

Michigan Astro Bugs



Sec. Peggy Gladden

59400 9 Mile Rd. South Lyon, MI 48178

July, 1982

• Speak Out! •

We've chosen this column for the critical side of this business. It's more or less a gripe column. The gripe for today is... where is the Z-Grass 100 add-under? What is taking so long?

Most of us are tired of hearing that the Z-Grass will be out soon. However, now we have some positive answers.

Delays have been caused by constant changes in the design (for improvement), and from manufacturing complications. Hopefully, by the time you read this, John Perkins (who designed the Blue Ram) will have signed a contract, to finalize the design, and produce the Z-Grass 100. Cross your fingers!

• What Bugs You? •

If you have anything at all to share with the group, please let us know. Our purpose is to show you what you want to see, and tell you what you want to hear. Any questions or requests, please tell us, or write them on the suggestion sheet in the back of this newsletter. Thanks.

• Where will BUGS attack? •

Our next meeting is Sunday, August 15, 1982. It will be held at New Image, in South Lyon. Time will be 2:00 to ????? There is a map at the back of your newsletter. Hope to see you there!!

• Master Plan •

George Moses will open our meeting at 2:00, and will show any new hardware and software which we will have available.

After this, Brett Bilbrey will hold a question and answer period. Please feel free to ask anything—no matter how dumb it seems to you. This is what Brett is here for, and he feels that no question can be too trivial or dumb, to be answered. Besides, the rest of us like to watch Brett work!!!

After the question and answers, we will be breaking up into special interest groups. The first two will be Beginner Basic Training, taught by Don Gladden, and a hardware group, headed by Marion Nalepa. These will go for a half-hour, and then be

changed to Games-Advanced Basic, headed by Brett Bilbrey, and Machine Language (not who will be heading it at this time).

• Finances •

These figures are complete, and up-to-date, except for expenses for this meeting, and a new check statement, which is not done at this time.

Membership fees	\$237.80
Pd meeting fees	- 50.02
Balance	187.78
Pd Postage	- 8.71
Balance	179.07
Pd printing and office sup.	- 15.00
Balance	\$164.07

• Games Galore •

We're still striving to get together a club tape. Please send us your program donations. Remember, we will accept any quality programs, that you have written yourselves. Be sure they are not programs which have not been donated elsewhere, such as the Arcadian. However, they may be programs which you sell.

Please... We are still desperate for these programs. We have some donations, but not enough to make out tape.

• Summer C.E.S. •

By Don Gladden

Just a quick report on the C.E.S., which some of us were fortunate enough to be at.

George Moses, Brett Bilbrey, Chris William and myself were all there, and enjoyed seeing the new things that Astrocade has planned.

All the new cartridges were there, some still in the prototype stage, but all functional enough to get an idea of what they will be like.

Shown were *Conan the Barbarian*, *Creative Crayon*, *Bowling*, *Soccer-Dribbling*, *Solar Conqueror*, *Cosmic Raiders*, *Music Maker*, *Artillery Duel*, *Pirates Chase*, and of course *The Incredible Wizard*, which was the featured cartridge of the show.

The Wizard is now available, while the rest are scheduled for release anywhere from July to the end of the year.

We also had the opportunity to use the "Z-Grass" 100 add-under, and all I can say is, "I can't wait!!!" John Perkins is working on the add-under, so I believe that it won't be long now!

If you ever get the opportunity to be at on the C.E.S., don't miss it!!!

• **X-TRA** •

We've taken a little space here to let everyone know about extra information for your Astrocades (Ballys).

We highly recommend the "Sourcebook," put out by RMH Enterprises, which covers the following:

- New owner information
- System summaries
- Index to all software and hardware sources
- *Arcadian* newsletter index
- Program descriptions
- Repairs and service information
- User groups, etc...

Price for the "Sourcebook" is \$7.00, U.S. funds, postpaid. Write to:

RMH Enterprises
635 Los Alamos Ave.
Livermore, CA 94550

We also highly recommend the "Arcadian," a newsletter with a wealth of info. Bob Fabris has put out great efforts and continued support for the last four years, and has greatly helped put the Astrocade where it is today. If you wish to subscribe, the present rate is \$15.00 per year (you will receive all issues from Nov. to Nov.), and the address is:

Arcadian
3626 Morrie Dr.
San Jose, CA 95127-9990

The "Astrocader" is a new newsletter, published by New Image, and is available for \$4.00 for the first three issues. This is a trial offer, both to feel out interest, and to determine whether it will be continued after three issues. The third issue will have all info as to whether or not it will go on, what all rates will be, etc. Write:

New Image
345 N. Lafayette
South Lyon, MI 48178

Hope we helped someone!!!

• **Astro-Nomic Sales** •

At our May meeting, we began our "Corner Store." It's a great way to buy and sell your software, etc. Last meeting we had some custom

handles, dust covers, badges and software. If you have anything to sell, please call Peggy, at 313-437-3984, for more details.

• **Help!!!** •

Just a reminder... Please feel free to criticize or add suggestions for our newsletter. You may write anytime, in regards to this column, or any others. Just send your letters to Peggy, at the address at the top of page one.

• **Video Bugs** •

We're going to try another new game category for our meeting. This is purely for fun, not prizes. Our board has chosen several cartridges, which we're going to let you play, for high game scores. The top three scores of each game will be printed in the next newsletter, and posted at the next meeting. It will cost 25 cents a try, and you can try more than once. The games will be:

- Space Fortress
- Galaxians
- Wizard
- Space Invaders
- Bally Pin
- Pirates Chase

Once slight catch; these must all be played on their highest levels! Remember, all you woman, we can win too!! This can be our chance to show the guys who's who!

• **Brain Invaders** •

This is an all-out plea to our members for new game ideas. Our poor guys are zapped of any new thoughts. If you have ideas, let us know. Just maybe it will develop into a new game. Should one of the guys write a game off your idea, there won't be any royalties, but you'd be sure to get one of the first copies!!!

• **Video Therapy** •

Wanna beat the Wizard? Now's your chance! We're gonna give the game tournament *one more chance!* This month you can play "The Incredible Wizard," on level three, and try to win a wizard T-shirt. You get two tries, and your highest score counts. Entry fee will be one dollar, payable at the door, or by mailing in advance. Rules will be posted at the meeting, and they will be enforced! The contest will go on this time, even if there's only one entrant, but is subject to cancellation, if the participation is down. However, if it turns out to be a

success, we will carry it on, to our next meetings, with better prizes to come.

• **Women... Do We Belong Here?** •
By Peggy Gladden

Of course! I have been around this crazy machine for two years now, and I love it one day, and hate it the next! Sure, there's times I want to take the entire works and throw it right into our pond! However, there are even more times that I don't know where I'd be without it.

I've also learned, that if my only competition in this world is a machine... well, I've got it made!

I hear lots of wives who feel their husband is more dedicated to his favorite Astrocade than his marriage. Well, I have some solutions.

Try the machine yourself! While he's at work, get out the ole Basic Book, and see what he's been up to. Instead of writing him a little Love Note in his lunch, learn to program your note on the screen. In fact, you can easily learn to program 3-part harmony to go along with is thanks to George Moses' music lesson. I did—and I don't even know about hex, RAM, ROM, or subroutines.

You know, not only do our guys want us to be more involved, but when I talked to members of a Cleveland user group, you'd be surprised how many men would give up their Space Invaders cartridge, just to have their wives be a bigger part of them.

Come on Gals, its fun, if you just let it be. Try coming to one of our meetings. We're even going to have a beginner class, so we can learn more about what our guys are doing, and how we can enjoy it too!

For a little extra fun, learn to program enough to make a copy of your marriage license. If all else fails, you can feed that into the machine every now and then, as a reminder. Not only will he think of you, but you'll realize how much your thinking of him, because you took the time to learn to be a bigger part of him.

Note: This column is open to anyone who wants to put two cents in, on most any subject relating to the Astrocade. Just send me your article, and please sign it. However, if you don't want your name printed, just leave me a note on the bottom of your letter. - P. Gladden (address on page one)

• **From the Inside Cover** •
By Brett Bilbrey

Since this is my first column, let me first introduce myself. I've been working and playing with Astrocade (Bally), since 1977. I've contributed to the Arcadian, Cursor, and the New Basic Manual. I'm 22 years old, recently engaged, and about to

graduate from the University of Michigan with, with an Electrical Engineering degree.

Because of my programming background and knowledge of the Astrocade, I've been hired recently to design new cartridges for Astrocade, Inc. Currently, I am responsible for the new Missile Attack cartridge (#2020).

I would like to try to answer your questions in future issues, so send them in. Also, we will have a question and answer period at the meetings, but please be prepared with any questions you want to ask!!!!

This time I would like to answer a question I'm asked often. "Can we make our game high resolution?"

First, what is high resolution? The Astrocade's graphic resolution is 160 pixels across by 101 top to bottom. A pixel is the smallest box the game can make.

Now, high resolution is 320 pixels across by 202 from top to bottom. In high resolution, a pixel is smaller than in low resolution. Therefore, the graphics are better.

Now, for some bad news... it is very expensive to modify a game to make it high resolution (about \$300). Also, if you did convert your game to high resolution, you would have to redesign or rewrite your games internal software. What this all means is that right now, we have to be happy with our normal resolution.

Now, for a little good news. At our last meeting, one of the things Mr. Perkins showed us was a unit he modified to work in high resolution. As of yet, he has not written the software to make it work. In fact, I don't know of anyone working on high resolution software at this time.

Needless to say, right now high resolution is not practical, but perhaps we will see some working high resolution units in the future.

If you have questions you would like to have answered, send them to Peggy, and I'll try my best to get you an answer.

• **Alien Bugs** •

This is a column we've chosen especially for our out-of-state members. We'd like to keep you up-to-date on Astrocade, Inc., our club, and anything we can, that's in association with the company and the Astrocade machine.

If you're interested in starting your own user group, please let us know. For a \$2.00 fee (postage and copies), we will send you an outline on starting your own group, and a list of names and addresses in your general area.

At our last meeting, we met John and Clyde Perkins, who make the Blue Ram. The Blue Ram has

now been upgraded to 16k and includes a 2000 board card.

They also showed us a copy of their Artillery Duel cartridge, which rates a '10' with everyone I've talked to.

Dan Drescher and James Curran were also there, from Esoterica Limited, and showed off their new Bowling and Gabersville programs. They're super tapes, and well worth the small investment. These programs, and dozens of others, are available to all Astrocade users. If you don't know how to get more information, please let us know, by sending a S.A.S.E., and we'll send you plenty of mailing list information.

For any of our out-of-state members, who may be starting their own group, let us fill you in on the background of our name, "Michigan Astro Bugs."

We were originally the "BUGS," which stood for Bally User Group. However, when Bally sold out to Astrocade (then Astrovision), we had to make a switch. We still like to word "BUGS," so we just shuffled our thoughts. We added the "ASTRO," for Astrocade, and changed the meaning of our letter 'B' in "Bugs." The 'B' now stands for "BASIC."

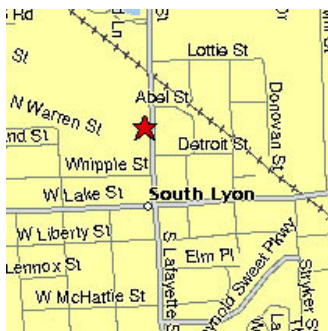
Then, to top it off, Dick Houser (of the Sourcebook), suggested to us the honor of being Nationwide Headquarters for the user groups, so we adapted "Michigan."

Needless to say, that's how we became the "Michigan Astro Bugs." Any of you who are starting a user group elsewhere, who would like to add the name "Bugs" or "Astro Bugs" to your club name, we would be honored. Just think, someday...

The Bugs could inherit the Earth!

===== Map =====

New Image
("Soft Water Works")
345 N. Lafayette
South Lyon, MI
313-437-7303



Michigan Astro Bugs Newsletter July, 1982
Version 1.1 - Released Oct 15, 2000

This document has been retyped and converted to PDF format courtesy of the *Bally Alley* newsletter. For other reprints and more information visit: <http://www.ballyalley.com>
Corrections? Suggestions? Email Adam Trionfo at: ballyalley@hotmail.com