

TI - D - BITS

FEBRUARY

1988



THE PHILADELPHIA AREA TI-99/4A USERS' GROUP (FEB, '88)

The Philadelphia Area TI-99/4A Users' Group meets twice a month. On the first Saturday of any given month, we meet at the Bucks County Youth Development Center, (YDC, which is next to Neshaminy Mall), Administration Building, beginning at 10:00 am. On the third Saturday of each month, we meet at LaSalle University, 20th Diney, in room M-329 located in the Science Building. Membership to The Philadelphia Area TI-99/4A Users' Group is available to all. We invite anyone that is interested in the TI-99/4A to visit us. Stop in and see what is available to you for your TI and how membership can benefit you!

Current executive board consists of:

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Bob Lundin
ASSISTANT TREASURER. Frank Passini
EDUCATION Barry Traver
Bud Shapiro
Carlo Angelico
EQUIPMENT Rice Hall

REMEMBER to be considerate when calling any of the above people. Limit your calls to the early evening hours. (6pm to 9pm)

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The editor of TI-d-Bits or the executive board of The Philadelphia area TI-99/4a Users' Group reserve the right to reject any material submitted for publication for any reasons.

The Philadelphia Area TI-99/4A Users' Group's program library is available to all active members at NO CHARGE. A catalog of the library's contents is given to all new members upon request and updates will appear in this publication from time to time. To obtain material from the library, contact the librarian for the best procedure to obtain your requests.

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the folks at TI-D-BITS for catching the error.

NEW FAIRWARE PROGRAMS DEMOED

Don Arsenault demonstrated some new Fairware offerings that have been added to our library. In addition to availability of the programs on disk, the SIG is also providing copies of the printed documentation. There is a fee of \$1.00 to cover the photocopying costs.

FUNNELWEB 4.0

This is the latest version of the Funnelweb program that comes out of Funnelweb Farm down in New South Wales, Australia. Formerly called "Funnelwriter", the program has grown from being an IBMPC II-writer loader to being a full utility environment. The Funnelweb disk can become the user's main program disk, as it includes E/A capabilities, Disk Manager 1000, and has provision for loading the user's favorite modem, database, and other programs from its main menus.

It's been awhile since the last release of Funnelweb, and it was worth the wait. (There used to be a new release every other month, it seemed, and what amazed me was how each version substantially improved upon the last.) The 4.0 release has some nice features added to it. A "ruler" has been added to the End-Of-File line in the text editor. The Show Directory feature (which is available from the menus by pressing FCTN 7, as well as from the Editor) now includes a row of numbers next to the filenames. Pressing a corresponding number key will flag that particular file so that it will automatically appear in LoadFile and SaveFile functions. There is a ScriptLoader function in the Loaders section that allows the user to execute limited D/V 80 batch files created by the editor.

One other nice new feature of the 4.0 package is the "Configure" program which allows the user to vary the features of both the BASIC "LOAD" program and the "UTIL1" program easily. Among other things, one can set screen color, Editor printer parameters, and Formatter printer parameters. (I appreciate the forethought in allowing two printer parameters, as I "print" to an 80 column terminal through RS232 in the Editor, and to a printer through PIO in the Formatter...)

What's next for Funnelweb? Hard to predict, but there are strong hints in the documentation that they are working on implementing the International version of TI-Writer... Umlauts and all that.... Some printers have international character sets built into them (Gemini 10X, for example), so if they get this going we can type letters in German or Spanish or whatever...

BIRDWELL'S DISK UTILITIES 4.0

This is a complete disk management package written by John Birdwell; it includes a powerful disk manager as well as an excellent sector editor. Within the editor, one can use the find string function to locate a certain string anywhere on the disk. This enables one to edit a chosen sector without extensive searching.

ARCHIVER II 2.3

Briefly shown was the latest version of Archiver II, written by Barry Koona to be compatible with Barry Traver's original Archiver. This latest version of Archiver II includes a compress-decompress utility in addition to the archiving functions. To explain what this does, here's an example: an assembly language game consisting of two 33 sector files may take 64 to 66 sectors when archived into one file; but when the archived file is compressed it only takes 42 sectors. A compressed file takes less time, therefore, to upload and download from a BBS. Compressed and archived files have been showing up on the TI-D-BITS BBS, as well as the Deptford TI group's BBS, so you'll need this program to unpack these files.

To determine if a file is archived and/or compressed, check its format on the disk catalog. A **DIS/FIX 128** file is usually archived (unless it's an **HLB** file), while **INT/FIX 128** indicates that it's compressed as well.

CRYPTOGRAM SOLVER

Frank Passini demonstrated his Cryptogram Solver program. The program will allow you to solve a cryptogram, once it has been typed in, by substituting letters. If you find that you've made several mistakes, you can erase what you've substituted and start over again. Once you have the solution, you can save it to disk (along with the cryptogram, of course...) The file format allows the maximum amount of files to be saved to the disk. In addition to using the program to solve cryptograms, you can also encode cryptograms as well. This program is to be on the February Disk-of-the-Month.

WANTED: ARTICLES

It was mentioned that we need articles from our group for the TI-D-BITS newsletter. While it's nice to reprint informative articles from other TI newsletters, it's also nice to have some from our own membership. Everyone has one favorite program, utility, or piece of hardware that can be reviewed for the rest of us. Perhaps you've come up with some nifty programming trick - share it with us! The articles don't have to be long - just long enough to get your point across. You'll find information on getting your articles to Don on the inside front cover of TI-D-BITS.

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PACS COMPUTER FEST - MARCH 19TH

And speaking of your favorite programs, etc., we will be at the PACS COMPUTER FESTIVAL, showing off what can be done with our "dead" machines, as well as the very-much-alive Geneve 9640. The Fest runs from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm, and will be in the LaSalle University Ballroom, which is upstairs from the cafeteria. So bring your favorite TI stuff and show it off!

Because of the Festival, we will probably not have our regular meeting that day (or if we do, it will be a short "business" meeting before the Fest).

LIBRARY ON PACS BBS?

Our public-domain library again came under discussion. Suggestion was made that programs from the library be placed in the TI section of the PACS BBS, one diskful at a time, and be changed weekly. A quick poll of the members revealed that most of us do have modems. If this could be implemented, it would increase access to the library for your members, as well as increase our use of the PACS BBS.

Speaking of the PACS Multi-SIG BBS, there are now four new phone numbers to use: (215) 842-9600, 9601, 9602, 9603. The numbers were changed to cut down the noise problem, and it seems to have worked!

INSTRUCTORS FOR YDC

We would like to expand the range of instruction for our meetings at YDC; there is ample room to have more than one class going at a time, with perhaps a beginner's course running concurrently with a more advanced offering. We would like to have volunteers to head up classes. If you have a handle on a particular program or utility we'd like to hear from you. Another possibility would be evening classes, if it could fit in with YDC's schedule.

CONTESTS...

The 50/50 was won by (ahem) me...

TRENTON COMPUTER FESTIVAL

April 23-24, the fourth weekend of April, are the dates for the annual Trenton Computer Festival. Trenton is probably one of the biggest computer shows on the Eastern Seaboard. While you probably won't find lots of specifically TI stuff there (although I found some used equipment on sale last year), you'll find a lot of great bargains on peripherals such as floppy drives (360K IBM compatible are fine), hard drives, printers, and so forth, all at very nice prices! And I'm just talking

about the flea market here... In addition, there are plenty of "new equipment" vendors, as well as demonstrations and discussions. This is one week after the April PACS meeting, so save your computer allowance money!

NOTES FROM HERE AND THERE

PARALLEL AND SERIAL OUTPUT VIA THE JOYSTICK

The last issue of International TI Lines (Oxford, England) I've received has an article and schematics for obtaining both serial and parallel outputs from the joystick port of the TI-99/4A. Included in the article are MiniMemory Assembly programs to drive the two circuits. The author has used the serial circuit to drive a Tandy TP-10 (a 32 column thermal printer, now discontinued) and claims it would also drive a modem; he has used the parallel circuit to drive a Seikosha GP500A dot matrix printer. The parallel circuit draws its 5 volt power from the printer; some printers provide this on the "Centronics" connector, others may not... You'd have to check the printer handbook to be sure.

While the article is a tad too long for me to type into this column, I'll have it typed up in time to submit to the next TI-D-BITS.

I also glean from this publication that a PE box is being made by a firm called Atronics. As far as I know, it isn't available here in the U.S. Does anyone have any further info?

DEPTFORD DOINGS....

The big news from Deptford is that they have decided to become an autonomous group. Formerly a chapter of DVUG (a TI group headed in Christiana, Delaware, with chapters in Dover, Del., and Atlantic City, N.J.), the group voted unanimously to become an independent organization dedicated to the TI and Geneve. The group plans on issuing its own newsletter. The Deptford TI group (which hasn't been more formally named as of this writing) has been growing stronger over the past year, and is looking forward to more growth.

NEW WARES AT THE FAIR

The latest TI FORUM in the February Computer Shopper had a report from Warren Agee on the newest offerings shown at the Chicago TI Fair. Several new products look rather interesting.

Genial Computerware offers several new programs, including "PC-Transfer" by Mike Dodd, which will transfer TI/Geneve and MS-DOS files both ways and format IBM 360K disks in the TI's drives (you need a Double Density disk

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CONFERENCE ON COMPUERVE
WITH LOU PHILLIPS OF MYARC
FEB. 2, 1988
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Welcome Lou Phillips.

(Lou)

Here goes. It's been some time now since the last time I was up here on CS. Much has transpired since that time. I would just like to thank the community for being supportive and understanding. I feel we have accomplished much and will be working on finishing up much more in the coming year. So lets start with the questions or areas of concern at this time.

QUESTION

Have you come up with the instructions/etc to have a 512K memory work with the Geneve?

(Lou)

We will have them out by the end of February. Essentially the modification includes setting the 5 jumpers to the address lines and 4 cuts and 3 jumpers to the PCB to alter the types of bus cycles used by the TMS 9995 CPU, since it is pipelined, there is no MEMEN signal that can be depended on for memory cycle start and stop.

QUESTION

Cost? I would just like to get it out of the box and back in to use.

(Lou)

We'll send you the instructions on a sheet so that you can do it yourself, or if you want us to do it \$50.00.

QUESTION

What is the current status of the Hard Disk controller card?

(Lou)

Let me start with a History if you please (but quickly) the first prototype worked I believe in Nov, 1986. It had too many chips, and got too hot. The project was put down in Feb, 87 and resumed again in June. We designed a custom chip (like for the 9640) to cut out 16 IC's and built 10 prototypes in August. Their performance was not satisfactory in the data separator stage, a 20 MHz Analog circuit, too much noise. The board was relaid out in October, November and we once again built some protos in December. To date these protos have not missed a lick and the production units will be out this month. Walt Howe has been a user and may like to comment?

(Walt)

OK, after some trouble with my own hard drives (cough), it has been working... flawlessly on my 4A, where I keep the DSR's in the GRAM KRACKER. Pending receipt of the EPROM with the DSR's

(Lou)

To give you a benchmark of the performance, consider a 4K program it assembles on the TI FDC in 10:55, on the MYARC FDC in 4:25, on the old WDS/100 winchester system in 2:56, and now on the 9640 at speed 3, with 7.1K in 1:25, it is almost as fast as a ram disk. One of the reasons for its speed is that there is 8K of RAM buffer on the card and there is DMA, such that data gets put in the memory where it is to be processed from automatically.

QUESTION

From what I gather, I would assume final model around second quarter 88?

(Lou)

I hope much sooner. However, we have added and are testing several features such as emulation of "DSK1" on the Winchester using both DSRLINK and GPLLINK, directories on the floppy disk and several other user friendly commands. There is also a new disk manager MDMS that comes with the controller, the functionality which will now be explained by Mike, its author.

(Mike)

MDMS is designed to totally access both floppies and hard disk. It will copy files to or from floppy to/from hard drive. It has user interfaces for subdirectory support, allowing you to either go through one level at a time, or type the full pathname if you hate menus. It is now reasonably well along... things left to code are: file copies (which are actually almost done) format floppy, backup and restore of hard drive directory. Anything I forgot???

(Lou)

That should do it Mike, thanks.

QUESTION

What about the streamer tape?

(Lou)

As for the streamer yes, the hardware interface is there and when you get the card, and if you want the software to support the streamer, you will be supplied with the appropriate software. One last thing, the card comes with a real time clock and date and time stamps files both for the 9640 and 4A.

QUESTION

What about Geneve support for the new HDCC? (how soon)

(Lou)

Yes, the cable comes with the controller for the hard drive The 9640 already works with the hard disk controller. It is already built in to the commands that are currently in DOS. As for the new commands, (of which I believe there are 4) they should be coming along by the end of the 1st quarter.

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QUESTION

What is the nominal data transfer rate -- 1) booting MDOS ... and --- 2) loading a program under MDOS?

(Lou)

First, in the 60.97 and 60.98 rom's there is a special loader. This loader first looks for the horizon ram disk, next the HDCC card, and lastly a FDCC card. Because as with all larger computers, you really don't want to dedicate a particular place of the hard drive for the operating system, you want to first load a "loader" therefore, the rom looks for a file called "load/sys" which is then loaded and it will go to load MDOS, or whatever operating system. It is a 2 step procedure and therefore it depends on where files are located on the hard drive. As for a real transfer rate, the situation is this at this time you can format the hard drive at any interleave, but the tightest is 3, so you need to go round 3 times to read 32 sectors or 8k bytes that is 8 K in .056 seconds if my off the top calculations are correct.

COMMENT:

Pretty quick...600 sectors per second

QUESTION

Sounds like it would also be the same loading a program..?

(Lou)

Correct, and with some special software, of course the controller will allow for an interleave of 1 which is 3 times faster, but that is something else.

QUESTION

Tell us about the new Forth Package.

(Lou)

There are at least 2 versions of FORTH around for the 9640, of which none are quite totally MDOS compatible, but are getting there. I know of at least one that, though it runs in the 4A mode it does work in 80 columns. Look to the Philadelphia area users group for a true MDOS FORTH coming soon.

QUESTION

Very simple question. Lou. Where, what, how, when====>C COMPILER.

(Lou)

My man finishing Advanced Basic has completed pass one of a two pass compiler. Plan on that at the end of the 2nd quarter. It is an ANSI standard rather than an AT&T C compiler.

QUESTION

You mentioned that Myarc would carry a monitor... anything new on that?

(Lou)

Now that the PS/2 is out and it is Analog RGB there are lots of 9640 monitors available. However, watch us handle a Samsung in the near future.

QUESTION

I am running two 800k Horizons on my Geneve one of which is a PHOENIX for booting MDOS- Will we ever be able to forego the memory check when warm booting DOS? I ask because the old process is very fast now except for the MEM check

(Lou)

Thats a hum dinger! Maybe in the near future, we can forego it with a special rom.

QUESTION

When is the developers package coming out?

(Lou)

We were let down by a software developer in CANADA who was working on a package, however, we have entered into an agreement with a new developer, Jim Lohmeyer. This PDS will consist of a Macro Assembler, A 9640 program loader linker, an advanced debugger, and documentation on the internal MDOS calls with examples and copies of the LSI

COMMENT:

Sounds great!

(Lou)

Hardware manuals. Look for this May 31. I'd like to say one word about the Debugger. It will work from either a screen on a tube from the RS232/2 port, or it will use a window on the screen, or it will use an alternate page of Video when going back and forth between software and debugger, it will also load object code and include a line-by-line assembler. The PDS will cost about \$100.00much less than on the Amiga or ST.

QUESTION

You're still very dependent on old PE boxes... Do you intend to control your own future?

(Lou)

There are 2 new PE boxes that have been released recently, one by Miller Communications that I understand has been shipped to date and another one by RYTE DATA that I have seen and heard will be coming soon. Both are less than the old PE box price and have more features.

QUESTION

That'll help! I just wondered if you planned to take a role?

(Lou)

Yes, we will and have the idea to do something a little later. For the first 6 months of 88, we'll be concentrating mainly on software.

QUESTION

I've read about GEME in Micropendium... (the bitmapped user-interface with windows, icons, etc)... could you give us some more background on it... like who is writing it, has it been started, how long it will take, etc.

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(Lou)

It is patterned after "ANDREW", a work done by IBM and Carnegie Mellon, its author is Mike Riccio and he has about 1 month under his belt already. Look to see it around MAY-JUNE. It features essentially the capability to run many tasks simultaneously through the use of the MYARC mouse by clicking from task to task. It uses the basic MDOS tasking software and when a task is halted for keyboard I/O the mouse and associated ICON decides who owns the keyboard. It makes the keyboard look like a device such as a file.

QUESTION

Have heard there may be logistic problem getting updates to MYARC users?

Any comment on the lack of registration cards?

(Lou)

We are trying to get a way without costing an arm and a leg.... any suggestions?

COMMENT:

Perhaps through dealer records?

(Lou)

We'll consider these, thank-you. In any case the next release will handle color printers (at least certain ones).

QUESTION

How are AdvBASIC and p-system coming?

(Lou)

AvB is now capable of loading programs, running them, including user defined subroutines (a constant problem with XBII), to complete, we need to finish testing the more exotic new functions such as mouse, and some of the the graphics commands like circle in all modes, etc.. It was first running by Thanksgiving and through it and others we have found a couple of MDOS bugs. Should have that ready for end of month and a little. AS for P-system, had "USER PROG", the software that initializes the system running on the 9640 back in December. Have needed and gotten some support from PECAN in finishing the PORT. One change that we had to make recently was memory mapping. The P-System wants a contiguous 32 bit address, and we had to make it look that way. We are testing that right now. The way we initially had it, it would only load small programs. Now you can have large (more than 100K) program segments. Should be also done by the end of February.

QUESTION

Everyone wants to see the version of GPL that will pick up MDOS ramdisk and contents! How is it coming?

(Lou)

Good question. I'll be able to tell you more after a particular meeting next week. I hope by looking at the code, you will be getting it with the P-system and AVBasic software.

QUESTION

Lou, I've been hearing reports of the print spooler not working on recent copies of MDOS, but I get confusing reports as to WHY (the reason I ask is because I am considering buying one... and I'd like to know if any serious bugs like the print spooler still exist)

(Lou)

Peter Hoddie, was the author of the DSR's on the 9640, after discussing it with him, and hearing about the problems it seems that it mainly crops up when spooling graphics data

COMMENT

If you have a SPOOL command in your AUTOEXEC file, spooler will die from GPL mode.

(Lou)

This is because the software is probably getting confused by title information. He is looking into it now to resolve the problem, However.

QUESTION

Title information?

(Lou)

What we are calling a spooler is perhaps a spooler, and perhaps a buffer, because a spooler will actually take a file name and read records to a printer device. Look for a "true" spooler in GEME and perhaps another work we are doing. Title information is the setting of the I/O parms such as .LF .CR .DA=8, etc..

QUESTION

I'm going to be frank about this, because I am concerned.... with the success of Myarc and the Geneve...there aren't "two sides" here... it's rather well-known that Myarc has had some trouble with it's employees... (ie. programmers)...I'd like to know what the problem is.... and has it been solved.... because I realize how small Myarc is, and that mega-talented programmers... are the backbone of the company..with no software, not a good chance of success. There must be some kind of middle ground... where all parties can work together peacefully and be productive. (Lou)

That question can not be answered without all parties being present and without hours of everyones time....

COMMENT

All parties ARE present.

(Lou)

That is not an easy question to answer at this time however, I believe you are mistaken when you say "programmers", there is only one "programmer" in that category at this time. I don't want to say anything at this time. This is simply not the proper medium for that type of discussion, nor do we have the time. Believe me Myarc is doing what it can.

COMMENT

Please note that I am not accusing anyone of anything. I am just tired of hearing "rumors" that MYARC this, xxx

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that, etc., etc., and would hate to see it thrown all away.

QUESTION

First, when are the print routines (screen dumps) expected?

Secondly, concerning the p-system, is this the run time module only, is/will there be compilers (Pascal, Modula-2, etc) available and from whom will they be available (Pecan or Myarc)?

(Lou)

First, I have seen the print screen routine, and as for print graphics, since it will make MDOS too large for a SSSD diskette, we will provide it to you as a separate task, like the print of graphics from MYART. Second it is the runtime module, and our license with PECAN enables us or PECAN themselves to sell the languages such as Pascal, Modula-2, Fortran, ETC.

QUESTION

Will the languages be available as soon as runtime is completed or is there a port necessary?

(Lou)

They will be ready immediately when the runtime is available... the verification software is compiled by the native machine (ie the 9640).

QUESTION

But Lou, I wanted to ask you to give us your vision... of what the machine should be... should people here or people reading this transcript... about being a VAR to this machine, or a dealer, or ... are there opportunities that this machine presents that others don't have? (Lou)

This machine has the 99/4A community and it is people like Warren who have invested a pile in the 4A and want to continue using state of the art equipment which I feel the 9640 represents at least for the \$1,000.00 or less market. We are exploring its graphics capabilities in markets such as with Miller Communications and in the 770 mini computer market with Chris and company and we feel with that momentum, this machine can stand on its own such as the ST and Amiga as a serious contender for the small business/ home market. We will do all we can to help people with their application and or with selling to new customers. We are listening to you for direction. Thank you, Jim.

(Jim)

Let me just follow up with one more thing. If people were wondering what they could do with this machine to help themselves pay for it or to make a few dollars on the side, what would be the advice of Lou Phillips, President and owner of Myarc Inc, be?

(Lou)

I think a computer can pay for itself in more intangible

ways than otherwise, but let me just tell you about how some people pay for their computer... I hear people tell me they run Video tape selection and mailing services with their 9640's, they keep the books and records of their local clubs, who eventually pay for or help pay for the computer, they use MYWORD to write resumes to get better jobs, paying more money, they even take up writing seriously such as my Mother-in-law. Lastly, we know that many bulletin boards are being written especially for the 9640, and the 9640 can use many of today's bulletin board software, and of course don't forget the speed feature of Multiplan such that many people now can use templates written for the PC on the 9640 just as they were intended to be used.

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YOUR 9640 INFORMATION PERSON: GENEVA GABOR
CHICAGO TIMES JAN, 1988
CHICAGO USERS GROUP
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Hello Darlings. I am Geneva Gabor. Beings my name is so close to what MYARC has decided to call their new computer, I felt it only fitting that I should write an article about this machine.

I have been on various Electronic Bulletin Board Systems and have read numerous newsletters. From time to time I find articles bad-mouthing Myarc's Geneva 9640. I am NOT here to promote or deter the purchase of this machine. Although most written articles on this topic are of an editorial nature, I hope to be informative. I know this article will have a limited audience. But, there is good information about the 9640 I feel MUST be revealed. I respectfully request all non-9640 owners to bear with me.

As all 9640 owners know, what you read and what you get are two entirely different things. We are finally up to DOS 1.0 (ED. now up to DOS 1.01) and still can't do all the things the DOS manual says we can. Even at that, we still have a working machine.

There is no way to find the built-in Ramdisk. And, DOS can't find the Horizon Ram Disk. As you read further, you will see that ways have been devised to do just these things.

First off, you will need a good sector editor program (ED. DSKU1 V4.0A is one of the best around). One that can locate string names. Let's set our DOS up to find the HKD.

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First off, the HRD can only be found by the 9640 if it is residing at CRU >1400 or >1600. Please set your DIP switches. For CRU >1400, switch 5 must be up. Put switch 7 up if you want CRU >1600. Now that you have the switches set, you will need to set up a physical drive number. If you chose CRU >1400, the drive number **MUST** be 6. CRU >1600 will be #7 drive. The built-in Ram Disk is drive 5.

If you've ever done an **ASSIGN** command from DOS, you would have or will notice that drives **A** through **G** have been assigned as **DSK1**, **DSK2**, **DSK3**, **DSK4**, **NDS1**, **NDS2**, and **NDS3** respectively. I only have a two drive system. But, I chose to make the letter **D** (**DSK4**) my HRD. Here is what I did.

Using a sector editor, I looked for every occurrence of the string **DSK4**. I found it twice in two different sectors. Each time I found it, I changed it to the drive number of my HRD. My HRD is at CRU >1400. So, I changed **DSK4** to **DSK6**. Don't forget, every time you make a change on a sector, you must write that sector back to disk. You would be wise to make these changes to a backup copy of DOS. After you have changed both sectors, exit the program.

Boot up DOS.

Do an **ASSIGN** command.

You should now see drives **A** through **G** with **D** being equal to **DSK6**. If you type **D:**, you should go to **D** (prompt **D**).

Type **DIR**

You should get a directory of your HRD. You can also get a directory of drive **D** from the **A**) prompt. Just type **DIR D:**. You can catalog any drive from any prompt just by typing **DIR** followed by the drive letter and a colon (:).

One of the first things I did while I was waiting for my 9640 was to buy an **MS-DOS** manual. I heard **M-DOS** would be something like **MS-DOS**. I'll tell you, the book really helped. I have found some things I can do that **M-DOS** doesn't tell or tells wrong. I have also found that **M-DOS** accepts some **MS-DOS** commands differently. So, keep trying. Sometimes you need to add or subtract a colon or something.

Here's a neat little command I found. The manual tells you to create **CONFIGSYS** and **AUTOEXEC** files from a word processor. I found you can do it from DOS. Here's how: First, go to the drive prompt that corresponds to the drive you want **CONFIGSYS** or **AUTOEXEC** on. If you want it written to drive 1, go to **A**). **B**) for drive 2 or maybe **D**) for your HRD. Yes, you can boot DOS and an **AUTOEXEC** file from HRD. I'll explain later. Now that you have

the proper drive prompt, you must tell the computer what you want to do. We want to copy text from the console to a file called **AUTOEXEC**. Here is how that is done.

COPY CON AUTOEXEC <hit enter>

Now you are in the mode for creating an **AUTOEXEC** file. Every statement must be on a separate line. Once you've finished typing all your statements, you end the command with a **Control Z** on a separate line. **Control Z** will tell the computer to write the file to disk. After a write, you must tell the 9640 to leave this mode. Do this with a **Control C**.

Here is an example of how I create an **AUTOEXEC** file that sets aside an **80K** **TIME** mode, a **255K** internal Ram Disk, and a **64K** print spooler. I will write this file to drive 1, my **A** drive.

A) COPY CON>AUTOEXEC <hit enter>

TIME <hit enter>

RANDISK 255 <hit enter>

SPOOL 64 <hit enter>

Z <this is control Z, it writes file to disk>

C <Control C - makes me exit mode>

If you catalog your disk, you will find a **Z** sector **DV 80** file named **AUTOEXEC** on it. How can I tell DOS where to find the **AUTOEXEC** file? **Very easily!**

Get your sector editor out again. Search for string **DSK1.AUTOEXEC**. Change the drive number to the one with your **AUTOEXEC** file on it. Write the sector back to disk. Next time DOS boots, it will pop over to the proper drive and get your **AUTOEXEC** file. If your system is set up like mine and you have only 2 floppies and HRD at CRU >1400 set for drive **D**, you will find that doing a directory of drive **C** will display your **255K** Ram Disk as drive 5. If you've made all the changes I've mentioned above, you should see some really nice ways of using the 9640.

Our only other problem is booting DOS. It's 350 sectors long. The swan is pretty, but, consider the time required to check memory then load all 90K of DOS. We end up watching the swan for quite a while. I guess it's better than **MS-DOS** machines. They don't even give you a swan to look at! Well how about this? Would you like to see DOS up and running within 3 seconds of turning on the machine? No, it's not a crazy question. Matter of fact, there's not a crazy answer. If you own a Horizon Ram Disk, it **CAN** be done. Matter of fact, you have a few choices of doing it.

Peter Hoddie of Genial Computerware, has come out with an EPROM that replaces the **BK** by **RK** RAM chip (U11) on the HRD board. If all your chips are socketed, you'll only need to solder 1 wire. You remove U11 and plug in the new EPROM. Then solder a jumper wire (provided) to pin 14 of U10. Once you have the EPROM installed, you

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will find you can do more than just boot DOS.

Here is a list of CALL commands you can perform.

- CALL HDDIR - Prints out a directory of the HRD.
- CALL HDDN(n) - Sets drive number of HRD.
Can use 1 - 6 as drive #.
- CALL HDVOL - Lets you give your HRD a name or label.
- CALL HDSZ(k) - Lets you set the size in
Kilobytes of your HRD.
- CALL DM - Lets you load DM1000 form filenames
MG and MH.
- CALL BOOT - Loads in a menu program.
- CALL MD - Loads in a Modem program from
filenames MD and ME.
- CALL EAS(filename) - Loads a particular EAS program.
- CALL EAS - Loads in a UTIL1 file.
- CALL ILD - Same as a call INIT.
- CALL LD(DSKn.xx) - Same as a CALL LOAD(DSKn.xx)
- CALL LLD(yyy) - Same as a CALL LINK(yyy).

There are also some power up key presses. Press these keys during BOOT.

- 1 to 6 - Sets default drive number.
- 0 - Turns DSKx emulation off.
- D - Loads MG disk manager.
- U - Loads UTIL1.
- M - Loads MD Modem program.
- B - Loads BOOT.
- ENTER - Bypasses auto power up.

As you can see, Peter has given us a few routines for our 9640's. I also understand he has or is coming out with the DOS 1.0 or 1.1 version of the EPROM. Another way of booting DOS from your HRD is to use a fairware program from **James Schroeder**. Jim's program comes with a DOC file and 2 other files called LHDROS and HRDOS. I must tell you that ALL functions of setting up your HRD with this program are done with the 9640. The DOCs don't say this. (ED, the latest DOCs tell this) I was the dummy trying to do half of the set up with my 4A and the other half with my 9640. Once you have a copy of the fairware program, do this:

- 1). Go into TI mode and load E/A.
- 2). From option 3 of E/A load and run LHDROS.
- 3). Choose item 1 or 2 from the menu.
Remember, your HRD must be at CRU >1400 or >1600.
- 4). Type in the drive number HRDOS is on.
Ex. DSK1.HDRS
The drive will come on and load HRDOS.
- 5). Hit item 3 to exit.
- 6). Load in DM1000. Do the following:
 - A) Choose item 2 for disk commands.
 - B) From the disk menu, choose #6 BOX FORMAT
 - C) Format your HRD as 6 or 7 using the appropriate number of sides and density to match your HRD.
 - D) Do NOT verify sectors.

- E) After format has been performed, FCTN 3 back to main menu.
- F) Choose item 1 for File Commands. Transfer HRDOS and SYSTEM/SYS onto your HRD.
- 7). Exit DM1000.
- 8). Read and execute the instructions I have outlined above for setting up DOS to find your HRD and boot AUTOEXEC from it.

If you have made most of the changes I've outlined, this is what will happen at power-up.

- 1). The swan will appear on your screen.
- 2). In about 1 - 1.5 seconds, the light on your HRD will flash.
- 3). About 1 - 1.5 seconds after the light flashes, DOS will be on your screen.

Want to read a text file but are too lazy to load in MYWORD? DO this. Use the TYPE command. Follow it by the drive letter and filename.
Example.. Load in a text file called README from drive 2.

TYPE B:README

In closing this article, I'd like to mention a few things and hope I've given you some insight to our new toy. To date MYARC is at DOS 1.0, MYWORD 1.0, ADVANCED BASIC is really XBII 2.11, and a new CSAVE. (ED, DOS is now at 1.01, MYWORD 1.1) I understand MYWORD should be coming out that boots from DOS. There is also information that Peter Hoddie has kept the rights to MYWORD. All future updates to it will probably come through Genial Computerware. There is a buzz in the air that DOS 1.1 is not far away, if it hasn't already reached you. Today is 12/7. I expect 1.1 to be out by XMAS. (ED It didn't make that date.) As I gather more information I feel should be passed along, I will certainly post another article here. Until that time, with Carole Goldstein's kind permission, maybe we can have an ASK GENEVA section. I would be more than willing to answer or find answers to questions about the 9640. There is a vast array of knowledge out there. I find all TI people are always ready and willing to share their knowledge with others. If you have any questions or would like to share some bits of info with us, please send a letter to:

GENEVA GABOR
C/O The Chicago TI User Group
P.O. Box 578341
chicago, IL 60657

Until then, darlings, I wish you lots of love and lovers.

X(X)(X)(X)(X)(X)(X)(X)(X)(X)(X)

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HIGH RES GRAPHICS
PART 4
by Anne Dheia
From Chicago Times

THE COMPARISON CHART
Hard Copy, File Management and Extra Support

Except for Super Sketch and Draw A Bit, which both have supporting disks that contain screen dumps, the drawing packages listed here all include built-in printer routines. The printer and the software package you use must be compatible. All of the programs listed are compatible with the TI Impact Printer which was made by Epson, so any printer that uses the same formats and codes as an Epson is also compatible. Paint 'N Print comes in a choice of three cartridges depending on which printer you have. Cartridge A works with the Axiom 6P-100 and 6P-700 printers. The 6P-700 will give color printouts. Cartridge B is set up to work with the Axiom 6P-550 and Okidata printers, and C is for the Epson compatibles, which include Star and IBM. The Extended Graphics Package which supports Paint 'N Print contains the routines from all three cartridges. Other printouts that can be used with a particular drawing program are listed on the chart.

Screen dumps vary widely in several important respects, including size, density, and placement on the page. All details given here were gotten from screen dumps using the TI Impact printer. They should more or less apply to all screen dumps but there could be differences. A small size screen dump occurs when the screen image is copied exactly as shown, pixel for pixel. A larger dump has more printer dots per pixel - usually either 4 or 16 dots for each pixel, which can give a blockier effect from up close but looks great when the viewing distance is further away.

The size of the printout is also affected by density. On the TI Impact printer there are normally 60 dots printed horizontally per inch. This would make 480 dots per each 8 inch row. Double density prints 120 dots horizontally per inch, and some printers have an even higher dot resolution than that. Since the graphic image has the same number of pixels no matter what density is used, it will be only half as wide when printed double density as when printed in normal density mode. Most of the packages listed here handle this factor for you by adjusting the line spacing when double density is used. Because of the difference in printers, and because screen graphics don't match up exactly pixel for dot with printer graphics you may still find some distortion in your printouts. On the whole, though, most paint packages produce a reasonable hard copy of your screen

graphics.

Joy Paint gives you a choice of two dump sizes and either can be single or double density. The small dump is centered on the page, and because Joy Paint uses 92% more area for graphics than other packages, it pretty well extends from one side of the page to the other (5 1/2 inches wide times 3 1/2 inches high). Three of these dumps will nicely center on a page, which using three screens consecutively, will produce a very good flyer. The large dump produce a horizontal picture 8" x 9" in size.

Bitmac also gives you a choice of large or small dump. The small dump places exactly one dot on the paper for each dot in the screen to give a single density printout 4 1/4 inches wide x 2 5/8 inches high. You have a choice of centering the graphics, or placing them over to the right or left margin. The large dump is centered and is double density. On the TI Impact printer it is distorted quite badly, however, as it is the same height as the smaller picture, but 6 3/8 inches wide.

TI Artist gives you the most control over the final output for your hard copy. You have a choice of up to three magnifications and four densities depending on what your printer is capable of doing. You can also control line spacing when the printing is being set up. Using the TI Impact printer you can have a double density printout as small as 1 3/8 X 2 1/8 using a magnification of 1 and a line spacing of 4; or a printout which will fill an 11" X 15" large size paper with a magnification of 3, a line spacing of 8, and single density. And all this from the same screen image! Printing can also be done from the zoom mode.

All TI Artist printouts are centered no matter what the size. A single density printing that has been magnified twice exactly fills one-half of a standard page; two consecutive printouts make a very nice flyer.

Graphx gives you a choice of two sizes, single or double density. The smaller (4 1/4 X 2 5/8) is printed at the left margin. The larger is half of a standard page - again, two screens make a nice flyer. Draw 'N Plot has one size, 4 1/4 X 2 5/8, single density. Paint 'N Print also has one large size single density printout. Paint 'N Print gives a choice of the drawing will be printed - from a very small section up to the whole screen. The drawing will be printed horizontally and in the upper left corner of the paper.

Sketch Mate, the Super Sketch companion disk, and the Master Painter program, both by Amerisoft International, have virtually identical printouts. Each is 7 3/4 inches wide and 4 5/8 inches high, single density. Each uses a technique whereby colors are assigned a texture (light,

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medium or dark) to simulate color. This gives pictures a very nice printed appearance. Each color is assigned a default setting which can be changed by the user if desired. The Paint 'N Print program also uses the technique of assigning a different print character for each color. The Draw A Bit companion disk also allows two printout sizes; single or double size, and each can be normal or double density.

The Norton Graphics Package doesn't actually contain a screen dump. Rather, it allows you to print out data that is needed to rebuild your graphics in your own program, either as Sprites or as Call Characters. This graphics data may also be saved in merge format on a disk.

File Management

Disk Catalog - It's handy to have a catalog available if you need to find out just what you did name a certain file, if it's on that disk. Only two programs perform this service - TI Artist and Joy Paint. Joy Paint also provides for deleting files.

Conversion Features and Compatibility - If you are intending to use pre-designed graphics either instead of or in addition to creating your own, file compatibility among the various programs becomes important because you will need a ready supply of artwork and clipart. The core program here is TI Artist. Not only is more ready-made artwork available for TI Artist than for the other paint programs, but TI Artist allows picture files from Draw 'N Plot, Graphics and Draw-A-Bit to be loaded in and permanently converted to the TI Artist format. Or, TI Artist files can be converted with TI Artist and loaded from any one of those programs. Instances, which are a very popular form for clipart, can be converted by first saving as a picture, then converting to an instance. CSGD graphics, which are another popular form of clipart, can be converted using any of several available programs including the Artist Extras companion disk. CSGD fonts can also be converted to TI Artist fonts using the same disk.

Joy Paint's Pal allows the conversion of graphx, TI Artist, and Draw 'N Plot picture files to the Joy Paint format and visa versa. Joy Paint will also load the first of the two output files for Sketch Mate. It will not, however, load Bitmac, even though Bitmac has the same Internal/fixed/128 format that Joy Paint does. This leaves Bitmac as the only major paint program to lack compatibility with the others.

Graphx does not have a file conversion feature, but it will load TI Artist files that end with _P. If you transfer the picture file this way you do lose the color. If the color is important the file must be converted to

Graphx format within the TI Artist program first, then loaded into Graphx. Graphx will also load Joy Paint files that have been through the conversion program on Joy Paint's Pal.

If you are primarily interested in screen graphics then file portability is important. This is the ability to move picture files into another environment without a great deal of programming; for example being able to move a picture you have drawn in TI Artist into your Basic program. This ability is built in to TI Artist's instances, slides and font files, which has caused a great many support programs to be written, both commercial and as shareware.

Draw 'N Plot and the Norton Graphics Package can easily be used by the average Extended Basic programmer. In the same way, Draw A Bit and Graphx adapt easily for assembly language programmers. Portability for the rest of the programs is limited.

Additional Support

In many cases the manufacturers themselves are doing a good job of supporting their paint programs. Great Lakes Software puts out clipart disks for Joy Paint, as well as Joy Paint's Pal which has routines to allow file conversion, creation of new patterns, and a reduction feature. Great Lakes also supports a user drawn base of Joypaint clipart. Their Extended Business Graphics II, while a stand alone package, has file compatibility with Joy Paint.

Besides Artist Extras, Insebot has released Display Master for the TI Artist which lets you add captions to your drawings and show them in any sequence. Quality 99 Software has some disks of very good artwork out for Draw 'N Plot. A volume of artwork was also released for Bitmac.

Other software producers have also done their share. Asgard Software has released several Graphx Companion sets that contain clipart, full pictures, fonts and animated sequences for the Graphx environment. They are a veritable gold mine of art and ideas for your own creations. Asgard has also released a disk for TI Artist that contains some of the same artwork imported to the Artist environment, but you can still use the Graphx Companions with TI Artist or Joy Paint if you don't mind making the conversions. Asgard has also released Graphx Pictures which contains more of their outstanding artwork - 24 pictures - and a Slide Show program with which to show them.

Triot Software has released some excellent artwork for use with TI Artist. Each 2 disk package includes pictures, clipart, fonts and slides.

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PROGRAM CORRECTION

GENEVE SUPPORT COLUMN
by Don Jones
fw Chicago Times

On last months program:
"CHANGE SCREEN AND TEST COLOR IN XD"
Line number 150 should read:

150 CALL LOAD(10021,32,32,36,2,0,8,16,4,32,32,36,2,0,8,
24,4,32,32,36,4,91)

Sorry about that! If you discover any errors in any other
programs let me know at the meetings and I'll be glad to
put the correction in the next TI-D-BITS.

thanks,
Ralph Field

<XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX>

AN EDITORIAL
by Ralph Field

There have been a number of articles or reports
circulated around in the past six months or so offering
some bitter feelings to say the lease about the new
Geneve 9640 Computer. Though they have the right to
express their feelings I feel that much of it has been
blown out of proportion. Most of the problems have been
preliminary software which has only begun to reach its
final form.

Below is an article in rebuttal by Don Jones from
Chicago TI User's Group. This artical was taken from the
Chicago Times Dec.87 issue, (rather lengthy perhaps) but
well worth your time to read it wither you are a Geneve
owner, considering on buying one in the future or just a
TI'er with no plans on purchasing any other machine in
the near future.

In the article he states that he is planning on a
monthly article in Chicago Times for the Geneve 9640
offering tips and information on the new system. If they
turn out beneficial I will in turn put those articals in
our TI-D-Bits for the benefit of our Geneve owners.

Happy reading, see you next time,
RALPH

<XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX>

Hi there, Sports Fans!

Well, just as I said, here I am in my new
incarnation. I hope that this will be an on-going
monthly column, which will be devoted exclusively or
indirectly related to the new Myarc (Geneve) 9640
Computer. For me, this is a very important and
significant thing that I do, as I feel that the future of
our TI Community lies with the future of the 9640
Computer. Unfortunately, I must admit that I have yet to
find one positive thing said about the 9640 Computer in
this newsletter, that has not been said in the most
grudging way. Still, most people are able to admit that
there are two sides to any question. Heretofore, only
one point of view has proliferated in the pages of this
newsletter.

Though I shall be working at a grave disadvantage, I
shall endeavor to present that other side of the
question. You may ask why I say I will be working at a
disadvantage. I say this for two reasons: 1.) All that I
write will be available for rebuttal, by the editor, in
the very same issue in which my ideas shall appear, and
2.) I feel that many people are convinced that positive
viewpoints are uncritical, lack probity, perspective, and
discrimination. In other words, it appears that it is
tacitly considered as chic to take a negative point of
view. Cynicism and pessimism are considered to be
acceptable and "in." Optimism and faith are looked upon
with disdain and derision. Everyone knows that bad news
travels very far and very quickly. Most people don't
want to hear praises; it's the negative stuff that sells
copy! (I truly believe that most newspapers and
television stations would go out of business if they delt
only with positive and uplifting subjects; the public
just isn't interested in that sort of thing. It's the
rapes, the murders, the extortions, the bribery, and the
dishonesty that sells both newspapers and air time.)
Well, so be it; still, I am not afraid to express my
pleasure with this new machine.

It is clear to me that the machine, which the editor
of this newsletter, Carole Goldstein, has been using, for
her reviews, has been a defective machine, and I don't
feel that this gives a fair or representative view of the
machine. Rather, it will clearly give a highly one-sided
view. Consider this scenario, which I feel is analagous
to the situation under which the Geneve has been reviewed
here: You are a writer for an important and highly
influently automobile magazine. Your assignment is to
review a new high performance car. The car, which has
been purchased, for the review, has a defective

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carburetor (or carb fuel injection system). As a result, it is difficult, and sometimes impossible, to start or restart. It is sluggish, when accelerating; it is highly profligate, relative to its use of gasoline, it idles roughly, and tends to die when you come to a stop. If you choose to review the machine in this condition, obviously, the review will be so negative that many intelligent persons will be dissuaded from purchasing one. In order to write a fair or objective review, you must do all that is necessary to bring the machine up to its specified operating conditions. To do anything else would cause your review to be highly prejudicial. Unfortunately, I don't feel that this has been the case, relative to the reviews, regarding the 9640 Computer, in this newsletter.

I LOVE MY TI, BUT I ALSO LOVE GENEVE

Let me begin by saying something which has not been in this newsletter: I AM VERY HAPPY AND SATISFIED WITH MY (GENEVE) 9640 Computer. I AM GLAD THAT I PURCHASED IT, AND IF I COULD GO BACK IN TIME, I WOULD DO IT AGAIN! Am I an uncritical, non-intelligent, non-discriminating imbecile? Well, all things are possible, and you will have the opportunity to come to your own conclusions, relative to this conjecture.

Why am I so happy, with my 9640? I feel that this is a fair question, and I shall now attempt to answer it with the following reasons: 1.) I purchased my machine with full knowledge of the problems which Carol was having with her machine. I purchased it expecting to have all sorts of problems and difficulties. 2.) I looked at the new machine as a potential challenge, a sort of a "adventure" which I had to solve. I expected for my joy to be found in the process of discovery and in the unlocking of the secrets of the machine. 3.) I received excellent support from my dealer (Mr. Bob Demeter, of Lake Computer Depot), from whom I purchased my machine. (I hasten to add that this was a very crucial factor to my happiness, and I would strongly advise against purchasing this machine sight-unseen or through a catalogue. Unless you are very bright, which I don't claim to be, you will require some help in getting started.) Therefore, when I finally did get my machine, I left his home with a rudimentary working knowledge of how to use the machine. 4.) As a result of my work on this year's Faire, I had the pleasure to become acquainted with Barb Wiederhold, of the Geen Ann Computer Shoppe, in Seattle, Washington. (A month ago, at this time, Barb had sold about 77 Geneve Computers. Though she won't tell me, I estimate that she will have sold about 100, by the time of the printing of this article.) Barb was able to make me privy to quite a few undocumented features, relative to the 9640. 5.) My uses for my machine are somewhat limited; 85% of my computer work is in the area of word processing. Relative to word processing, the

Myword program, which I am using to write this article, is a very decent program. When you consider the fact that it is free, with the Geneve Computer, it is highly cost effective. Incidentally, how many other computers actually give you, for free, a word processor, or a DOS, or a spread sheet? Darn few, Neighbors, and this has to be considered with one's considerations, relative to purchasing a Geneve 9640 computer. 6.) Thought I did encounter most of the difficulties, which Carole experienced, with the help of my dealer, I was able to solve my problems in short order or find a way of getting around the problems. As a result, I am very happy with my Geneve.

Relative to the problems which Carole has been having, I can only say that some of her problems are hardware and some are software. I am also prepared to demonstrate, publicly, that my machine, using my software, will not have the problems which Carole has repeatedly documented.

Another "fair question," which one would possibly ask me is, "Why would I purchase a machine with which I expected to have difficulties?" The answer to this question is clear and simple: I am committed to the TI Community and the TI family of computers; it's just that simple. I don't own a clone, and I have no intentions of ever purchasing one. In fact, I really don't even want one. I am very satisfied with what I have been able to find within the TI Community.

Some other important questions are, "Should everyone in the TI Community run out and purchase a Geneve? Does everyone need one? In fact, exactly, who needs a Geneve?" In attempting to answer these questions, let me begin by saying that the choice of what machine anyone invests in is a highly personal choice. As my associate, Mr. Dave Wakely, has stated, you should get the machine "that suits you." And in order to find out exactly what "suits you," I suggest that you first choose the software that you want/need to run; you then find the machine that is capable of running it. (Not even all "clones" are equal!) Next, I would not urge everyone to run out and purchase a Geneve; nothing is for everybody. I also happen to feel, very strongly, that the TI 99/4A is as much of a machine as most people need. It is a heck of a computer, with a great potential, that is able to deal with most people's computing needs. I therefore suggest that if you have a 4A, keep it. It will do virtually all that you need to have done. The only people who I would counsel towards getting a 9640 are: a.) those who have no computer and are therefore starting from "scratch," and b.) those people in the TI Community who want something more; I mean those who have outgrown the 99/4A. I am talking about those who need a faster and more powerful machine with an ever greater potential. I feel that these people can most benefit from a Geneve.

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PROBLEMS, PROBLEMS, PROBLEMS!!!

In order to start with the negative stuff, let me discuss some of the problems which I did encounter with my machine: I encountered almost all the problems which Carole has routinely and repeatedly documented: run-away keys and redefined keys. Here I must emphasize that I encountered only most of the problems which Carole documented; some of her problems were never experienced by me. Relative to the problems which I was having, I found out in conversations with Messer's J. Peter Hoddie and Jack Riley, of Myarc, that my problems were the result of a faulty keyboard. When I was told this, I didn't want to hear or accept it; I was totally incredulous as I felt that I was being put off and euchered. But once I had my initial keyboard replaced, with the aid of my dealer, all of my problems went away. (Here, I wish to emphasize that the Geneve keyboards are generic XT/AT keyboards that are not manufactured by Myarc.)

I must again admit that I never experienced some of the problems which Carole documented, such as chronic locking up. I also never had any problems with my telecommunications. The obvious question is, "Why didn't I have the same severe troubles that Carole did?" I feel that the answer to that question is the fact that I had easier access to the most current software that was being made available for the machine. It was made available to me through my dealer and through Barb Wiederhold's excellent B.B.S. Therefore, because of these two sources, I had early access to a terminal emulator, a disk manager program, and other programs that worked. I would also like to mention and thank Mr. Don Walden, of the Milwaukee TI Users's Group and the Wisconsin TI Council. Don was very instrumental in getting to me programs which his associate, Mr. Jim Schroeder, either wrote or modified for the 9640 Computer. Therefore both Don and Jim were great aids to me.

As I said earlier, it is abundantly clear to me that some of the later problems, which Carol experienced, using our group's Geneve, were hardware related. They were obviously the result of a bad chip, which was progressively deteriorating and/or a faulty voltage regulator. The latter has been a problem with some of the 9640's. I don't feel that this makes the Geneve into a bad or poor machine. As long as Myarc services these machines properly, and in a reasonable length of time, I can see little reason for complaint. Here, I would like to talk a little about Myarc:

AN UNPOPULAR POINT OF VIEW

First, I would like to say that I am not a dealer, I don't work for Myarc, I have never even met Lou Phillips,

and I have never received any monies or gratuities from them. I therefore have nothing to gain or lose from either positive or negative statements regarding this company. Also, other than my Geneve, the only other piece of Myarc hardware that I own is the 512K RAM/memory card, and I am very satisfied with it. (You may remember that I did a demo/tutorial for a past users' group meeting, and I uploaded the text of my demo to the users' group's B.B.S.) As a result of this, I remain highly appreciative of what this company has done for the TI Community. I am also well aware of the problems which some close friends of mine have had with their double sided double/quad density disk controllers, when they first came out; I would be dishonest and lacking any credibility if I claimed ignorance of them. In spite of the initial problems, with the Myarc disk controller card, it must also be admitted that that particular piece of hardware, and its accompanying software, actually works. It is totally functional, and the bugs have been worked out. Speaking of bugs, I don't think that there has ever been a piece of software that has been written without bugs. You don't get an MS-DOS version 4.0 or a 1-2-3 Lotus version 3.0 because they were written without bugs or room for improvement! The issue which has to be addressed is, "How well are the problems being dealt with?" For me, this will be the bottom line that will determine the future of the Geneve Computer.

I feel that Myarc is one of the companies which have allowed the TI Community to remain the viable entity that it has been. At the same time, I don't feel that either Lou Phillips or Myarc owes it to the TI Community to support it. The one thing that they do owe any community, which they choose to support is a decent and workable product, and if that product has any imperfections, they owe their customers a speedy and complete remediation of the problems.

I also admit that the price of some of the enhancements and improvements which we have enjoyed, through Myarc, have come with a cost; the cost was a lack of compatibility. Though I don't own a Myarc disk controller, I understand that it is compatible with only about 90-95% of existing software. All that I can say in regard to this is that there is a price for everything. Total compatibility would be nice and is something to be sought, but finding it is both unlikely and unrealistic. This phenomenon is also not to be found in the world of clones.

THANKS FOR THE SUPPORT!

I would also like to say one other thing about Myarc: It is not another International Business Machines; in fact, it isn't either another Texas Instruments, Inc. Rather, it is a small company. From what I understand, Lou Phillips put up his own personal money to subsidize the

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production of the 9640 Computer. We are therefore not talking about big or significant corporate monies. Rather we are talking about a highly innovative individual with a big dream upon which he is staking a great deal in order to make it into a reality. I, personally, feel both admiration and respect for anyone who has been able to do so much with so little. What Lou Phillips has done is an excellent example of American ingenuity. I am also deeply appreciative of what he has done for me and the entire TI Community. Thanks you, Lou Phillips, and all of the people at Myarc.

OPTIMISM, PESSIMISM, AND REALISM???

Dave Wakely, in his usually perceptive and astute articles, has clearly delineated what he sees as the possible futures of the TI 99/4A and the TI Community. I can only marvel at his intelligence and insight; he truly impresses me with his logic and the ostensible realism of his point of view. Still, I would submit that many of the phenomena which we have seen unfold within the TI Community have not been based in either logic or "realism." We have done what no other computer or computer community has ever done before. What other orphaned computer has had a new and more powerful compatible version emerge? What other computer community has continued to thrive, in terms of both hardware and software, in the midst of such adversity? In other words, we don't do things in predictable ways; we don't function according to the book. We don't necessarily conform to reality, rather we make our own reality! This is why we have survived, and this is why I believe that Geneve will endure, in spite of the problems and the negative criticisms. I admit it; here, I am talking about FAITH! At the same time, I would caution you, Sports Fans, don't allow yourselves to become cynical, relative to this particular sentiment. As does the human spirit, it too endures.

Speaking of negative criticisms, I would like to say that relative to both the Geneve and the TI Community, these have continued to proliferate. Some of these criticisms are well founded, but I do not feel that it is proper to only present one point of view. To the critics, I urge you to continue. I am confident that we shall endure; we have what survival requires, and it is only through a true "baptism of fire" that we will find our place of respect, in the world of computers. It is just another adversity that will result in the strengthening the fabric of our community. Bring on the antithesis; we Geneve/TI loyalists will provide the synthesis! Just remember, "Da opera ain't over until da fat lady sings!!!" As you can see, I am fully committed to the belief that the resolution of conflicts are useful in that they help to weed out that which is weak or unworthy. What remains will be awesome!

It must be clearly admitted that there exists a small but steady attraction of 4A users. This attrition is occurring from the TI Community to other computers. It has also been my observation that the I.B.M., or a "clone" of it, is the most popular computer for most former 4A users to move to. Some move to this other computer for reasons related to use of this computer in their work environments. I find that a few educators, with 4A's have invested in the Apple Computer, because this is the computer which is most often being used within many educational environments. A few serious game players have gravitated towards the Atari ST or the Amiga. A couple of others, who are most interested in graphics and computer art, have sought out the Amiga. (At the same time, I don't know of anyone who has moved to a Commodore.)

In spite of this attrition, I am convinced that our community can remain strong. The way that this can be done is through the selling of used machines to individuals who have no computers. By keeping used 4A's circulating, I feel that we can keep our community both viable and alive. I am also convinced that there still exists a significant part of the computer owning population that still has 4A's and that they would use them if only they had access to the proper support. My most recent work as the former membership chairman seems to bear this theory out.

Here, I would like to predict that there will also be a number of computer owners who will re-buy the TI 99/4A Computer. I predict that these "re-buyer's will probably be those who purchased an I.B.M. "clone" for unclear and amorphous reasons, rather than for work related reasons. I predict that these "re-buyers" will be somewhat disenchanted with their "clones." They will find that educational software will be expensive and difficult to find for their machines. They will also be disappointed in the lack of convenience and ease, which they took for granted with their 99/4A's. Though they will find that there is excellent support for most of the hardware and software for their "clones," they will find that the initial cost of the hardware and the software to be prohibitive; they will find the "fair ware" phenomenon hard to come by. (I herewith challenge any I.B.M. or "clone" user to show me a disk manager or sector editor of the same quality as the ones in John Birdwell's Disk Utilities Program. I used this program for the first time ever yesterday, and it blew me away! I will have more about this program next month; incidentally, it is fully Geneve compatible.) They will experience compatibility problems in both software and hardware, which, heretofore, the TI Community has not experienced to any significant degree. I also predict that they will miss the cohesive support groups, such as this one, as within the I.B.M. Community, there is no need for them. I am therefore predicting a return to "the fold" of those

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who hope to stay in the direction of the "clone."

Still, I see the main salvation of our community as the 9640, but at the same time, I am forced to admit that the 4A community also wants to be able to deal with programs written for the MS-DOS environment. Well, Sports Fans, again, I am convinced that it's Geneve to the rescue. I understand that Myarc is actively working on some sort of hardware peripheral which will allow full P.C. compatibility; this is an important priority project, for them. We are already seeing the emergence of programs that allow for the transfer of P.C. text files. I predict full P.C. compatibility before the end of 1988. I also predict that when this occurs, it will be the one thing that will convince the more timid and less adventurous members of our community to go for a Geneve rather than a "clone." I therefore say, if you have been contemplating moving in the direction of a "clone," I urge you to wait. There is no cost for waiting, and you may well be happy that you did. I believe that it will be possible for you to have the best of both worlds (the TI and the I.B.M.).

Already, some of the current members of our community have computers other than the 4A. It is also clear that these same persons have fully committed themselves to their other machines, and they do not even use their 4A's anymore. The logical question is, "Why do they continue to remain in the group and the TI Community in general?" I believe that the answer to this question lies in the fact that these persons have developed many close friendships and associations, as a result of their work with the 4A. They continue to stay with the community simply because there are so many really nice people to deal with. This is very nice, but there is also a danger; it is the danger of the "self fulfilling prophecy!"

What I mean by a "self fulfilling prophecy" is a prognostication, which because of the respect and the probity of its bearer, is taken to be a literal statement of reality, and is therefore acted upon and adhered to uncritically. As a result of a tacit, subconscious mental acquiescence and acceptance, it truly becomes the reality, of many individuals. (I believe that our beliefs are the basis of our realities.) I therefore want to warn the TI Community, and the Geneve segment, in particular, of the danger of this sort of thinking. We cannot allow ourselves to be swayed by others who are not Geneve owners or those who are not committed to this machine. I would even go so far as to conjecture that there are members of the TI Community who would like to see Geneve die! I feel that it is the only way that some members of our community can internally justify their apostasy relative to the TI 99/4A and the TI Community. The death of Geneve would be the only way for them to validate the correctness of their choice to commit

themselves to a "clone" or some other machine. It's nice to be able to say, "see, I told you so!" or "Well, it looks like I was right all the time!" or "I made the best choice!"

As it is clear, the going may be a little tough for those of us who are Geneve lovers, but I am confident that we shall endure. I am also sure that the TI Community will also endure. We are too strong, and failure is out of the question.

This article has gone on long enough, and I haven't even begun to tell you anything that will help you with your machine. I hope that you will forgive me if I save that for the next issue. I feel that it was important to set the tone of these articles with this initial one. Next month, I will talk about some undocumented commands in M-DOS and in the GPL mode. I shall describe how you can use your Horizon RAM disk to boot your DOS or GPL loader in 3 seconds. I will also talk about modifying your DOS with a sector editor so that it will find your AUTOEXEC file on your Horizon RAM disk. There is also an interesting thing that you can do with the CSAVE program that will give you greater convenience in the GPL mode. I will also talk about how to create your BATCH and AUTOEXEC files in M-DOS or in Myword. I will also continue to make sure that new and updated files, for the 9640, are uploaded to the group's B.B.S. (In fact, just today, I received a package of some of the most current software, for the Geneve from Mr. Jack Riley, the vice-president of Myarc. With his permission, I will be placing these files up onto the group's B.B.S. In other words, I will do everything in my power to support this most estimable machine.

By the way, be sure to get the GIF program and some of the GIF files off of some of the various bulletin boards. This program gives you graphics of I.B.M. EGA quality! (You don't need MByBaBrBtB or any other program to run these files.) Show some of these pictures to your friends with "clones" or Amiga's or Arari's, and when you do, be sure to leave the room so that they can cry in both dignity and privacy!

Well, Sports Fans, it looks like ole Krome Dome Jonz has talked too much again. Well, ahm real sorry 'bout dat! I only ask that you allow me the time and the space to wish you all most pleasant holidays. Have a Merry Christmas, a Happy Channuka, a Joyous Solstice, and a Happy New Year!

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