TI READER

The Newsletter of the
Charlotte TI—99/4A User Group

APRIL 1988

PARDON OUR INTERRUPTION:

The gap between your last TI READER and this one was not due to the post office, but to the editor. Job pressures and seasonal business have made time scarce. We regret any disappointment or inconvenience this has caused our club or other readers. The issues will be con—tinued in regular monthly order, with every attempt to make up the missed months.   —Ed.

DECIDING ABOUT THE 9640

What TI user has not thought at least once about whether or not to buy the Myarc 9640 computer--the Geneve? It was long awaited; there are some mixed reviews; there were some bugs; the cost is a factor; the itch to have IBM compatibility is in the back of the mind. Why buy the 9640 anyway?

John Johnson, of the Miami Users Group, wrote a piece in R/D Computing on this topic. He recently "took the plunge," and spoke about why.

Briefly, John says he had "too much time invested" in his TI to abandon it for a totally new computer. The tricks learned, the friends met, all figured in. The 9640 was the solution, and he lists four primary benefits: (1) Speed, (2) The power of the display, (3) The keyboard, and (4) the 4A co-existence.

R/D's editor comments that the 9640 already has the principal software support that it takes to make it a viable machine in the future, and that the nearing end of TI's legal obligation for support makes the shift logical.

No one in the Charlotte group has a 9640 yet.

SOMETHING FREE FOR SOMETHING NEW

(Reprinted from the Boston Computer Society TI-99/4A User Newsletter)

Boundless Systems and Software, 1191 7th Street NW, Salem, OR 97304 recently sent out the following letter. It was published in Tico Topics, the newsletter of the Texas Instruments Club of Oxnard, CA:

"We at Boundless are going to be marketing software and hardware for use with your TI-99/4A and Geneve computers. We hope to be sending out the first catalogs in January of 1988. At this point we are still taking in orders for catalogs and software/hardware submissions. If you would like a catalog or would like to send in any software/hardware to add to our catalog, please write to us at the above address. At this point in time, we are not ready to handle phone orders for the catalogs. Our phone number and all other ordering information will be in the catalog. The catalogs we are sending out will be free for the asking. Our prices will be competitive. And our products will be of the best quality. You will find software/hardware in our catalog that can be found in no other place in the world. We have a staff of programmers working on new and more powerful programs every day. We aim to please you, the proud users of the wonderful TI-99/4A home computers."

"Please pass this information on to any TI users you may know.

"Glenn J. Schworak, Founder."

[[The author sent a postcard to the listed address.]]

C O R R E C T I O N ! ! !

The Funnelweb 4.0 Flow Chart printed last month contained a slightly misleading graphic in the very first menu. The menu seemed to

CLUB INFORMATION

THE CHARLOTTE TI-99 USERS' GROUP meets the second Monday of each month at the Mary Eliza Computer Learning Center (at the Department of Social Services, 301 Billingsly Road, Charlotte, NC). Visitors are invited to enjoy our meetings without obligation. Membership is only $15 per calendar year per family or individual. Privileges of membership include borrowing from the software library, monthly newsletters, special interest group meetings, and low rate ads in the newsletter. For more information contact any of the officers.

THE USERS GROUP NEWSLETTER is printed monthly, and includes news concerning the Charlotte TI-99 Users' Group, as well as items related to the TI-99/4A computer system in general. Product reviews and announcements should not be considered endorsements or the official stand of the users' group as a whole, but only represent the opinions of the authors. Articles from this newsletter can be reprinted freely, in whole or in part, by any other bona fide computer users' group if credit is given to both the original author and to the Charlotte Users' Group. Articles from other users groups' publications may be included in this newsletter to help broaden our range of topics. Full credit will be given to any reprinted articles. Submissions for the newsletter are welcomed. We need long or short programs, technical tips, software or hardware reviews, problems, etc. Credit is given to the author of every item printed. Copyrighted material will be not be accepted without the author's permission, and articles may be edited for reasons of space. Newsletters are also available to other TI Users Groups on an exchange basis. Any group interested in this arrangement should contact the secretary at the address below.

ALL CORRESPONDENCE, submissions, ads, changes of address or other requests should be sent to: The Charlotte TI-99/4A Users Group, P.O.Box 9353, Charlotte, NC 28299-9353

1988 OFFICERS		*UPCOMING MEETING DATES*	
Dave Wentzel, President	(704)334-8302		
Jim Lucus, V. President	" 534-2497	JULY	11
Robert Simms, Editor/Sec	" 563-0820	AUGUST	12
Arnold Wollman, Treasurer	" 542-1903	SEPTEMBER	8
Jack Foy, Systems Operator	" 542-6014	OCTOBER	10
Bill Morrison, Software Lib.	" 525-1583		
Wayne Hollar, Hardcopy Lib.	(704)264-7803		

indicate that choosing "XB Return" leads to the E/A Central Menu. Before the printout went to press, two small marks connecting the flow chart arrows to the proper choices were supposed to have been added. Mark your copy according to the section reproduced below, for the most clarity when passing this chart along.

HORIZON RAMDISK OWNERS: MENU VER.7.3

Menu version 7.3 is out, and available on Compuserve. The Horizon menu program allows up to nine disk drives and permits custom formatting of the RAMdisk.

The file on Compuserve is in DL1 and is in compressed form, requiring Archiver 2.4 or 2.3 to decompress and unpack. If you lack Archiver with compression routines, get it from GEnie, files 2022-2024, or Compuserve, filename ARCV24.BIN in DL1.

TIP FROM THE TIGERCUB

Jim Peterson, the famed Tigercub, reminds us of the order in which operations are performed in program lines on the TI computer. It is:
1. Parentheses
2. Powers (exponentiation)
3. Prefixes (plus and minus)
4. Multiplication
5. Division
6. Addition
7. Subtraction
8. Relational operations

Peterson suggests a mnemonic to help the list stick in the mind: "Pretty Please, Pinch My Dear Aunt Sally Rudely!" The order of operations is important when programming, to make sure the calculations are performed as intended.

SUBROUTINE EXTRACTOR PROGRAM

This program comes from the KC 99er Connection, the newsletter of the Kansas City Ti-99/4A Users Group. It is a utility which will take lines out of programs and save them. You load the targeted program and then merge in the extractor. It deletes all the lines except those which you have chosen. You then save it in the merge format. Type "NEW" and merge it back in and save as usual.

```
1 !SUBROUTINE EXTRACTOR by G
eorge F. Steffen. SAVE in ME
RGE format. MERGE into any p
rogram (with line # s starti
ng above 8). RUN to extract
2 !selected lines. Deletes i
tself. Then BE SURE to SAVE
the selected lines in MERGE
format because the remaining
lines are still in memory!
3 CALL CLEAR :: CALL INIT ::
INPUT "Line Numbers of routi
ne to be saved: First,Last?
      ":L,M :: G=256 :: CALL
PEEK(-31952,H,I,J,K)
4 C=INT(M/G):: D=M-C*G :: F=
(J-G)*G+K :: FOR E=(H-G)*G+I
 TO F STEP 4 :: CALL PEEK(E,
A,B):: IF A=C AND B=D THEN 6
5 NEXT E :: PRINT :"LINE";M;
"NOT FOUND!" :: STOP !@P-
6 H=INT(E/G):: I=E-(G*H):: H
=H+G :: C=INT(L/G):: D=L-C*G
 :: FOR E=E+4 TO F STEP 4 ::
 CALL PEEK(E,A,B):: IF A=C A
ND B=D THEN 8 !@P-
7 NEXT E :: PRINT :"LINE";L;
"NOT FOUND!" :: STOP !@P-
8 E=E+3 :: J=INT(E/G):: K=E-
(G*J):: J=J+G :: CALL LOAD(-
31952,H,I,J,K):: STOP !@P-
```

BBS ECHO CONFERENCING

Many of our club members have called Amnon Nissan's BBS in Raleigh at some time in our lives. Nissan's board is quite large and very active. Now Nissan is one of several TI boards around the country involved in what will probably be a growing trend in the TI world as well as with other systems. It's called Echo Conferencing, and involves the transfer of files from one system to another so that messages and articles place on one board appear throughout the country.

At present, four systems are in the network. They are:

Compulink Opus
    805-494-3350, Eric Daymo
Dakota Infonet Opus
    605-336-3578, Rory Binkerd
North Carolina Control Opus
    919-852-8460, Amnon Nissan
Oregon Opus
    503-692-7204, Rich Hill

Another networked BBS which might be of interest is Computers for Christ, with local number 563-2646. It is linked to several systems nationwide including Christ-Link. System is primarily for exchange of Christian discussion, questions, and lively interchange.

NEW EXPANSION SYSTEMS

Owners of the bare TI-99/4A console who have wondered how they might expand their computer, or have had trouble finding a used expansion system, or simply don't trust used equipment, need no longer worry. There have long been small expansion systems marketed by CorComp, which allow the basic 32K, RS232, and disk control, but no additional cards. But recently two other companies have launched well designed expansion systems which seem intended not only to provide an alternative to expanding the 99, but to house the new Myarc 9640 as well.

Ryte Data company is making what they call the 99AT Expansion System, which looks for all the world like a typical IBM or clone box, has a power supply from 135 to 200 watts (your choice) space for up to four floppy drives, or two floppies and a hard drive, five expansion card slots (with none take for the interface), and a smaller cable. The price for the basic 135 watt system with built-in interface is only $155.00. For more

information, call 705-457-2774.

The other expansion is marketed by the Queen Anne Computer Shoppe in Seattle, Washington. This, too, is an AT style box, with a 220 watt power supply. It has eight total slots, and will accomodate three floppies and two hard drives. In addition, an IBM type computer on a card is available for the box, which will allow the same system (with only a different keyboard) to be used for either TI or MS-DOS, at the flip of a switch. The basic box retails for $329.95, and the IBM type, 256K card goes for about $399.00. For more information, call the Queen Anne Computer Shoppe, at 206-522-6558.

This newsletter has reported previously on both these boxes, but new readers may not be aware of the availability of new expansion systems.

BUGS IN FUNNELWEB CONFIG

The Lima Users Group, which gave us the Funnelweb flow chart, has identified a problem with the CONFIG program, which this editor has encountered himself. The situation, as they discribe it, and the fix, is reprinted here:

"Sometimes the Funnelweb 4.0 CONFIG won't save your configuration data to both the LOAD and UTIL1 at the end of a configuration. Only one of these two files gets the configuration data. This is most likely to happen if you specify boot disk tracking off and have UTIL1 and LOAD in different drives (or different ramdisks). The solution seems to be to do the complete configuration twice. The first time answer "N" to the prompt "Do you wish to edit the XB LOAD program UList before saving UTIL1?" Then save your configuration to UTIL1 as prompted. Then do the complete CONFIG cycle from the beginning again, answering "Y" to the prompt "Do you wish to edit the XB LOAD program...." Enter your XB LOAD configurations, or just press <ENTER> repeatedly if you don't want to change the XB LOAD. Then save the configuration to DSKx.LOAD as prompted.

"If you attempt to alter previously configured user lists by selecting "2 Redo User Lists" from the first CONFIG menu, you sometimes lose the ability to use the configurable #6 UTILITY item on each of the central menus. The central menu screen display shows up OK, but the utility program won't boot. The problem seems to be that the two #6 UTILITY file names are somehow lost from the original configuration. The solution is to start the configuration from the beginning with "1 Continue Normally" from the first CONFIG menu." (From Bits, Bytes,&Pixels, April 1988.)

We have also noticed this bug in the CONFIG program, which has the added effect of not saving proper default printer names. We tried to change RS232 to PIO a dozen times, and wondered why it never took. The above fix solved it.

SALUTE TO OUR EXCHANGE GROUPS

We wish to take time and space to recognize the contribution to our common knowledge made by other users groups around the country with whom we exchange newsletters. Much information is shared in the TI world, and this is the primary medium of its communication. Some of these newsletters are exceptionally good.

The groups listed below exchange with us on a regular basis. The dates to the side of each are the last issues received; an asterisk indicates that this group has been added in the last year. To each group, its contributing members, its newsletter editors and officers, we give a heart salute! Keep up the fine work!
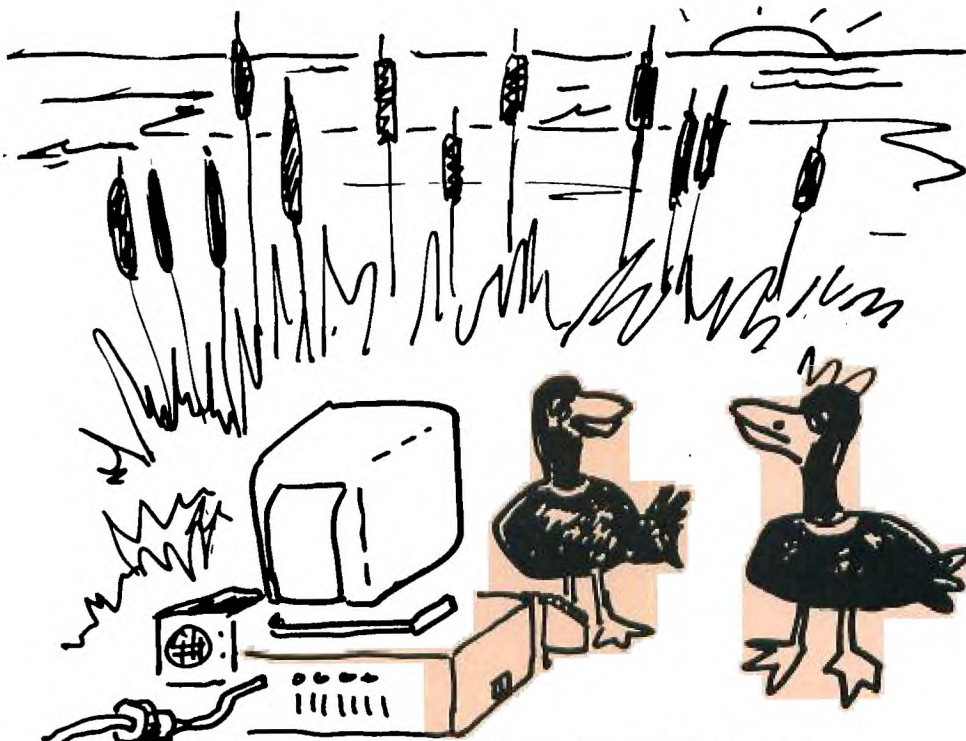
Amarillo 99/4A UG   4/88
Bayou 99 Users Group   1/88
Bluegrass 99 Computer Soc. 3/88   *
Boston Computer Society BCS 99er 4/88 *
Brazos Valley 99ers   3/88   *
Calgary 99'ERS   2/88
Central PA 99/4a Users   3/88   *
CIN-DAY User Group 1/88 *
Cleveland Area TI99 Users   4/88   *
Delaware Valley Users Group 3/88
SSgt. Donald S. Copeland   4/88   *
Edmonton 99er Computer Users 3/88

Forsyth 99ers "99 LINES"   1/88   * Tri Valley 99ers   3/88   *
Grand Rapids Area 99ers 4/88   * West Penn 99'ers   4/88
Houston Users Group Newsletter 3/87
Jackson County 99ers 4/88   Over the past year we have been
Johnson Space Center JUG 12/87   * forced to drop exchanges with a number
K*3 TI Users Group   3/88   of clubs which formerly provided us
KC 99er Connection   4/88   with good newsletters, but which have
LA 99ers Computer Group   3/88   * either disbanded, or have ceased
Lehigh 99er Computer Group 4/88   * publication. Below are the names of
Lincoln 99 Computer Club   3/88   * some fine clubs with which we have
Manasota Users Group   1/88   * been exchanging, but may regrettably
Montreal 99er   1/88   * have to drop. If their editors are
Net 99er (HCUG)   3/88   still publishing, and would like to
North Eastern 99ers   2/88   continue the exchange, we urge them to
North Jersey TI Users Group 2/88   * check the accuracy of our address,
Northwest Ohio 99er News 4/88   which may be the entire problem, and
Ottawa TI Users Group   4/88   renew our acquaintance right
Philadelphia Area Users Group 12/87   away--even with an old issue as an
Piedmont 99'ers Computer Grp 11/87   immediate indicator to us.
Pittsburgh Users Group   3/88
Queensborough Monitor   4/88   * Chicago 99/4a Users Group 9/87   *
Rocky Mountain 99ers   1/88   * Great Lakes Users Group   11/87
Ryte Data   2/88   SFV 99ers   8/87
St. Louis 99ers   4/88   * VAST 99ers   12/87
San Francisco 99ers 3/88   * West Jax 99ers   10/87
South Mobile and Alabama U.G. 4/88   * Victoria 99er User Group   9/87
Sudbury 99ers 4/88   --
Tidewater 99/4 User Group, Inc 3/88 *

'Say each shot holds 48 pellets and there are four guys with four guns ... what pattern should we fly?'

CHARLOTTE NEWSLETTER INDEX

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INDEX OF CHARLOTTE NEWSLETTERS

The above index is for Charlotte TI Users Group Newsletters from November 1986 through March 1988. It was entered with TI Writer and sorted with the Sort Utility by John Johdfsk. The "keywords" to the right of the issue and page number are extra sorting words. If entered in this fashion, these sort words can be used with TI Writer FindString function to locate article subjects.

The file will be available at JULY the users group meeting in ~~May.~~ This sheet is provided for our club members and other clubs as a "pull-out" for filing with Charlotte newsletters for easy location of all articles from those issues on tan paper.

The next index will be done after December 1988, and will be available either for only 1988 or for the all issues since November 1986.

Charlotte T.I. Users
TI READER
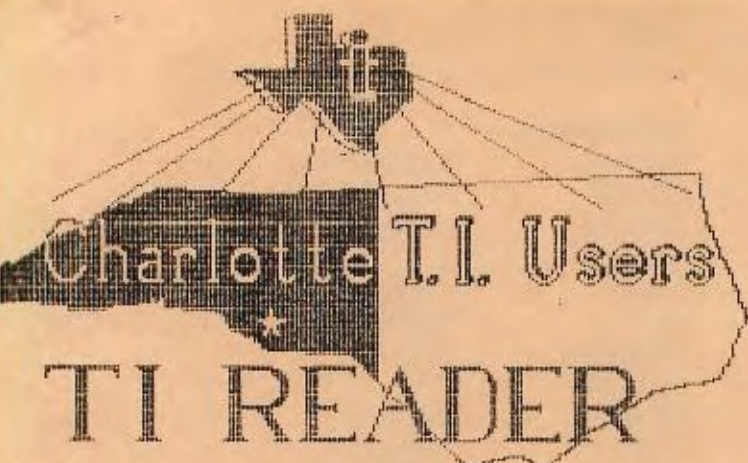
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