man's chest, yo!ho!ho! ..."

Who hasn't heard this song and not conjured visions of romantic adventures on the high seas! For both in literature and history the pirates of old were grudgingly admired, or at least respected to some degree, for their historic role of anti-hero and spoiler. Witness the impact of Jean Laffite and the Baratarians upon U.S. history and Canada's mysterious Oak Island treasure. And who hasn't enjoyed the stories of Treasure Island, The Swiss Family Robinson and The Pirates Of Penzance. Even the Disney Pyrates of the Caribbean ride reflects modern society's pre-occupation with the Robin Hoods of the Seven Seas.

Having such a high interest in the antics of pirates, its little wonder Asgard Software was willing to assume the risK of distributing software that followed in the footsteps of the Adventure Pirate disK or the cartridge, Return to Pirates' Island. However, we are not just presented with a single adventure game or group of songs. Rather Ken Gilliland's offing has combined historical biographies and histories, together with animated instance displays, a slide show of Pirate memoribilia, salty sailor songs, instances and an adventure game ala 99'er magazine. While all of the pacKage may not be original software, the innovative genius behind putting such a pacKage together maKes for a great entertainment pacKage in four-SS/SD disKettes.

With this era of serious word processing, graphic and data base software, Ken Gilliland reminds us one of the reasons many of us first bought,(and still use), our TI, and that is the "entertain-me", at the same time "teach-me" aspects of the TI system. Because of this and the fact the software utilizes the many capabilities of the TI so well, I must give this pacKage top marKs. If you too harbour some facination with these rougues and scallywags, then the DisK of Pyrates is for you.

DEAD MEN TELL NO TALES!

BOSUN! KEEL HAUL THESE MEN!

TI CLASSROOM

TIPS FROM THE TIGERCUB NUMBER **14**

By Jim Peterson

You may have observed that the Tigercub now possesses a Gemini 10X printer. The only fault I could find with it was that it wouldn't print Chinese, so I remedied that defect with this little program.

```
100 !THIS ROUTINE INITIALIZE
S THE GEMINI 10X TO PRINT 'C
HINESE' UNTIL IT IS TURNED O
FF - by Jim Peterson
110 OPEN #1:"PIO"
120 PRINT #1:CHR$(27);CHR$(4
2);CHR$(0);:: CALL CLEAR
130 FOR CH=65 TO 90 :: PRINT
 "WORKING..." :: FOR J=1 TO
7 :: FOR L=1 TO 9 :: RANDOMI
ZE :: IF (INT(3*RND+1)<3)+((
L>1)*(D(J,L-1)>0))THEN 150
140 D(J,L),D(J,10-L)=(1+ABS(
J>1))^J
150 NEXT L
160 NEXT J
170 FOR L=1 TO 9 :: FOR J=1
TO 7 :: X(L)=X(L)+D(J,L):: N
EXT J :: NEXT L
180 PRINT #1:CHR$(27);CHR$(4
2);CHR$(1);CHR$(CH);CHR$(1);
CHR$(X(1));CHR$(X(2));CHR$(X
(3));CHR$(X(4));CHR$(X(5));C
HR$(X(6));CHR$(X(7));CHR$(X(
8));CHR$(X(9))
190 FOR J=1 TO 7 :: FOR L=1
TO 9 :: D(J,L)=0 :: NEXT L :
: NEXT J
200 FOR L=1 TO 9 :: X(L)=0 :
: NEXT L :: NEXT CH
210 PRINT #1:CHR$(27);CHR$(3
6);CHR$(1);
220 PRINT #1:CHR$(27);CHR$(8
7);CHR$(1)
230 PRINT #1:CHR$(27);CHR$(7
1)
240 STOP
```

Now, without turning off the printer, type LIST "PIO" or run any program that puts out text to the printer. It won't fool a Chinaman but it might impress your friends.

Here's a little something for you who own the Terminal Emulator II and the Speech Synthesizer. Maybe our Congressmen could use it to help them discuss the national debt.

```
100 CALL CLEAR
110 PRINT TAB(7);"NUMBER SPE
AKER": : :"by Jim Peterson":
"        of Tigercub Software"
: : :
120 PRINT " This program wil
l print any":" number of les
s than 67":"digits in number
s and in"
130 PRINT "words, and will s
peak the":"words.": : : :" R
equires Terminal Emulator":"
II and Speech Synthesizer.":
 : :
140 CALL CHAR(39,"0000000000
301020")
150 OPEN #1:"SPEECH",OUTPUT
160 DIM HIGH$(21),NN$(23)
170 DATA ONE,TWO,THREE,FOUR,
FIVE,SIX,SEVEN,EIGHT,NINE
180 DATA TEN,ELEVEN,TWELVE,T
HIRTEEN,FOURTEEN,FIFTEEN,SIX
TEEN,SEVENTEEN,EIGHTEEN,NINE
TEEN
190 DATA TWENTY,THIRTY,FORTY
,FIFTY,SIXTY,SEVENTY,EIGHTY,
NINETY
200 DATA THOUSAND,MILLION,BI
LLION,TRILLION,QUADRILLION,Q
UINTILLION,SEXTILLION,SEPTIL
LION,OCTILLION,NONILLION
210 DATA DECILLION,UNDECILLI
ON,DUODECILLION,TREDECILLION
,QUATTUORDECILLION,QUINDECIL
LION,SEXTEDECILLION
220 DATA SEPTENDECILLION,OCT
ODECILLION,NOVEMDECILLION,VI
GINTILLION
230 FOR J=1 TO 9
240 READ ONE$(J)
250 NEXT J
260 FOR J=1 TO 10
270 READ TEEN$(J)
280 NEXT J
290 FOR J=1 TO 8
300 READ TEN$(J)
310 NEXT J
320 FOR J=1 TO 21
330 READ HIGH$(J)
340 NEXT J
350 PRINT : : :
360 PRINT #1:"NUMBER"
370 INPUT "NUMBER? ":N$
380 L=LEN(N$)
390 FOR J=1 TO L
400 IF POS("0123456789",SEG$
(N$,J,1),1)=0 THEN 360
410 NEXT J
420 IF (VAL(N$)<1)+(VAL(N$)<
>INT(VAL(N$)))THEN 360
430 IF L<67 THEN 470
440 PRINT "HEY! I CAN ONLY C
OUNT TO A":"VIGINTILLION!":
:
450 PRINT #1:"HAY I CAN ONLY
 COUNT TO A VIGINTILLION"
460 GOTO 360
470 IF VAL(N$)>0 THEN 510
480 PRINT : :"ZERO": :
490 PRINT #1:"ZERO"
500 GOTO 360
510 IF L/3=INT(L/3)THEN 540
520 N$="0"%N$
530 GOTO 380
540 X=L/3
550 FOR J=1 TO L STEP 3
560 JJ=JJ+1
570 NN$(JJ)=SEG$(N$,J,3)
580 IF J>1 THEN 610
590 P$=STR$(VAL(NN$(JJ)))
600 GOTO 620
610 P$=P$%" "%NN$(JJ)
620 NEXT J
630 PRINT : : :P$: : :
640 FOR J=1 TO X
650 GOSUB 670
660 GOTO 1150
670 IF VAL(NN$(J))<>0 THEN 7
10
680 A$=""
```

```
690 FLAG=1
700 GOTO 1140
710 FLAG=0
720 H=VAL(SEG$(NN$(J),1,1))
730 T=VAL(SEG$(NN$(J),2,2))
740 TT=VAL(SEG$(NN$(J),2,1))
-1
750 VV=VAL(SEG$(NN$(J),3,1))
760 IF T=0 THEN 1000
770 IF T>9 THEN 810
780 A$=ONE$(T)
790 SP$=A$
800 GOTO 1000
810 IF T>19 THEN 880
820 A$=TEEN$(T-9)
830 IF T<>19 THEN 860
840 SP$="NINE TEEN"
850 GOTO 1000
860 SP$=A$
870 GOTO 1000
880 IF VV<>0 THEN 950
890 A$=TEN$(TT)
900 IF TT<>8 THEN 930
910 SP$="NINE TEE"
920 GOTO 1000
930 SP$=A$
940 GOTO 1000
950 A$=TEN$(TT)%"-"%ONE$(VV)
960 IF TT<>8 THEN 990
970 SP$="NINE TEE"%ONE$(VV)
980 GOTO 1000
990 SP$=A$
1000 IF H=0 THEN 1080
1010 IF T=0 THEN 1050
1020 A$=ONE$(H)%" HUNDRED %
"%A$
1030 SP$=ONE$(H)%" HUNDRED %
"%SP$
1040 GOTO 1140
1050 A$=ONE$(H)%" HUNDRED"
1060 SP$=A$
1070 GOTO 1140
1080 IF (J<X)+(T=0)+(VAL(N$)
<100)THEN 1140
1090 A$=" % "%A$
1100 IF (TT<>8)*(T<>19)THEN
1130
1110 SP$=" % "%SP$
1120 GOTO 1140
1130 SP$=A$
1140 RETURN
1150 PRINT A$
1160 IF FLAG=1 THEN 1200
1170 PRINT #1:SP$
1180 PRINT HIGH$(X-J)
1190 PRINT #1:HIGH$(X-J)
1200 GOSUB 670
1210 NEXT J
```

```
1220 PRINT B$
1230 A$=""
1240 JJ=0
1250 B$=""
1260 P$=""
1270 FOR D=1 TO 500
1280 NEXT D
1290 GOTO 350
```

I hope you noticed that all those zeros were neatly slashed so that you wouldn't mistake them for O's. Here's a little routine that will set up your printer to slash the 0's until you turn it off.

```
100 OPEN #1:"PIO"
110 PRINT #1:CHR$(27);CHR$(42);CHR$(0);
120 PRINT #1:CHR$(27);CHR$(42);CHR$(1);CHR$(48);CHR$(0);CHR$(92);CHR$(34);CHR$(81);CHR$(8);CHR$(69);CHR$(2);CHR$(65);CHR$(34);CHR$(28)
130 PRINT #1:CHR$(27);CHR$(36);CHR$(1)
140 STOP
```

And, somebody might get mad if I don't include a little music –

```
100 REM – BELL MUSIC programmed by Jim Peterson
110 CALL CLEAR :: CALL SCREEN(5):: RANDOMIZE
120 FOR CH=96 TO 136 STEP 4 :: FOR L=1 TO 4 :: X$=SEG$("0018243C425A667E8199A5BDC3DBE7FF",INT(16*RND+1)*2-1,2)::
 B$=B$%X$ :: C$=X$%C$ :: NEX
T L
130 D$=B$%C$ :: Z$=RPT$(D$,4)
140 CALL CHAR(CH,Z$):: B$,C$,Z$=NUL$ :: CALL MAGNIFY(4):: CALL SPRITE(#CH/4-23,CH,INT(15*RND+2),255,255):: NEXT CH
142 FOR J=1 TO 10 STEP 2 :: X=9*RND-9*RND :: Y=9*RND-9*RND :: CALL MOTION(#J,X,Y,#J+1,X,Y):: NEXT J
150 FOR J=1 TO 20
155 CALL COLOR(#INT(10*RND+1),INT(15*RND+2))
```

```
160 FOR V=0 TO 16 STEP 4
170 ON J GOSUB 250,270,290,310,330,350,370,390,410,430,410,390,370,350,330,310,290,270,250,270,290,310,330,350
180 NEXT V
190 READ X
200 FOR D=1 TO X*5
210 NEXT D
220 NEXT J
230 RESTORE
240 GOTO 150
250 CALL SOUND(-999,131,V,523,V,131*15/2,30,-4,V)
260 RETURN
270 CALL SOUND(-999,165,V,167,V)
280 RETURN
290 CALL SOUND(-999,196,V,199,V)
300 RETURN
310 CALL SOUND(-999,262,V,265,V)
320 RETURN
330 CALL SOUND(-999,330,V,333,V)
340 RETURN
350 CALL SOUND(-999,392,V,394,V)
360 RETURN
370 CALL SOUND(-999,523,V,392,V,330,V)
380 RETURN
390 CALL SOUND(-999,659,V,666,V)
400 RETURN
410 CALL SOUND(-999,784,V,792,V)
420 RETURN
430 CALL SOUND(-999,1047,V,1057,V)
440 RETURN
450 DATA 16,16,2,16,8,16,4,4,16,2,16,4,16,8,8,16,2,2,16,4,2,8,16
```

Just about MEMORY FULL, so Happy hackin'
Jim Peterson   YN

CHALLENGE OF CAMELOT

In the days of old when Knights were bold and rescued damsels in distress, all of the valorous champions were men. If you were a woman back then, you were doomed to an ivory tower, a dreary dungeon, or a dragon's den. Well, despair no more valiant ones, with this BASIC game you have a chance to enter and liberate the fourteenth century. Everyone, regardless of age, stage or chromosomes, gets an opportunity to out joust the evil Blue Knight, Sir 99.

If you are brave and triumph over this Knight of dubious character, you are given the honor and responsibility of defending our fair Camelot against the firey dragons who fiendishly hover about in the foothills. Once you have defeated these four fierce adversaries you can proudly take your hard-earned seat at the round table.

The Challenge of Camelot, as you may have guessed, is a game of chance for one person against the computer (the infamous Sir 99). It has two screens or levels of play: a jousting match and a life or death struggle with firebreathing dragons.

At the beginning of each round you must choose your weapon – Lance, Mace or Sword. In the first level, Lance beats Sword, Mace beats Lance, and Sword beats Mace. The crafty Sir 99 does not tell you his choice until after the battle is fought. If you choose the same weapon as Sir 99, that round ends in a tie with neither side losing a Knight. If you are the mightiest Knight and thereby reach the second level, you choose from the same three weapons hoping your choice will slay the dragon. Don't get too confident, however, the dragon has his firey breath which can scorch your shield, or worse, if you get too close.

Music lovers will be pleased with the way the TI 99/4A's music capacity is utilized in this program. A dedicatory fanfare invites you to choose your weapons at both levels making it seem like there are really other Knights and ladies gathered around to encourage you. The familiar refrains of Lerner and Loewe's Camelot chime in to make your moments of triumph in the game even sweeter.

After playing this game and achieving Knighthood you will undoubtedly agree that "There certainly is not a more congenial spot for happy-ever-aftering than here in Camelot."

☆ JUNGLE ☆ JIM ☆

By Michael McCue   99'er - 8/83 - Vol. 2,No. 10

The dense, dark Brazilian jungle turns and twists menacingly, but you are not afraid. You know that the acid pits, rolling logs, hungry cannibals, slithering snakes and sudden bonfires are only temporary hazards thrust upon you to test your persistence and prevent you from gathering the giant diamonds which lie in the bush.

Not only can you rise above these obstacles by jumping over them, but you have allies in the trees. Benevolent monkeys will appear to rescue you from perilous pits, spiriting you up gently and musically above the bubbling acidic ooze. If you can catch one, a prehensile-tailed deliverer will carry you through the trees beyond harm. Thanks to them and your own athletic prowess, you can gather piles of the sparkling diamonds and rack up quite a fortune to show for your time spent in this jungle adventure.

This game has bright appealing graphics to keep your spirits high. All the action takes place in front of a three-dimensional backdrop of jungle complete with trees, flowers, grass and mountains. Even the obstacles you encounter are visually entertaining as they try to thwart your diamond gathering mission.

It's a Jungle Out There
The dangers you encounter on your way to wealth and high scores will put your reflexes to a real test. Particularly treacherous are the cannibals and rolling logs. To avoid these hazards, you must jump over them by pressing [I] on your keyboard. The arrow keys [S] and [D] move Jungle Jim backwards and forwards. To grab a diamond you need only to run past it.

The acid pits provide a real challenge. You cannot jump over them; instead you must jump up and grab onto a passing monkey - a bit like catching the brass ring on a merry-go-round. To do this, press [I] and release it as soon as you are in the air. If you have the right touch and have jumped under the monkey, it will carry you safely across the pits - or any other hazard. You can boogie through the trees forever, but when you do want down, simply press any key to be released. Once you have run the full length of the screen, you will automatically be transported to the next one.

Behind the Screens
In creating Jungle Jim my goal was to come up with a new COINC routine and a new key scan set-up in a game that wasn't a space shootem-up exercise. After many hours of programming, I came up with a game I think you'll find fast, fun and challenging, with exacting coincidence checks. All that remains for you to do now is power up your TI and play Jungle Jim.

A Challenge
Now that you're privy to all the goings on in the jungle, prepare to collect precious gems while you jump and jog your Jungle Jim to new heights. Before you pack up your belongings and bid civilization adieu, here's a challenge to you from our editors: Anyone who can beat our Jungle Jim record of 1500 points (and send us a screen photograph verifying the score) will receive special mention in an upcoming issue and will be inducted into the "99'er Hall of Fame". So, go for it, treasure hunters! We'll see you in the jungle and maybe even in the record books!   YN

LETTER FROM TEX✪COMP™

HOUSTON USERS GROUP - APRIL 1986

This is a copy of a letter sent by Jerry Price, Vice President, Tex Comp TI Users Supply Company to Mark Crump, President of Houston Users Group. It is a response to several comments made by a previous guest speaker. Dr. Ron Albright, a system operator on Compuserve. This letter, and the comments which were made by Dr. Ron Albright represent the personal feelings of those people, and do not necessarily represent the beliefs of this editor or the other officers of this organization.

Mr. Mark Crump, President
Houston User Group (HUG)
Houston, TX
January 27, 1986

While we have not met personally, I am sure you have heard of our company, Tex-Comp, which has been supporting the TI-99/4A user since the introduction of the original 99/4. As you may be aware, we also support legitimate regional dealers including Mike Matula of MS Computers in Houston. In fact, if I remember correctly, Mike and I worked together to get your bulletin board a modem at a special low price.

The reason I am writing you is that it has recently been brought to my attention from several sources who attended your last monthly meeting on Sunday January 5, 1986 that scheduled speaker Ronald Albright, a system operator (sysop) on CompuServe, deviated from his presentation about CompuServe and made a number of defamatory and untrue remarks of and concerning myself, my business, and one of my suppliers.

Since I was not present to respond to Dr. Albright's remarks, nor did he ever make a prior effort to contact me to confirm the truth or accuracy of the statements he made of which he has absolutely no first-hand knowledge, I would appreciate your reprinting this letter in your next newsletter so that your members can have the opportunity to hear both sides and form their own conclusions.

1. Dr. Albright accused Tex-Comp of mis-appropriating DM1000 from a Canadian user group and urged your membership to stop dealing with Tex-Comp until it stopped giving this program away.

The facts are that this program was provided to Tex-Comp by a Canadian customer early last summer with the request that it be "freely distributed." Notwithstanding the request that the program be "freely distributed," we also confirmed that the program had been placed into the public domain by the author, which means absolutely no claims of copyright or any other proprietary right can legally be made nor can the program be reclaimed from the public domain at a later date. At the time we received this program it was being handed out and passed around at just about every user group meeting or gathering in the country and also appeared for free downloading on many local and national boards. In fact, I am informed that even the Houston board and CompuServe board had it at one time or another.

Apparently, the fact that we started giving it away upset a small group of individuals who feel that they have the right to dictate and control who can freely distribute this public domain program. Since the program is public domain, the attempt to control, limit, or monopolize its distribution by letters falsely implying the violation of non-existent legal rights or by conspiring to bring about a boycott or by interfering with the relationship of Tex-Comp with its customers, prospective customers, and its suppliers, is a clear and wilful violation of the United States anti-trust laws which contain appropriate criminal and civil sanctions. Tex-Comp, with the help of many of its customers and user groups in both the US and Canada, has identified the culpable parties, and the matter is currently in the hands of our legal counsel for appropriate action. There has also been false inferences made that Tex-Comp removed the name of the author and his group on the version it is freely distributing. Please check this out with any copy MS has in stock or any copy any of your members has purchased from us and you will see that this assertion, like the others, is simply untrue. We have also written proof that many of our customers did in fact send contributions to the Canadian group. Unlike DM1000, there are a number of so-called "freeware" programs, such as Fast-Term and Mass Copy, that make a legitimate claim of copyright, which would enable the author or owner to make legal claim of unauthorized use.

2. Dr. Albright accused Tex-Comp of improperly taking the name "Explorer" from Millers Graphics for a program of its own.

The facts are that Tex-Comp has been selling a disk editor program licensed from a young man in Virginia (who also wrote Nibbler) under the trademark "Explorer" since December 1984 and has records such as cancelled royalty checks, invoices, etc, to establish this date. I first learned of Miller planning to call a forthcoming program "The Explorer" in mid-summer of 1985 at local user group meeting and after promptly verifying that Miller had not sold or introduced his program I put him on notice so he could change his proposed name before introduction and avoid the possibility of any conflict or confusion. He never responded to this letter or changed the name even though he had more than enough of an opportunity to do so. Millers Graphics is a small firm which is actively supporting the more advanced 99/4A users and I have no desire to injure him financially.

Accordingly, when Triton asked my permission to sell his program which infringed my California trademark registration, I agreed providing the name in the catalog was changed to MG Explorer. The story Dr. Albright related to your group about my midnight trip to a typesetter to beat Miller to the marketplace with the name has absolutely no factual or truthful basis. Even Miller himself stuck to the facts as reported in the January [1986] issue of MICROpendium.

3. Dr. Albright advised your group that the new CorComp diagnostic module (PDM) that Tex-Comp is currently advertising is nothing but an old worthless program that CorComp had used internally for its own testing. He also implied that CorComp and its dealers were ripping off the public on its Load Interrupt Switch since it could be built and hard-wired with a couple of dollars' worth of parts from Radio Shack.

The facts are that the PDM contains a brand new program that CorComp had developed for this module product. It is the only product of this type that we know of that enables a user to test the system even when the [disk] drive is malfunctioning. The information Dr. Albright provided to your [user] group about it being an old program is false and constitutes trade libel against both CorComp and its many retailers, including Tex-Comp. In addition, while Dr. Albright may be a talented electronic technician, many TI-99/4A owners are not and do not wish to build their own hardware or make internal connections to their equipment. The plans for many pieces of TI hardware, adapters, cables, etc, including load interrupt switches, have appeared in the various 99/ 4A magazines and user group publications through the years, and we at Tex-Comp have always provided them to our customers. However, to publically attack a company and its retailers which make an investment in research, design, testing, tooling,

component parts, packaging, overhead expenses, and advertising to bring a product to market at a price higher than what one could throw it together in his back yard, is not only blatantly unfair, but is totally inconsistent with the economic principles which underlie our democratic society. Apparently Dr. Albright fails to realize that many 99/4A users are not as talented as he is and would prefer to pay extra to get a complete unit with tested software that plugs right in with no hassle.

4. Dr. Albright also advised your group the CorComp is in serious financial trouble and would most likely be out of business by the end of the year.

As one of the many retailers which market and support CorComp products, I take particular offense to this defamatory statement which was made with absolutely no first-hand knowledge of the facts. I personally know of no situation where CorComp, under its present management, has failed to deliver product as promised or has failed to meet its current legitimate financial obligations. As a mail-order company, Tex-Comp could not sell a product that was unreliable. CorComp's outstanding record of delivering what it promises should be compared by contrast to other firms that have either gone out of business or keep promising to introduce products that are either delayed, introduced with serious problems, or not introduced at all.

On the advice of legal counsel, I cannot at this time go into Dr. Albright's motives for using the platform your group gave him as a CompuServe spokesman to make false and defamatory remarks against Tex-Comp and CorComp, or the legal effect this may have on pre-existing contractual relationships. I can assure you, however, that Tex-Comp takes any and all unfounded and malicious attacks on its reputation very seriously and is more than willing to provide anyone making false and defamatory statements about it an appropriate forum to be properly heard.

In closing I would like to point out several interesting facts for your membership to consider in forming its own conclusions in this matter:

1. Mr. [Bob] Boone, the Canadian who along with Dr. Albright and Teresa Masters has been actively engaged in a smear campaign against Tex-Comp in an attempt to limit and control the distribution of DM1000, have attacked this free distribution of a public domain software by Tex-Comp ostensibly on the grounds that Tex-Comp is a dealer as opposed to a user group. It should be pointed out, however, that Mr. Boone is listed in the current Millers Graphics catalog as a Canadian dealer. Teresa Masters has in the past converted the LA 99ers Computer Group from a club to a dealership and has purportedly obtained a business and resale license. Products from firms such as Millers Graphics, and Myarc are advertised by her group in the LA 99ers Computer Group newsletter [TopIcs] and are

sold by her at a profit at other user group meetings and computer selling shows throughout the area. Dr. Albright himself is currently receiving profits from commercial software that he partially wrote and sold to Tex-Comp through his partnership, Heritage Software.

2. At your last meeting [January 5], Dr. Albright advocated that software for the 99/4A should be issued as freeware with the ultimate user being the sole judge of what should be paid. If Dr. Albright feels so strongly about this freeware concept, I question why his book, which was originally written on disk, was distributed commercially rather than being distributed on disk as freeware.

Thank you for your anticipated co-operation in presenting our position in this matter. Your group can count on Tex-Comp for support in the TI-99/4A marketplace and we thank you all for making 1985 a very successful year for a firm supporting a computer that has not been made for almost two and a half years.

Very truly yours,
Jerry Price, VP
Tex-Comp TI Users Supply Co.   YN

MICROPENDIUM
January 1988
Volume 4, Number 12

EZ-KEYS By Harry Brashear

REPORT CARD
PERFORMANCE   A-
EASE OF USE   A
DOCUMENTATION A
VALUE   A
FINAL GRADE   A

I want you to remember a name. Harry Wilhelm! Got that? I'm pretty sure you've never heard it before, but you're going to hear it very often, very soon. The upper echelon of TI-dom had best get on its toes because Harry's the originator of EZ-Keys, which is being distributed by Asgard Software. This is his first attempt at commercial software and it looks like a super pro job. He's working with a minimum TI system right now and I shudder to think of what he's going to do with a full blown system. I can't wait to see, either!

At first I had a little problem figuring out exactly what kind of program EZ-Key's really is because it's very hard to describe. There are at least two or three pieces of software on the market already that allow you to program your function and control keys, and this seemed for all the world like another one of them. Frankly, that kind of thing never excited me. The ability to hit one key and have LIST "PIO" execute seemed like the epitome of laziness. After thoroughly reading the extensive docs, though, I decided that EZ-Keys was a lot more than that. Some say there has never been anything like this for the TI, and it's true.

EZ-Keys is a programmer's environment, made up by the programmer to take all the drudgery out of his work. At the same time, however, it's also for the non-programmer, the user, if you will. Everyone has need for this package.

Yes, it does what you suspect it does - programs your Keys, 55 of them to be exact. It also allows you 668 characters of programming per Key, and you can embed up to 16 levels of Key passes. In other words, one Key can call a second, etc. It sounds very complicated, but it's not. I was able to set up this program after one good reading of the docs, and about an hour later I was comfortable with it.

That's not to say I mastered it. I just started figuring out a small percentage of the fantastic power it has for maKing computer chores a lot easier.

Let's get on with the details. First of all, a couple of built-in CALL LINKs.

How many times have you locked up your computer in the middle of line 1200 and haven't saved to disk since line 250? (Darn! and you promised yourself that you would save every 10 lines.) That will never happen to you again. EZ-Keys has a built in "savings plan" you can "banK" on. CALL LINK("AUTO",8) will save your program to disk approximately every eight minutes all by itself. The time period can be from one to 18 minutes. (Of course, it's based on an interrupt, so the time is not accurate.) It's quite a shock to be typing along madly on a program, finish a line, hit ENTER and up pops SAVE DSK1.BACKUP1. You don't have to hit ENTER or anything, it just goes to the drive. SpooKy, huh! Well, you wanted your computer to do things for you, didn't you?

CALL LINK("HILITE") is simple, and valuable. It highlights all numbers and arithmetic operators while you are programming. No more confusion between "I" and "1" or "O" and zero. Great for debugging that type-in program that won't run.

CALL LINK("RCOLOR",Fground,Bground) will set color to all character sets from within a running program.

CALL LINK("EZKEYS") and CALL LINK("OFF") toggles the EZ editor, the meat of this pacKage.

The EZ-Key Editor is, to say the least, the invention of a diabolical mind. Real twilight zone stuff to the TI computer, but easy enough for anybody to handle. The program is accessed via XB auto-load. I should point out that I have had no trouble using it with the Super Extended Basic cartridge and am presently Keeping it in my Horizon RamdisK for quick retrieval. (It's only 40 sectors, and you are expected to maKe copies of the disK for your own use.)

You are greeted with a title screen and a blinking cursor ready for programming on a colored screen. At this point you may want to use the final CALL LINK, which will set your programming screen colors, editor screen colors, and the colors of some special characters we will discuss later.

FCTN 5 puts you into EZ-Key editing mode. There is a status screen first, telling you what Keys have been programmed, and how many bytes of memory are left for you to use. By pressing the Key you want to program (i.e. CTRL =), you are sent to the editing screen. If you just bought the program and would like to see what's happening, by all means, press CTRL =. This macro has been preset to give you a disK catalog.

The cataloger is just an Extended Basic program, but that's where the similarity ends to anything you have ever seen before. This macro looKs liKe you had set up a program in TI-Writer without carriage returns, and then hit reformat. The line numbers are buried in with the code, as are various predefined control characters that show up in a reverse color pattern. These characters are for ENTER, CTRL, FCTN, arrowKeys, or anything you normally can't detect in a program. In other words, the cataloger looKs liKe one continuous chain of code, no spaces. You can edit anything you liKe there, and that's another neat wrinKle - full screen editing! The FCTN arrow Keys will put you anywhere you want on the screen, and you can use standard editing controls from there.

OK, fine. Now KicK out with the FCTN 5 again twice and you will return to Basic. (EZ-Keys calls it "BASIC," it's really XB.)

Try the macro out by pressing CTRL = from command mode and here's what happens: The macro first LISTS itself as any program would, as lines 1 to 9, then RUNS itself.

You enter the drive number, it executes a catalog, then it deletes itself! It has no effect on the program you are worKing on as long as you follow the instructions. It is recommended that you start your programming at line 100 so that the macros don't use your line numbers.

One of the permanent features of EZ-Keys is the ability to run up and down through a program line with the FCTN 6 and FCTN 7 Keys, very handy for those long code lines that you need to get to the end of quicKly. There are also macros provided that will delete everything to the right of the cursor and KicK you bacK to the beginning or end of a line of code. If you would liKe, you can set up a super eraser by programming a macro as FCTN 3;FCTN X. This would erase the line the cursor is on and then bring up the next line with a single Key press. Neat, huh?

I want to straighten out an idea that some of you may have gotten by now. Many people have been buying Super Extended

Basic and may think that they have many of the features of the EZ-Keys program already covered. I don't agree. It's true that many of the editing features and color calls are already yours, but this program makes these all the more powerful. Things such as LIST "PIO":28:1-30000 can be had with one Key stroke instead of typing it all out. Plus, you can initialize the printer to enhanced mode at the same time.

Here's one that I created that was a real step saver: To get to Draw 'n' Plot in Super Extended Basic, you have to type in four commands (refer to MICROpendium review, September, 1987). Since NEW has no effect on EZ-Keys, I was able to set up a macro to take me right to Draw 'n' Plot by pressing FCTN J.

There is no end to the possibilities, and no matter what you're using, or what you're programming, EZ-Keys may double or triple your power.

Let me quote from the EZ-Keys documentation: "The uses for programmable macros aren't well defined - there being no precedent set elsewhere." True. I haven't been able to find any program like this for any computer.

You can use other Assembly Language routines with EZ-Keys as long as you don't exceed the 8K that Extended Basic uses for such routines, and that must include the macros you have developed. As a matter of fact, the object code and loader are included to load a bare bones version of the program along with your own.

Here's another interesting possibility for EZ-Keys. Let's assume you had a program that demanded a lot of repetitious input. EZ-Keys can be laid in behind the program with macros set up to enter multiple inputs on a single keypress. I tried it using a short file manager program. The program required input of the words "FAMILY", "ASSOCIATE" or "PERSONAL" and then a date that was always the same. I set up CTRL 1, 2 nd 3 with the words and then the date along with each one. By George, all I had to do was press one of the three Keys depending on the requirement and, bingo, there were the inputs.

EZ-Keys also comes with a couple of nifty utilities:

1. POKER: This program is designed to load a text file into the macros. (Help files for that program you've been working on?) On the other side of the coin, though, you can convert a program to D/V 80 and dump it to the Keys you want, or it's possible to make up your functions in TI-Writer and then use this utility to load them to EZ-Keys.

2. LISTMACROS: This one will look at the custom version you have made and print the complete listing of the macro coding to your printer.

There was really only one thing that bothered me about EZ-Keys. It's an old problem with so many software products today. The author and distributer leave too much to the imagination of the user. This program has potential that could take months to discover, so a lot of time could be saved if more examples were given. When I called Asgard to make sure I had the latest version of the program, the company indicated the possibility of a newsletter to tell people about new discoveries for this program, and others that they distribute. Sounds like a good idea to me. Asgard's price for EZ-Keys is only $14.95, a pittance for this Kind of power.   YN

EZ-Keys Plus - The revolution continues

KEY-NOTES - 1988 Spring - Volume 1, Number 2

Just when we started trying to figure out what EZ-Keys can do for us, Harry Wilhelm has sprung a new version on us! Version 2.0 of EZ-Keys (Known as EZ-Keys Plus) is, as usual, nothing quite like anything else you've seen.

As mentioned above, EZ-Keys Plus includes a new "input" macro function that works almost exactly like the "hold" function described on page 6 of the EZ-Keys manual.

EZ-Keys Plus also features a built-in Assembly disk cataloger (which frees up the space the CTRL = macro used to take), an Assembly screen-dump available at the touch of a Key, and automatic checksum checking of anything typed in from a magazine (now just load EZ-Keys Plus and type away!).

The last few functions provided are repeated in other routine packages, but are still useful. EZ-Keys Plus will allow you to save or load a character set or screen to or from disk.

The remaining changes in EZ-Keys Plus are internal, and should mostly be of inte rest to serious programmers: EZ-Keys Plus will allow you to include up to 8K of assembly routines in addition to itself, it won't "stomp on" any other interrupt-driven routines loaded with EZ-Keys (in other words, you can load a clock or BBS program with EZ-Keys and they'll co-exist just fine), and finally, you can put XB programs in low-memory and fill high-memory with Assembly routines (the possibilities here are staggering!)

There is even a good possibility, not verified at this time, that you'll be able to use EZ-Keys Plus with PRBase, the Funnelweb environment, and other all-Assembly programs.
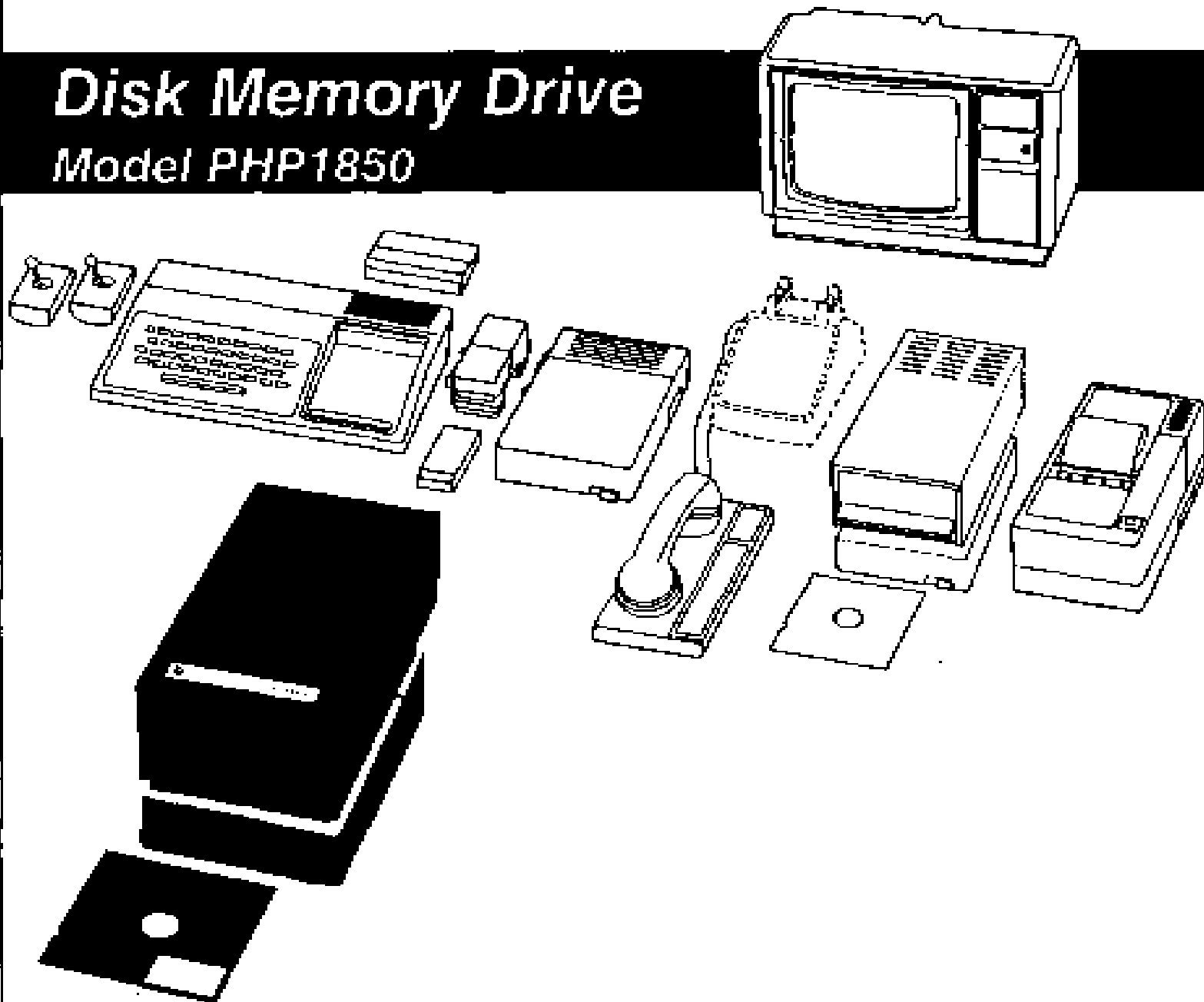
EZ-Keys Plus includes a number of sophisticated memory management routines that will allow you to do things in Extended Basic previously only dreamed of.

**Texas Instruments
TI-99/ Home Computer Accessory**

Disk Memory Drive
Model PHP1850

The Texas Instruments Disk Memory Drive is a mini-floppy disk mass storage system with a 1 to 3-disk memory drive capability. Use of the TI Disk Memory Drive requires the TI-99/4 Disk Drive Controller (Model PHP 1800).

The TI-99/4 Home Computer mass memory system is capable of storing up to 90,000 bytes of information on each floppy diskette. Up to 127 files may be defined on each diskette.

Fixed and variable length records can be handled by the Disk Drive Controller, as well as sequential and relative files. Free disk space is automatically reassigned for user file allocation.

Provided with the controller is a Solid State Software™ Command Module which supplies disk utilities including disk and file maintenance commands. The command module is preprogrammed and greatly simplifies use of the Disk Memory Drive and Disk Drive Controller with the TI-99/4 Home Computer.
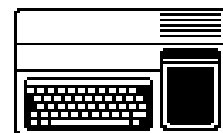
Availability of the Disk Memory Drive and Disk Drive Controller is first half 1980.

Preliminary Information
Texas Instruments reserves the right to make changes in materials and specifications without notice.

Yesterday's News Information

Yesterday's News is a labor of love offered as a source of pleasure & information for users of the TI-99/4A and Myarc 9640 computers.

TI-99/4A HARDWARE
TI99/4A COMPUTER
MODIFIED PEB
WHT SCSI AND SCSI2SD
MYARC DSQD FDC
MYARC 512K MEMORY
HORIZON 1.5 MEG HRD
TI RS232
CORCOMP TRIPLE TECH
1 360K 5.25 DRIVE
1 360K 3.50 DRIVE
1 720K 5.25 DRIVE
1 720K 3.50 DRIVE

TI-99/4A SOFTWARE
PAGEPRO 99
PAGEPRO COMPOSER
PAGEPRO FX
PAGEPRO HEADLINER
PAGEPRO GOFER
PAGEPRO FLIPPER
PAGEPRO ROTATION
PIXPRO
PICASSO PUBLISHER
BIG TYPE
TI ARTIST PLUS
GIF MANIA

PC HARDWARE
COMPAQ ARMADA 7800
COMPAQ ARMADASTATION
SAMSUNG SYNCMASTER

PC SOFTWARE
DEAD WINDOWS 98SE
FILECAP
PRN2PBNS
IRFANVIEW
ADOBE DISTILLER
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Yesterday's News is composed entirely using a TI-99/4A computer system. It consists of 11 PagePro pages which are "printed" via RS232 to PC to be published as a PDF file.

NOW PLAYING

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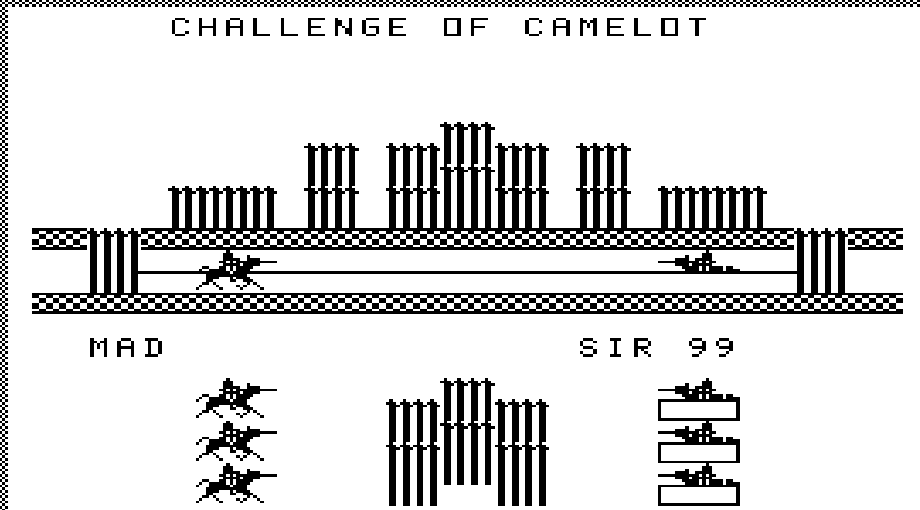
Texas Instruments   color monitor