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AIRPORT AREA COMPUTER CLUB  
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CORAOPOLIS, PENNSYLVANIA 15108

NEXT MEETING: 6:30 PM Sunday June 5, 1988 at the John Jay building, Room 22, at Robert Morris College. Ask the guard for directions from the entrance road.

June 1988

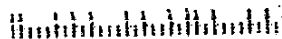
Newsletter

Vol. VI No. 6

Airport Area Computer Club  
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LAST MONTH: Our May meeting was devoted to software demonstrations. I finally got "Freddy" to run properly after an earlier attempt at demonstrating this German authored game has refused to run for us. I was exceptionally fortunate in getting Freddy out of the maze during the short demo! See my President's report on the other side for more news on Freddy. I remembered to bring my disks of digitized pictures so that we could demonstrate the slide show program. It properly ran through the pictures in sequence for the members. Great Lakes Software has upgraded Certificate '99 into an assembly language version which seems to run a bit faster. I demonstrated the new version and some of its added fonts and graphics. It is a well done piece of software which is very easy to use from the on-screen menu and "select from the screen" borders and graphics features. If you choose a border it is much slower than if you elect not to have one. Then I demonstrated a couple of the games from the Disk of the Month. I never seem to have the time to develop enough skill to properly show how to win, but there was greater demand for the disks than the previous month so I guess I got the general idea across!

## President's Message

Actually, this entire (small) issue will be written by the President. Joe Spiegel had commitments which prevented his doing his usual fine job on the newsletter, and in fact he will not be at this month's meeting to keep your President out of trouble during the demonstrations! I suspect that most members do not realize what an outstanding job Joe has done for this very long period of producing a monthly newsletter every month with almost no help from the rest of us.

I have some difficulty in producing a new program each month of software which the members have not previously seen. I am involved in so many different activities that I have trouble finding time to practice enough to give the software a decent demonstration. There was a comment from the floor last month that I seemed to "be into games". I hadn't thought about that much before the comment, but I guess that I primarily USE the TI99/4A for entertainment. I have two MS-DOS machines which I generally use for word processing and such. And the only reason in many instances is that I have never taken time to set-up my Horizon RAM disk properly and use it. I don't ever have to get out the software disks for the "big" machines since my most used programs are on hard disk. This is the type of advantage the Horizon disk provides - when used. Myarc is said to be shipping its hard disk controller. It is expensive when compared to the cost of our CPU these days, but not completely out of line with the cost of other hard disk units. If you are going to stick with the 99/4A, you might wish to consider the enormous convenience of having such enormous storage and fast access.

Last month I got "Freddy" to run for the members; a German game involving getting a monkey out of a maze populated by unfriendly vermin. To my surprise I will be able to offer members a copy of Freddy at this meeting to try on your own machine - as long as you use disks. You begin the game with a certain amount of "life", shown by symbols at the bottom of the screen. Every time you are nicked by vermin (rats, scorpions, even dripping water) you lose a unit. You must jump the rats, switch sides to avoid the scorpions, etc. When you make it to the second screen, ghosts wander through (look like large sprites to me). You can make them reverse direction by shooting at them with your pistol, with the joystick fire button.

I even have a second German software program to show and share, Oh Mummy. This is in some ways a bit like Munchman, but with sufficient added variety to make it a new experience. You enter your figure into a maze in which you are chased by a number of Egyptian mummies. The maze is laid out in rectangles and when you have completely made the trip around blocks pictures appear in the blocks. Frankly I have not read the on-disk documentation yet (!) (as usual, time runs out on me between meetings), but I promise to try to explain the rest of the features at this month's meeting. This game is actually listed as "freeware" and we should be able to provide copies for interested members at the meeting.

Although I haven't actually had any response in the past from members when I offered music on the disk of the month, I still find the programming involved interesting. A good number of people who try their hand at putting music and graphics on disk have a good sense of humor, and are able to depict a humorous interpretation of the lyrics to some songs. I just received a disk full of music, most of which I had acquired before. But I ran through the songs anyway. To my surprise, a number of the songs had new graphics. I have found that it takes a lot of patience and experimenting to make a song sound right, so I appreciate the efforts of these programmers.

I have received the first copy of a new magazine, "Asgard News". The editor notes that the first issue seems more like a promotion piece for Asgard software, but promises more variety in the future. Chris Bobbitt offers a look at the Geneve. One of the strongest supports of the new machine, here he slips in a comment that he doesn't think Myarc is providing sufficient support to software developers. Personally I think time is running out on the appearance of new software for the machine. Myart is fine, but it alone is not sufficient to justify purchase of the board.

Join me at this meeting to see what else I will demo. As usual, we will probably vote to suspend meetings for the summer vacation period.

Bob Dudley