

"Michigan Astrobugs Newsletter"



Secretary: Peggy Gladden * 59400 Gmiland * South Lyon, MI
313-437-3984 * MARCH 1984 * 48178

WHERE WILL BUGS ATTACK???

I'M SURE YOU ALL REALIZE THAT BY NOW I'VE GOTTEN AN ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF RIBBING ABOUT OUR CLUB MAP. I'VE HEARD EVERY SENILITY JOKE AROUND, BEEN COMMENDED ON MY TERRIFIC ORGANIZATION, & EVEN BEEN ACCUSED OF NEVER HAVING A MAP IN THE FIRST PLACE.

I AT LEAST LEARNED ONE THING...I'LL NEVER AGAIN HINT THAT I'M GOING TO ADD THE MAP TO THE NEWSLETTER. ALL I CAN SAY IS...YOU'LL NEVER KNOW WHAT YOU ARE LIABLE TO FIND IN THE MICHIGAN ASTROBUGS NEWSLETTER.

AS FOR OUR NEXT MEETING, IT IS SCHEDULED FOR SUNDAY, APRIL 1, AT 1:00 P.M. THE ADDRESS IS: GREEN OAK TOWNSHIP HALL 10789 SILVER LAKE RD., SOUTH LYON, MI. IF YOU NEED DIRECTIONS, OR FURTHER INFO, JUST CALL ME. I HAVE A MAP!!!

CLASSES:

ONCE AGAIN IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR, TO SIGN UP FOR BOTH THE BASIC AND ASSEMBLER (MACHINE LANGUAGE) CLASSES. THESE WILL BE ON THE BEGINNER-INTERMEDIATE LEVELS, WITH PRIVATE COUNSELING ON ADVANCED LEVELS. AS OF RIGHT NOW, WE DON'T HAVE MUCH MORE INFO TO ADD, EXCEPT THEY WILL START AROUND THE END OF APRIL, AND WILL COST \$20.00 PER PERSON, PER COURSE.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE GIVE US (DON & PEGGY) A CALL AFTER APRIL 1, AT (313) 437-3984. YOU CAN THEN MAKE ARRANGEMENTS TO SIGN UP BY PHONE, OR YOU CAN SIGN UP AT OUR APRIL MEETING. WE WILL HAVE ALL FINAL INFO AT THE MEETING SUCH AS THE TIME, AND THE WHEREABOUTS.

HIGH SCORES:

SNEAKY SNAKE
1-DARRELL HAINES.....12,993
2-STEVE QWCZAREK.....9,669
3-TOM QWCZAREK.....9,551

COSMIC RAIDERS LEVEL 9-3 BASES
1-GEORGE MOSES.....11,150
2-RICK MOSES.....3,775
3-CHRIS SUSINKO.....2,370

SPACE FORTRESS LEVEL 9-3 BASES
1-GEOFF SIEMBOR.....10,200
2-BRETT BILBREY.....8,075
3-TOM BURTELL.....7,800

GALACTIC INVASION LEVEL 9-3 BASES
1-DARRELL HAINES.....1,824
2-REX BELDEN.....1,790
3-GEORGE MOSES.....1,470

THE INCREDIBLE WIZARD LEVEL 3-1 PLYR
1-TOM BURTELL.....12,940
2-DARRELL HAINES.....7,610
3-BILLY ZDAN.....5,200

ASTRO BATTLE LEVEL 4
1-DARRELL HAINES.....3,110
2-JAMIE BROWN.....2,360
3-BILLY ZDAN.....1,560

ASTRO PINBALL GAME #1
1-RICK MOSES.....85,820
2-MIKE TOTH.....57,630
3-DON GLADDEN.....48,680

PIRATES CHASE
LEVEL 9-3 TURNS
1-PEGGY GLADDEN.....69,673
2-JOHN ZALEWSKI.....16,638
3-SUE MULLEN.....11,158

PAC-MAN
1-MELINDA MULLEN.....51,820
2-PEGGY GLADDEN.....45,200

NEWS!!!

INFLATION HAS FINALLY HIT US! I'M AFRAID WE'VE HAD TO RAISE THE DUES THIS YEAR. OUR NEW MEMBERSHIP FEE IS \$10.00 PER YEAR AS OF 1-1-84.

HOWEVER! WE INTEND TO GIVE YOU MORE FOR YOUR MONEY! WE'RE PLANNING BIGGER TOURNAMENTS AND BETTER PRIZES! WE REALLY HAVE SOME GREAT SURPRIZES FOR THIS YEAR.



WE GET LETTERS.....

Dear Sirs,

I am a student in high school in Cleveland, Ohio. I am greatly interested in the field of computer programming. I have purchased the Bally Arcade system and the Bally Basic cartridge for basic programming. I have a number of questions referring to the learning course booklet included with the cassette.

On page 97 is a routine entitled "Decimal to Hex Converter". Please explain the value and uses of the hexadecimal system. On page 98 is a Character Code Table (Appendix A). Please explain to me the use of this table. On page 99 is Appendix 3 having to do with bus and connector structure. Please explain the use of this (even if it may be insignificant), and the Astro signals. On page 100 a light pen connector port is mentioned. Please inform me the use of this piece and how I may obtain, and what it will do. Page 101 is about a system memory map. I would like to know about this system and how I can work this on my unit. Page 102 has Appendix D. I'm sure if you explain what it is I can figure out how to use it. On page 103 is Appendix E. I would appreciate knowing of this and how it may be useful to me. On page 115 is another list that could be helpful to me, if I know how to use it. Please send me a list of books or attachments and a price list of material I can order.

Thank you for your time.

Yours truly,
Doug Dunyan Jr.

Doug,

I will try to briefly answer your questions in the order that you wrote them. The value of the Hexidecimal system is in programming in machine language. The Z80 microprocessor contained in your Arcade can be programmed in its own language which uses hexadecimal (base 16) numbers as its command words. You are more accustomed to using decimal numbers (base 10).

Page 98 The Character Code Table is very important in doing word processing or in storing letters in memory as numbers, which your computer understands. Refer to pages 38 & 39 of the manual for a more complete explanation "Storing Text in Arrays."

Page 99 Bus & Connector Structures refers to the signals present

on each of the pins on the 50 pin connector in the back of your Arcade. These signals are only important if you are going to build your own memory expansion to plug into the Arcade.

Page 100 Lite Pen Connector Port is on the right rear of your Arcade. It provides a 5 volt power supply for a lite pen that will allow you to draw on the screen or choose menu items by touching the screen with the lite pen. Two members of the B.U.G.S. have developed lite pens that work, but no one has found it economical to produce one as yet. Stay tuned!

Page 101 System Memory Map shows the addresses in hexadecimal where different parts of the operating system are stored. If you know where these commands are you can call them and get them to work for you doing graphics, sounds and storing and moving large amounts of info at high speed. To learn how to peek and poke into screen ram which is the memory you can manipulate, study Lesson 10 on music and subscribe to The Arcadian users newsletter.

Page 102 Input and Output Ports diagrams the numbers of the ports through which you can input data to your computer (input ports) and those through which the computer outputs data to the screen and loudspeaker (output ports). For more information order the Bally Basic Hacker's Manual from The Arcadian. For a demo of these ports in a program see the bottom of page 114 (3) The Direct Use of Sound Ports &(16) thru &(23). Also, see Mike Peace's excellent "Sound Port Study" on page 88.

Page 103 Appendix E tells you where everything is stored in the AstroBasic cartridge by address. An ideal tutorial to read on peeking and poking into these areas is to be found in Volume I page 78 of The Arcadian, "Using the Bally Basic Text Area" by Dave Ibach.

Page 115 is a simple list of what you have bought in your computer: Memory; Inputs; Output Graphics; Output Audio, etc.

Contact The Arcadian, 3626 Morrie Drive, San Jose, CA 95127 for the monthly newsletter that will make a real hacker out of you in no time!!!

Sincerely,
GEORGE MOSES

HELP!

As you can tell, we're becoming a bit desperate for information for our newsletters. We can't seem to get anything to write about.

Our question and answer column almost never has any questions for it. It's kind of hard to come up with information, when we can't get anyone to take the time to drop us a line.

I'm not sure whether everyone has figured the machine out, or if you've all just parked your Astrocade in a dark closet. Sometimes I don't think there's anybody out there!!!

Another sad loss was our Bug Puzzle. Out of all the puzzles we ran, the most entries we had at any one time was two. We were at least hoping for a dozen or so. That's not too much to expect, out of 200 members! It was a real disappointment to have to cancel it. We felt it wasn't a problem of the puzzles being too hard. After all, no one complained!

APOLOGY!

As you can tell, I owe an apology for the layout of this newsletter. Unfortunately, our printer is broken right now, so I had to resort to using my typewriter to do part of this paper. George Moses was good enough to print out half of our newsletter, but when I realized how small it was, I felt I'd put in a plea for help. I'd really hate to see the Michigan Astrobugs go down the drain!

EDITORIAL:

What's Happening?
by Don Gladden

Many, many rumors are circulating about Astrocade and those associated with it. "Video Games" magazine (March '84) ran an article by Mark Brownstein, covering these rumors. I will attempt to answer what I can.

Rumor #1 - Astrocade will come out of the Chapter 11 soon.

First we must realize that Astrocade will not have much to say until they are out of the Chapter 11. They are restricted in what they can do or say until then. We should know more after March 14, and be able to report more at our April meeting.

Rumor #2 - Many suppliers of software (including New Image) are giving up on the Astrocade.

Some software companies are "fly-by-night" operations, and have ceased producing entirely. Most established companies plan on continuing to produce new games and programs for the Astrocade. "New Image" is now going through a major transitional period, with a name change, (COMPU-C.A.T.S.) and will be expanding to other computers AS WELL AS THE ASTROCADE!!!

Rumor #3 - The "Michigan Astrobugs" are dissolving.

Due to many factors, the Astrobugs have decided to cut down meetings from six to four per year. Also, help "up front" is scarce, so more member participation (writing for the newsletter, setting up the meetings, planning, etc.) is very desperately needed. Please give us your input and your volunteer time if you can, or the above rumor could be something to worry about. We still have over 200 members, and have no plans whatsoever of stopping as long as the interest is still there.

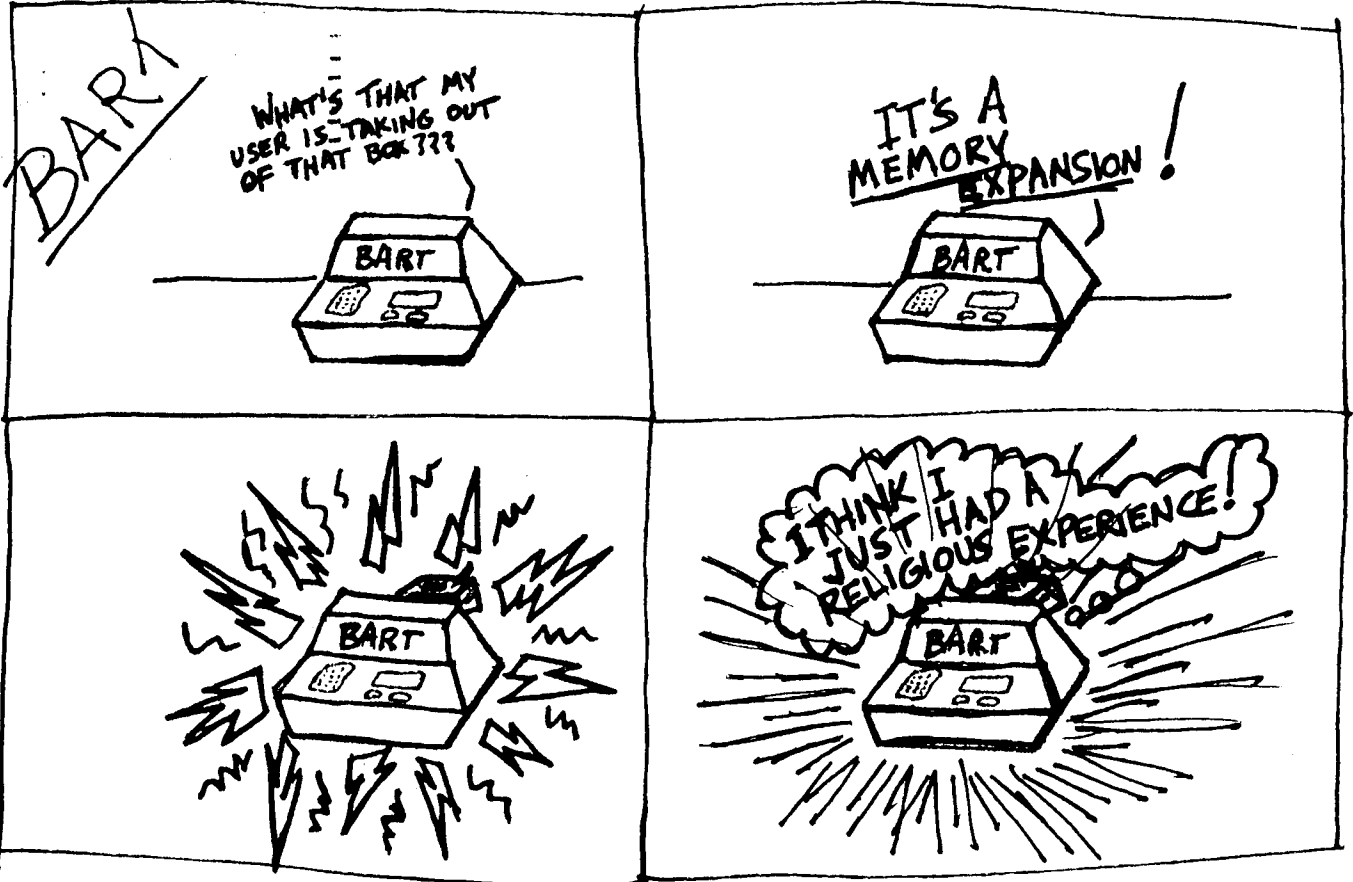
We need you....Write an article or send us your ad.

HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY!!!





NICHIGAND ASTROBUS
59400 DUDE MILE RD.
SOUTH LYON, MI 48178



by Don Gladden