OUR NEXT MEETING will be on Friday,

DECEMBER 16, 1983 at 7:30 pm

PLACE: KEY BANK BLDG.

SW corner of Rt. 20 and Rt. 155

THE JANUARY MEETING will be on Friday,

JANUARY 27, 1984 at 7:30 pm

PLACE: KEY BANK BLDG.

SW corner of Rt. 20 and Rt. 155

December's meeting will include a showing of the demonstration
tape for the graphics code generator and what to do when the program
you just spent hours typing in won't run.

UPSTATE 99/4A USERS GROUP
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ALBANY, N.Y. 12212

PM
Season's Greetings USA20c Season's Greetings USA20c
1983

VOL I, NO. 10   DECEMBER, 1983

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Time marchs on. TI has announced their decision to stop production on
their home computer line of products. We've heard claims that they will
put out the in-house software that was essentially completed in its
development, but that they have shutdown production on all previously
developed software. We know that there will be a large number of new
people who will become owners of TI-99/4A computers as TI's last one-half
million computers are selling like hotcakes at their new price of about
$50. We still do not know what will happen to 99'er Magazine. We hope
that they will continue to publish, but there is concern that they may
start to lose support from their advertisers.

In this new environment, our local newsletter and this hints column could
assume more importance for the 99/4A owner. The time is right to share
your ideas with your fellow 99/4A users. If you have any hints and/or
tricks that you think are worth sharing with your fellow club members,
send them to my home at 734 Wright Avenue, Schenectady, New York 12309,
to me c/o the Users Group at P.O. Box 13522 in Albany, or talk to me at
our monthly meetings. If you pick up an idea someplace else that you have
not seen appear in this column, send that along. Just include a note as
to where you found it and we can give an appropriate credit when we use
it.

Progress is slow, but continuing. We have a second contribution from a
reader (Thanks Rich Lane). Keep it up readers!

Item 1:
Back to our category of mistakes that you can make when working in a less
than alert state at 2 A.M. in the morning. You've just finished debugging
or composing (you think) of an Extended Basic program that you want to
save as a protected program. It's late, you're groggy, and (without
thinking), you save it protected, shut off the computer and go to bed.
The next day you discover two things: 1. You didn't save an updated
version in the unprotected state and 2. The program still has an
execution bug. You now can't list, resave, or modify your most recent
version. If you have a MEMORY EXPANSION unit (or if you have a friend who
does), don't shoot yourself in the foot or kick the dog -- there is a
solution. Rich Lane was rummaging on a bulletin board for the 99/4A in
Florida and found the following hint. Load the protected Extended Basic
program and then at the imperative level enter the following:
                    >CALL INIT
                    >CALL LOAD(-32187,0)
You will now find that the program in memory is unprotected. You can
list it, change it, and resave it under its old name or a new name.

Item 2:
In constructing the character set for the 99/4A TI did not slash the zero
and O's and O's do not have a large difference in appearance. From the
Tigercub Software newsletter by Jim Peterson comes this idea. You can
slash the zeroes in your output by putting into your program a line:
                    1 CALL CHAR(48,"003A444E546444B8")
This will only redefine ASCII codes below 128 while the program is
running, so your zeroes will be unslashed while you are keying in a
program or listing it. If you add a temporary line:
                    2 GOTO 2
then key in or list a screenfull of program lines, type RUN, you will see
all the zeroes on the screen become slashed to aid your proofreading
efforts. (Don't forget to remove line 2 after debugging.)

                            Mike Henry

HEX ADDR	OBJ CODE	LAB	OP CODE	OPERAND(S)	COMMENT(S)
7D00	1004		JMP	ST	Go to start
7D02	3030	TX	TEXT	'00000000'	(Initialize
7D04	3030				screen
7D06	3030				char's)
7D08	3030				
7D0A	0200	ST	LI	R0,>1BC	(Set site of
7D0C	01BC				counter)
7D0E	0202		LI	R2,6	(No. of bytes
7D10	0006				to display)
7D12	0201		LI	R1,TX+2	(Addr. of 1st
7D14	7D04				char)
7D16	0204		LI	R4,>3A00	(Byte to check
7D18	3A00				rollover)
7D1A	0203	D	LI	R3,6	(Set for 6
7D1C	0006				digits)
7D1E	0420		BLWP	@>6028	(Screen write
7D20	6028				utility)
7D22	05A3	IN	INC	@TX(3)	
7D24	7D02				
7D26	9123		CB	@TX,R4	(Check
7D28	7D03				rollover)
7D2A	16F7		JNE	D	
7D2C	DBE0		MOVB	@TX,@TX+1(3)	Move bytes
7D2E	7D02				
7D30	7D02				
7D32	06E3		SWPB	@TX(3)	Swap bytes
7D34	7D02				
7D36	05A3		INC	@TX(3)	
7D38	7D02				
7D3A	9123		CB	@TX+1(3),R4	Compare bytes
7D3C	7D03				
7D3E	06E3		SWPB	@TX(3)	Swap bytes
7D40	7D02				
7D42	16EB		JNE	D	
7D44	DBE0		MOVB	@TX,@TX(3)	Move bytes
7D46	7D03				
7D48	7D02				
7D4A	0643		DECT	R3	R3=R3-2
7D4C	0300		LIMI	2	(Enable
7D4E	0002				interrupts)
7D50	0300		LIMI	0	(Disable
7D52	0000				interrupts)
7D54	10E6		JMP	IN	Count again
7D56			AORG	>701E	
701E	7FD8		DATA	>7FD8	(Update REF/
7020			AORG	>7FD8	DEF pointer)
7FD8	434F		TEXT	'COUNT '	(Input name of
7FDA	554E				program and
7FDC	5420				addr. of 1st
7FDE	7FC0		DATA	>7D00	statement)
7FE0			END		

A simple program from the Int. Users-Group to show the speed of Assem. Lang. The program counts with a 6 digit counter on screen at about 2500 times per second. Compare this to a count and print program in BASIC.

I'll assume you have a version of the line-by-line assembler with OLD, NEW, NAMES and CLEARS from previous columns. Select NEW from the RUN option in MINI-MEMORY and type in the program shown at the left.

To run the program select COUNT from the RUN option in MINI-MEMORY. You will see a 6 digit counter. The assembly language program is counting and displaying the number on the screen as it counts. Note that the program checks to see if any digit has reached ":" (ASCII 58, the character after "9") to know when to roll a digit position over to a zero and to "carry" a digit into the next place just as we do when performing addition long-hand.

The "LIMI 2" followed by "LIMI 0" allows you to stop the program using the QUIT key.

Hopefully you are now getting used to the sequence at the end of the listing to name a program, and update the REF/DEF table and the pointer for that table.

As with BASIC much more time is spent in printing than in counting.

Mike Henry

TROUBLE WITH YOUR TEII?

Many people over the years have tried to save information while on line with the terminal emulator and have ended up with a blank file. All you have to do is make sure that when finished you leave the module with it's EXIT (control zero) instead of quit etc. Works wonders. Yes I've done it wrong too.

TIBBS

That stands for Texas Instruments Bulletin Board Service. No it's not run by TI but you do get a TI if you call. At the moment there are two of them and more on the way. Here are the phone numbers (404) 425-5254 or (813) 525-7998. I have called them both several times with no prior experience and found it lots of fun.

FOR SALE

USED: TI-TREK,ADVENTURELAND,STRANGE ODYSSEY ALL ON DISK CHEAP
     See Rich at meeting

PLEASE TAKE A MOMENT AND CHECK THE LABEL

The mailing label, and if it is incorrect either drop a note to the users group or see the secertary at the meeting. Thank You.

YAHTZEE

Another of my favorite games written for the TI. Yahtzee is a challenging stategy game. Now I have someone to play with when no one else is around. I only wish they had made it more than just a one or two player game. Other versions or variations of this game I've seen allow more than two players. Never the less a great game, for hours of fun. It is played the same as the non-computer version.

For those of you who know nothing about Yahtzee, if you do nothing after putting in the module and selecting Yahtzee the computer will play a demo game to give you an idea what it is like. You have the option of a one or two player game, one player you play the computer and two player you play against a friend. You also have the option of regular or challenge yahtzee. In regular the computer randomizes the first roll of each player, in challenge each player has the same first roll.

After you have made these choices player #1 presses Enter to roll the dice. Next, press the number shown on the dice you want to keep. For example if you roll 2 2 4 5 1 and decide to keep the twos press 2 twice. A red line is drawn under those you wish to keep. If you make a mistake or change your mind press Erase (FCTN-3). This will erase all the red lines. After you have underlined those you want to keep press Enter again to roll the dice. Each time you roll you must reunderline. You have a maximum of three rolls.

To enter your score use the arrow keys to move the flashing cursor to the category you want. As you move the cursor it will show you the score for each category. When you have the cursor where you want it press Enter to register the score. In column one of the scoreboard your score is the sum of the number of dice of that number. Example, you roll 2 3 3 5 3 you score 9 for your three's. To get the bonus in column one you need a total of at least 63 points. Three of each will give you exatly 63 points. In the second column 3 and 4 of Kind your score is the sum total of all the dice. Full House (three of one kind and two of another) scores 25 points. Small Straight (four dice in sequence) 30 points. Large Straight (five dice in sequence) 40 points. Yahtzee (five of a kind) 50 points, and 100 points for each additional yahtzee in a game plus you get to use the points in another place (column one, three or four of a kind or chance). Chance scores the sum total of all the dice.

The highest score wins. The computer also will keep a running total for successive games if you press REDO after each game.

This game lets you concentrate on game strategy while the computer does all the work, rolling the dice and figuring the score. Some may find this a boring game, with nothing much to do but, I don't. I can sit and play six games in a row especially if I am winning.

                                                                Sally Lane