

YESTERDAY'S NEWS

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NOVEMBER 2018

30 Years Ago...

Historical Information taken from Bill Gaskill's TIMELINE

NOVEMBER 1988:

MICROpendium receives an award from the Ottawa TI-99/4A Users Group for the support MICROpendium has given the TI Community since 1984. The award was presented to John Kolean by Ottawa UG member Jane LaFlamme.

Tom Freeman and Jim Lohmeyer, T and J Software, announce the release of their DiskAssembler program for the Geneve.

DaTaBioTics announces plan to create a GROM port add-on board for the 99/4A.

The Press word processor by Charles Earl via Asgard Software fails to make its debut at the Chicago TI-Faire.

Genial Computerware announces Picture Transfer for the 9640.

At the Chicago TI Faire a representative from Delphi Communications Services contacts Bob Demeter about the possibility of the Chicago TI User Group having a special area on Delphi.

NEWSBYTES HOME COMPUTER COMPENDIUM
Volume 1, Number 3 - April 1984

NOTHING FROM THORN

Despite reports published recently in a leading home computer magazine that indicated that Thorn E.M.I. is marketing Computer War for the TI home computer, the company is doing no such thing. According to spokeswoman Val Demeo in the company's New York office, Thorn E.M.I. has no plans to market any of its games for the TI. The company had planned to produce several games for the TI computer but everything was cancelled last December after TI pulled out of the home computer market. Demeo says the company has nothing planned for the TI.

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Vienna, VA, Oct. 10, 1989: After months of work designing, planning and manufacturing, Asgard Software is pleased to announce that we've become the first new original equipment manufacturer (OEM) of modules for the TI-99/4A in over 4 years.

Virtually all modules available today for the 99/4A are leftovers from stocks constructed by various companies in 1983-84 (primarily TI), or were manufactured more recently by Databiotics, Inc. for various distributors. Asgard Software originally purchased finished module versions of its software products from Databiotics, but because of quality, cost and flexibility considerations, we decided to begin manufacturing cartridges in Spring of 1989.

After much work, and consultation with some of the foremost hardware designers in the 99/4A and 9640 community, we have constructed a completely original device that is rugged, reliable and of exceptional quality. The PC board in our module features both a capacitor and a resistor, as called for by TI specifications, and is designed to fit firmly but not too tightly within a variety of standard module cases. The nickle-plated edge connectors are durable and built to TI standards.

See "ASGARD", Page 2



ELEMENTS OF BASIC

By Dave Howell

COURTESY OF THE EARLY 99'ERS PART 13

GOSUB...RETURN

Many times the same set of program instructions are used more than once in a program. Re-entering these program lines can be very boring and time consuming. The use of subroutines make the additional entries unnecessary.

A subroutine can be defined as a program which appears within another larger program. The subroutine may be located anywhere in the larger program and may be executed as many times as desired.

GOSUB is similar to GOTO. It is followed by a line number, and when the program comes to the GOSUB statement, it will branch to the line number, just as it does with GOTO. However, with GOSUB, the computer will remember where it branched from. When it reaches the command RETURN at the end of the subroutine, it will branch back to the first line after the GOSUB statement. GOSUB works like a boomerang - it goes where you want it to, but it always comes back.

To understand better what GOSUB can do, study this MUDVILLE SCHOOL cheer:

```

10 PRINT "MUDVILLE IS THE VE
RY BEST,"
20 PRINT "WE PLAY CLEANER TH
AN THE REST!"
30 GOSUB 200
40 PRINT "WE CAN RUN AND WE
CAN PASS,"
50 PRINT "MUDVILLE HAS A LOT
OF CLASS!"
60 GOSUB 200
70 PRINT "MUDVILLE KNOWS WHE
N WE BEGIN,"
80 PRINT "WE WON'T QUIT UNTI
L WE WIN!"
90 GOSUB 200
100 END
200 REM HERE IS THE SUBROUTI
NE.
210 PRINT
220 PRINT "ONE, TWO, THREE,
FOUR,"
230 PRINT "WHO ARE WE FOR?"
240 PRINT "MUDVILLE! MUDVILL
E!"

```

These three lines send computer to line 200

Stops the RUN
Does not get printed.
(You'll learn more about REM later on.)
Leaves a blank line.

This BOLD part of the program is called a subroutine.

250 PRINT "GO TEAM GO!"

260 PRINT

270 RETURN

This line sends the computer back to the line after the GOSUB it came from

The computer will go to a subroutine as many times as a GOSUB sends it there. The above program has three GOSUB statements. Therefore, the portion of the cheer found in the subroutine will be repeated three times.

Subroutines can make writing a program easier. By dividing a lengthy program into a number of smaller subroutines, the complexity of the program will be reduced. Individual subroutines are smaller and therefore more easily written. Subroutines are also more easily debugged than longer programs.

Try these programs on your computer:

```

10 FOR B=1 TO 4
20 READ D$,D
30 GOSUB 60
40 NEXT B
50 GOTO 110
60 IF D/2=INT(D/2)THEN 90
70 PRINT D$
80 PRINT "OOL";
90 RETURN
100 DATA T,18,C,7,F,8.2,P,2
110 END
10 GOSUB 90
20 GOSUB 70
30 GOSUB 60
40 GOSUB 110
50 STOP
60 PRINT "TI";
70 PRINT "ME";
80 RETURN
90 PRINT "SO";
100 RETURN
110 PRINT "S"
120 END

```

ON...GOSUB

An ON...GOSUB statement is very similar in principle to an ON...GOTO statement. The following is an example of an ON...GOSUB statement:

```
100 ON X GOSUB 1000,2000,3000
```

If the value of X is 1, the subroutine at line 1000 is executed. If X is 2, the subroutine at 2000 is executed, and so on. If the value of X is rounded off to a value less than 1 or greater than 3, a BAD VALUE error message will appear. As with the GOSUB statements, when the computer encounters the RETURN statement, the program will return to the line immediately following the ON...GOSUB statement.

MICROREVIEW

MICROPENDIUM
Charles Good

Vol. 11, No. 6
July 1994

DORTIG DISK #2 BY DORSET TI USER GROUP

To the best of my knowledge there are two TI user groups in the UK. A national group, chaired by Stephen Shaw, publishes a nice newsletter which is well known to many in the USA. The smaller group is limited to the county of

Dorset, and communicates with the outside world via its numerous disks of public domain utilities. Mr. J. Murphey, Treavor, and the other lads of DORTIG have recently released their second such disk.

Everything is in extended basic. When you first DSK1.LOAD you are given the choice of a full introduction with "a load of rubbish" or a menu of applications with "a little bit of rubbish". The "load of rubbish" choice is so funny that the first time I saw it I burst out laughing several times during its execution. I was in my living room at the time, and the rest of my family wanted to know what was so funny. I couldn't describe in words the cause of my chortles. All I could say was, "Come here and look at this thing."

Here is the "load of rubbish" scenario. Text of the DORTIG lads' conversation appears at the bottom of the otherwise black screen. You quickly figure out that the lads are INSIDE the disk drive. Ten pairs of eyes appear. It is determined that someone out there wants to see a menu on the disk. One of the lads is assigned the task of putting the needle on the disk. Another is supposed to work the little red disk drive light. The rest get on the tread mill to start spinning the disk. You see the eyes of the lads moving faster and faster across the screen as the disk gradually gets up to speed. Finally the (on screen) red light starts to glow and an application menu appears. This all is really quite funny, with a definitely British flavor (oops, flavour) to the humour.

In addition to several graphic demos, there are some useful applications on the disk. My favorite is the program to randomly assign matches to teams in a round robin bowling tournament. This is for British lawn bowling, not our familiar 10 pin bowling, but it will work for any multi game league team sporting event such as baseball or basketball. The soccer world cup series, currently touring the United States, could have used this software to determine which country plays which in each round. You enter the names of the teams and the number of games each team is to play. The computer then randomly creates play lists matching teams against each other for the required number of games. This may be a unique application in the TI world. I don't remember seeing another TI program that does this. The DORTIG #2 disk also has a nice program to keep track of automobile expenses and gasoline (oops, petrol) mileage on a month by month basis. Accounts are maintained for business and personal car expenses, and the program handles petrol amounts entered either as gallons or liters. Data are displayed on screen and can be printed at any time with a screen dump.



THE END CONTINUES...

THE FUTURE OF TI/GENEVE USERS

My predictive powers are not what they used to be, but it's clear to me that the future for TI and Geneve users lies on the web. A number of user groups maintain useful and active web sites, not to mention publishing electronic newsletters. The Milwaukee User Group and Southwest Ninety-Niners are two that pop into mind. Individual users also maintain sites dedicated to the TI and Geneve. And you're missing the boat if you have access to the Internet and are not subscribing to the TI list-server (ti99@TheRiver.com) or accessing the TI newsgroup (comp.sys.ti).

The web is the one place where TIers can maintain contact, regardless of our marginal TI user groups and businesses become. I imagine that I will continue to use my TI: at least the PC99 version that never has problems with keys that have a habit of repeating or cartridges that overheat and cause the console to lock up.

It's been a great run for us and we are eternally grateful for your support.

-JK

ASGARD continues...

On our modules we use genuine Texas Instruments EPROMs which, as we've all learned from our 99/4As, are guaranteed to be built to exacting standards. We have acquired the capacity to "burn" (program) the chip on our modules in house, saving both time and expense. This capability also permits us to rapidly implement updates, as well as service our module software quickly and easily.

Finally, our modules are packaged in genuine TI cartridge cases (which we've purchased new), and are professionally labeled. Our high-quality modules are then individually tested to assure they function properly. We are able to produce this exceptional device at a cost comparable to what we used to purchase them for from Databiotics.

Currently, Asgard Software manufactures two programs in cartridge form - Typewriter 99 and Tris, both by Jim Reiss. In the near future, we intend to extend our offerings with new productivity, educational and entertainment software by a range of authors. Even today, years after TI discontinued the TI-99/4A, tens of thousands of new modules are still sold every year. Even today, the majority of TI-99/4A systems in use are equipped with at most only cassette recorders. Hopefully, the products we offer will extend the viability of console-only systems (from which disk system owners spring), for years to come.

See "ASGARD", Page 5

Home Computer Compendium

Volume 1 Number 1 February 1981 \$1.50

Covering the TI99/4A and Geneve home computers

MICROpendium

Volume 18 Number 3 May/June 1999 \$6

A New
Magazine
For TI99/4A
Computer
Users

MICROPENDIUM CEASES PUBLICATION

It was the best of times.....It was the worst of times

HOME COMPUTER COMPENDIUM

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 1, FEBRUARY 1984

What is the Home Computer Compendium?

It may be better to begin answering the above question by describing what the Home Computer Compendium is not.

As you can see, HCC is not a slick, high-priced magazine. Nor is it a clever merchandising scheme. We have no intention of selling you, the reader, anything other than this magazine. We have no plans to market software, books, T-shirts or anything else that cannot fit between the covers of the Compendium. To paraphrase a popular television commercial, we will strive to do only one thing well.

So what is the Home Computer Compendium?

It is a conduit, a source of information and a vehicle for the dissemination of information.

It is also unique among computer publications inasmuch as it operates under newspaper-type deadlines. All of our schedules revolve around the goal of providing up-to-date articles and news. We have the capability of going to press within a day of completing a late-breaking story, unlike other publications which must work months in advance of publication dates.

We also offer a classified advertising section, which we hope you will find useful.

Each edition will also include a minimum of six staff produced reviews of software, hardware and other items designed for use with the TI home computer. They will be unbiased, consumer-oriented reviews with an opportunity for rebuttal on the part of vendors.

We urge you to review this edition carefully. It is the prototype of what will follow. We hope it is the smallest we ever publish, but regardless of its size we feel that the Compendium is an idea whose time has come.

We hope you agree.

Sincerely,
John Kolean
Publisher

Editors Note - Home Computer Compendium changed its name to MICROpendium starting with Volume 1, Number 4, May 1984. This was due to another company threatening a lawsuit over the name "Home Computer Compendium".

MICROPENDIUM

VOLUME 16, NUMBER 3, MAY/JUNE 1999

This is the final edition of MICROpendium.

We knew this day would come and frankly I thought it would come sooner. Although you our readers are loyal, there aren't enough of you to sustain us any longer. Laura and I have been underwriting MICROpendium for a while and can no longer afford it.

This publication has been a big part of our lives over the past 15 years, much bigger than we imagined when volume 1 number 1 was published in 1984. We thought then it might last three, maybe four years. I would never have predicted it would last until 1999.

But as the saying goes, all good things come to an end. Producing MICROpendium has become a physically challenging project as well as a personal financial drain. While we still have hundreds of loyal readers, Laura and I can no longer afford to devote ourselves to the publication. It's time to call it quits and move on to other things.

We do regret that we can't provide refunds for the balance of your subscriptions. There's just no money available to do this. If we'd stopped publishing a year ago, there would have been enough money in the checkbook to make token refunds. But we decided to keep MICROpendium going as long as we could. Thus the checkbook balance declined every month until reaching a point where it can decline no further.

I wish we had the foresight to plan for our demise, but it's not something that comes easily. I would have liked this final edition to have been a kind of "survival" guide, wherein we list all the resources, web sites, e-mail addresses, and other information that could be used by our readers to move forward into the 21st century. But I guess it was the denial of the inevitable that allowed us to continue publishing MICROpendium in the first place, and if we'd allowed ourselves to see what was coming we would have quit long ago.

Although we don't anticipate publishing another edition, we are offering back issues at 50 percent off the cover price (see the ad else where in this issue). Funds that we raise now will be used to pay our accountant, hopefully cover most of our debts, and to close down the company. We will fill orders until July 31, 1999, after which we will be completely out of business (the phone will be disconnected). So, if there's anything you want, this is the time to buy it.



SEE "THE END", PAGE 2

ASGARD continues...

Asgard Software is currently seeking assembly language programmers interested in adapting their software for modules, or writing new items specifically for the cartridge market. While because of the relatively high cost to produce modules, we can't offer as generous a royalty as we like, the sheer number of copies that virtually any module sells more than justify the time spent to produce them (you can truly "make it up in volume").

Of course, we intend to continue extensive development of disk and cassette software for the TI-99/4A and Myarc Geneve 9640, and are always interested in new programs for either machine in virtually any language. We have acquired this capacity in order to reach more TI users, and to better serve our customers.

While on a percentage basis alone, our royalties may not be as generous as those extended by some other manufacturers, we invest the difference in advertising your program, sending catalogs to literally thousands of TI users around the world, maintaining accounts on major telecommunications networks, publishing a highly respected magazine for 4A and 9640 users (that periodically spotlights individual products we produce), and more. Asgard Software has invested almost ten thousand dollars in equipment designed to help us produce the most professional looking software possible for the cost the program sells for. A high royalty percentage doesn't assure you of high royalties - it doesn't mean anything if no one has heard of your program or knows it advantages over others.

Finally, you can be assured of professional treatment for your program because we are the only 99/4A or 9640 software firm that is run full-time by its owner - our firm isn't a hobby of the owner, it is his livelihood and he has a vested interest in promoting your program.

Asgard Software offers a full line of programs for serious TI and 9640 users by some of the best-known names in the 99/4A world. When you get serious about publishing your software, you should contact a serious software company.

YN

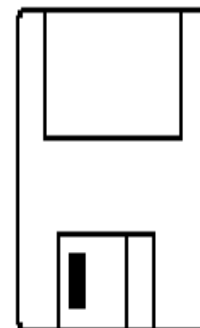


TI CHIPS

MARCH 1997

**USING 3.5" DRIVES
WITH YOUR CORCOMP
DISK CONTROLLER CARD**

By John Parken



The 5 1/4 format of the TI has been a plus because 5 1/4 disks have been more or less set aside for the more popular 3.5 inch format on the IBM. The people who get rid of 5 1/4 disks because they don't use them anymore give me a good source of disks to reformat for my TI. People get rid of disk files full of double sided double density which work fine with the TI.

For people who are putting no more money into their TI. You can buy 3.5 IBM drives for use with your TI until you decide to retire it. Then recycle them on your IBM system. If you have a Corcomp disk controller you can use 3.5 inch disk drives and only need low density disks for them. I have thought about putting two 3.5 drives on my system because I have seen so many 3.5 disks on sale with a rebate for the whole purchase price. I just bought 100 SONY disks for \$39 and got a \$30 rebate check - 9 cents a disk! Hard to pass a deal like that up. I can't understand how the manufacturers can make any money with a deal like this but I love them.

I wrote this article in another article, then I bought two 3.5 drives and found things not to be as I thought. That prompted me to get it working before I submitted the article as true. So here we go.

Hooking up two 3.5 drives on the CORCOMP disk controller card in addition to the two 5.25 drives you have in the PEBox, no problem right? Well, drives have changed. All IBM 3.5 drives are set up for drive 2 which for IBM is OK. Their data cable takes care of selecting drive 1 or 2, but what about my TI? Gone are the drive select jumpers and no select as to high or low density. We can use the same approach as IBM uses. I will do my switching in the cable: pin 12 or wire 12 is the drive select #2. If I want drive 3 all I do is move wire #14 coming out of the disk controller card to wire #12 into the drive. The disk controller will then consider that drive as drive #3. The drive select lines on a corcomp card are:

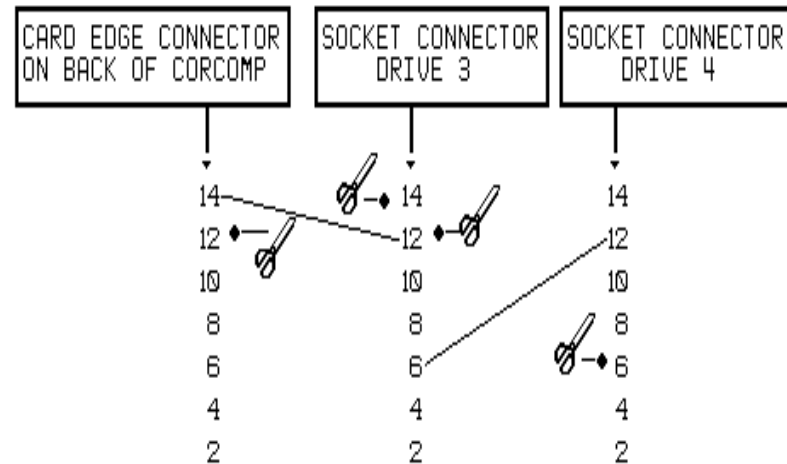
Select Line	Drive
6	drive #4
10	drive #1
12	drive #2
14	drive #3

The drives I used were purchased at a Peter Trapp show for \$19.50 each. They are Neutronics (Mitsumi) 3.5 1.44 MB. At that show I also bought the splitter cables to power the drives. I did have to go to two different vendor tables to get the right combination I needed. First a V 5.25(Large Connector) to get my power outside of my PEBox. I did experience some problems with the 3.5 drives by just using the pbox power supply so I did add an external 5 volt power supply, which provides 1 amp 5VDC. You can buy a wall plug in 5 Volt power supply from Jameco or Radio Shack. When you hook it up the black and red wires are GND and +5VDC, respectively.

Then I purchased a double 3.5 (Small Connector). These 3.5 drives only need 5 VDC. Use a volt meter to see which wire from the wall 5 volt power supply are GND and +5VDC. A 24" length of 34 conductor ribbon cable with one 34 position card edge connector and two 34 pin socket connectors make up the cable. All odd pins are at ground potential. In my cable diagram I will only show part of the cable and only the even wires.

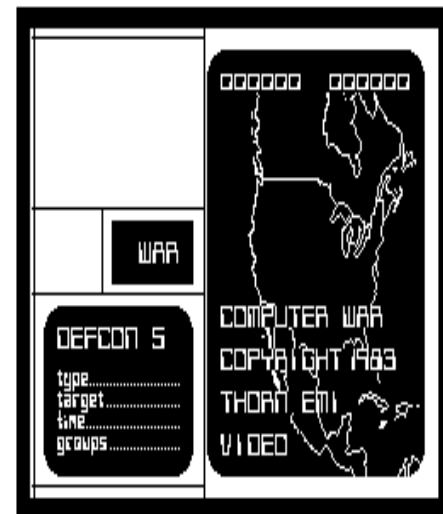
Please remember this is for a Corcomp disk controller only. Even when you use a 3.5 1.44 meg drive it will only format your 3.5 disks to 360K and only if you cover the density hole with tape (black) or use some of those write protect tabs.

As I wrote this article I built the cable. Then I tried it. It did NOT work. The drive lights came on (all four) all the time. Upon inspection the card edge connector was crimped just enough side to side to short all the pins together. I cut off that connector and recrimped a new one on and problem fixed. These connectors should be available at radio shack. Having the 3.5 drives is nice. Again II is a winner only because we do have some compatability with IBM equipment.



Cut the cable where  is shown.

EDITORS NOTE: I BELIEVE 3.5 DRIVES WILL WORK WITH A II CONTROLLER ALSO, ALTHOUGH I HAVE NEVER TRIED IT.



RIVER RESCUE



SUBMARINE COMMANDER

