

User's Newsletter

TI issues comprehensive TI-99/4 software directory.

The new Application Program Directory for the TI-99/4 accompanies this newsletter and lists the software packages currently available from TI and other companies. More than 100 packages are listed by application category. Information on each package includes the media, title, brief description, required or recommended peripherals, and suggested retail price.

Software packages are now being produced in three media — *Solid State Software*™ Command Modules, cassettes, and

diskettes. Presently, 64 software packages are available from Texas Instruments, and many more are being developed. Over 40 packages, covering a wide range of applications, have been produced by other companies. Ordering information has been included in the directory so that you can purchase these software packages directly from their producers.

New additions to the TI library of software packages include those on music, real estate, weight control and

nutrition, securities analysis, tax/investment record keeping, TI Extended BASIC, and games. Two exceptional games, A-MAZE-ING and The Attack*, have become very popular in the short time they have been available.

As the number of software packages for the TI-99/4 increases, the Application Program Directory will be revised. Call the toll-free telephone number listed in the directory to obtain the latest updates of the software listings.

* A trademark of Milton Bradley Co.

99/4 Home Computer Users-Group: a national organization.

Charles LaFara, a computer novice interested in a greater variety of software for his TI-99/4 Home Computer, turned his interest into action on Sept. 6, 1980, when he organized the 99/4 Home Computer Users-Group. Today, the group provides an active software exchange for over 3,000 users.

The group's newsletter lists more than 300 programs originated by users and available on diskette or cassette for a minimum of \$2.50 per program. At present, all programs are written in TI BASIC.

LaFara gets 4,000 program requests a month and has sent out more than 18,000 programs to date. He can also put people in touch with member users who can create custom software programs to meet their business or personal needs.

The 99/4 Home Computer Users-Group is not affiliated with Texas Instruments. Unlike many users' groups, no dues are charged. Group members range from first-time computer users to high-level engineers.

The 99/4 Users-Group has become a family hobby for the LaFaras. Family members share in answering the phone, replying to letters, copying programs on cassette and diskette, and evaluating new user programs. The living room of the LaFara home in Oklahoma City is outfitted with two TI-99/4 computers and monitors, one 80-column printer, four disk drives, three cassette recorders, an RS232

Interface, a *Solid State Speech*™ Synthesizer, modem, and joysticks.

LaFara has also written four programs for use in his meat processing business. They include an inventory program, least-cost formularization, ground meat formularization, and accounts receivable program. All LaFara's activities total to an involvement that has grown rapidly for a computer novice.

For complete information on the 99/4 Home Computer Users-Group, write or call Charles LaFara at:

P. O. Box 95148
Oklahoma City, OK 73143
405-787-8521

The Home Computer User's Newsletter is published by the Texas Instruments Personal Computer Division, P.O. Box 53, Lubbock, Texas 79408. All correspondence concerning this newsletter should be mailed to the above address.

System IV TI-99/4 Home Computer table: the perfect accessory for the TI-99/4.

A compact, specially designed table for the TI-99/4 is now available. This attractive table, which blends with any decor, is custom-made to fit the TI-99/4 and accessories. It keeps all elements of the Home Computer system organized and within easy reach.

The base table supports more than 800 pounds and is 43 $\frac{3}{4}$ " long and 24" deep. The table is constructed of a $\frac{3}{4}$ " wood product core with a high-pressure laminated walnut finish. It features a beveled edge, leveling feet, and steel spring-lock construction for easy, no-tool assembly. It has a 42"x12" video monitor shelf, as well as one or two 24"x12" side extension leaves. The video monitor shelf is designed to accommodate a color monitor or television set. The space under the shelf provides a convenient storage space for software modules and other accessories. An optional six-outlet plug strip supplies power to a Home Computer system with a convenient ON/OFF switch. The table is shipped unassembled.

TI has made an exhaustive study of computer furniture

and has found the cost of the System IV table to be far below that of comparable tables. The System IV Home Computer table is being offered to you at the cost of \$105 (including base table, video monitor shelf, and one extension leaf). The additional extension leaf is \$10, and the six-outlet plug strip is available for \$22. (All prices are F.O.B. Dallas.)

System IV is made by Computer Roomers, Incorporated, designer and producer of computer and specialty furniture for leading computer manufacturers. For complete information, call or write:

Computer Roomers
2737 Seelcoo Street
Dallas, TX 75235
Phone: 214-357-4671



The custom-designed, low-cost System IV TI Home Computer table keeps all elements of the Home Computer system organized and within easy reach.

Teachers find TI-99/4 helpful in the classroom.

In the past, computers have been primarily a business tool. Recently, however, microcomputers have been developed for personal and home use. And now, the use of computers in the classroom is becoming more prevalent. Today, computers are used to help kindergarteners, as well as high school and college students.

Microcomputers are generally used in classroom situations in two ways: as an instruction tool and/or in computer literacy programs. A wide

variety of instruction methods in almost any subject area can be implemented with the computer. Learning the capabilities, functions, and basic workings of the computer is called computer literacy.

The TI-99/4 Home Computer is ideally suited for classroom instruction. While TI BASIC is a very powerful and flexible language, it is also easy to learn and to use. The color graphics, sound, and speech capabilities of the TI-99/4 make it interesting for even the

youngest student and still provide many challenges for older ages.

Teachers around the country are using the TI-99/4 Home Computer in their classrooms. Karen Jones, a teacher at Round Rock High School in Round Rock, Texas, teaches four Computer Math classes. The juniors and seniors in her classes use seven TI-99/4s to develop problem-solving skills through BASIC programming. Ms. Jones, however, does not (See Teachers, page 3)

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believe that computer use and knowledge should be limited to the high school level. In fact, her 11-year-old daughter is learning to program in TI BASIC with the TI-99/4.

Another teacher using the TI-99/4 Home Computer in the classroom is Marilyn Latham. Ms. Latham, a teacher at Meyer Elementary School in Tempe, Arizona, heads a special pilot program at her school, sponsored by the Tempe Independent School District. Ms. Latham uses four TI-99/4s with *Solid State Speech*[™] Synthesizers and four Radio Shack computers in two different ways for two different groups of students.

Her first use of the computers is for children requiring remedial work in math and English. Several *Solid State Software*[™] Command Modules, including Number Magic, Beginning Grammar, Early Learning Fun, and Video-Graphs, enhance and reinforce the traditional classroom approaches. Ms. Latham also uses Scott, Foresman and Company's Reading Courseware Series and Math Courseware Series Command Modules.

The second use of the computers in the Meyer Elementary School project is with a group of gifted children in grades four through six. In addition to providing regular drill and practice using the computers, Ms. Latham is teaching this special group of youngsters how to program in BASIC. She believes computer programming is valuable to children because it teaches them both computer literacy and logical thinking.

The uses of the TI-99/4 in the classroom are almost limitless. Refer to pages 3, 4, 7, and 8 of the Application Program Directory for educational software packages available from Texas Instruments Incorporated and independent software companies.

New TI Extended BASIC module and Memory Expansion unit soon to be available.

TI Extended BASIC, an expanded version of TI BASIC, will soon be available to TI-99/4 users as a *Solid State Software*[™] Command Module. The enhanced language offers a number of new programming features that enable users to write a broad range of highly colorful, active programs for the TI-99/4.

To complement the extensive capabilities of TI Extended BASIC, the new Memory Expansion unit also will be available soon. The Memory Expansion unit adds 32K bytes of Random-Access Memory (RAM) to the 16K bytes resident in the TI-99/4 console. The unit is also designed for use with TI Extended BASIC.

Through the use of new programming statements, TI Extended BASIC greatly expands the flexibility, programming efficiency, and general capability of the TI-99/4 Home Computer. For instance, the ACCEPT AT and DISPLAY AT statements allow information to be entered and read from any part of the screen. The new SPRITE statements allow as many as 28 graphics to be moved around the screen, each having its own direction, speed, and color. The user may also write subprograms that can have their own local variables and also have arguments passed to them from the main program.

In addition, multiple statements can be contained on a single program line, thus increasing the total number of statements in one program. You can also write "tail remarks," comments placed at the end of a program line. A program can be written that will load and run another program. A new SIZE command

allows a programmer to determine how much memory his program occupies. Complex IF/THEN/ELSE statements can also be written. These and many other features enhance TI Extended BASIC.

Random Bits

Editor's Note: This column presents suggestions and ideas for using the TI-99/4 Home Computer and its accessories. We would like to publish your programming problems, solutions, and ideas. Send letters to:

Home Computer Newsletter
Texas Instruments
Incorporated
P. O. Box 53
Lubbock, TX 79408
Attn: Editor

Self-Study BASIC Book

A self-paced tutorial guide, *Programming BASIC with the TI Home Computer*, can help you learn TI BASIC at an easy, relaxed pace. Written by Herbert D. Peckham of Gavilan College, the book features a brief introduction to the TI-99/4 Home Computer, as well as "discovery" activities and application ideas. This useful text covers the full range of TI BASIC, from simple commands through advanced activities. It is published by the McGraw-Hill Book Company and Texas Instruments Incorporated.

Mailing List Program Corrections

Mailing List is a diskette-based application program for the TI-99/4. The program has recently been rewritten to include new features that speed retrieval of information. You may correct the program yourself by sending for written instructions. For more information, write Consumer Relations at the address below.

New Products to Watch for in 1981

During the year, watch for the 9900 Assembler for use with

(see RANDOM BITS, page 4)

(Random Bits, cont'd.)

the Memory Expansion unit. Also, a new keyboard overlay will be available to accommodate touch typists. A blank "dummy" key has been added to the overlay to provide a "home" key for the little finger of your right hand. In addition, watch for the introduction of the USCD Pascal* System software.

* A trademark of the Regents of the University of California at San Diego.

Program Information

To obtain information about new programs or to place an order for packages or accessories you cannot locate at your retail store, call toll-free 1-800-858-4565 (in Texas call 1-800-692-4279) between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. CST, Monday through Friday.

Technical Assistance

Need help? For answers to technical questions about programming, specific Home Computer applications, etc., you can consult a Home Computer programming specialist. For assistance, call 1-806-741-2663. We regret that this is not a toll-free number and we cannot accept collect calls.

Consumer Relations

When you move, send a U. S. Post Office Change of Address form to:

Consumer Relations
Home Computer
Texas Instruments
Incorporated
P. O. Box 53
Lubbock, Texas 79408

Local TI-99/4 Users' Groups organizing around the U.S.

In addition to Charles LaFara's national organization, local TI-99/4 Users' Groups are organizing quickly throughout the country. These groups provide a forum for users to exchange programs, share technical information, and stay current on new TI hardware and software.

Some of the active groups are:

Cincinnati, Ohio

99/4 Users
Larry Morrow
8075 Spring Garden Court
West Chester, Ohio 45069
(513) 777-7042

Denver, Colorado

Rick Savage
CRS, Inc.
4860 Ironton, Suite E
Denver, Colorado 80239
(303) 371-8272

Eugene, Oregon

Pacific Northwest TI-99/4
Users' Group
Gary Kaplan
P. O. Box 5537
Eugene, Oregon 97405
(503) 485-8796

Houston, Texas

Houston TI-99/4 Users' Group
Raymond Wells
8922 Roos Road
Houston, Texas 77036
(713) 771-3483 (Home)
(713) 871-8000 Ext 4516 (Work)

Los Angeles, California (Orange County)

John Chihorek
(213) 831-0611 Ext 236

Los Angeles, California (South Bay)

Chuck Hershey
(213) 744-9300

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

R. Riley
111 Teeple Avenue
Donora, Pennsylvania 15033
(412) 379-5976

San Diego, California

Paul Yates
4037 Johnson Drive
Oceanside, California 92054
(714) 758-4292

San Francisco, California

Bill Christensen
(415) 352-8500

Washington, D.C.

Bill Whitmore
P. O. Box 267
Leesburg, Virginia 22075
(703) 777-2017

TI is interested in assisting users who wish to form new users' groups in other areas of the country. If you are interested, write to:

TEXAS INSTRUMENTS
INCORPORATED
P. O. BOX 10508
M/S 5890
Lubbock, Texas 79408
Attention: Home Computer
Users' Group Coordinator

Non-TI products are listed here for your information. Their inclusion in this newsletter does not represent an endorsement by TI, and lists are not necessarily complete.