

# CLEVELAND AREA TI USER GROUPS

SEPTEMBER 1987

OFFICERS	NORTHCOAST	TI-CHIPS	MEETING DATES	
PRESIDENT	MARTIN SMOLEY 1-257-1661	TERRY VACHA 225-5368	NORTHCOAST 1:30 P.M.	TI-CHIPS 10:00 A.M.
VICE PRESIDENT	RICH JOHNSON 261-9274	RUSS SHIMANDLE 1-887-5330	EUCLIDIAN ROOM	NORTH ROYALTON LIBRARY
TREASURER	JIM MEKEEL 286-3179	LIN SHAW 235-3912	EUCLID SQUARE MALL	STATE ROAD & RT 82
MEMBERSHIP	ELMO IACOBUCCI 585-2588	JOHN PARKEN 331-2830	THIRD SATURDAY	THIRD SATURDAY
	2161 Pine Ridge Drive	4172 W.217TH ST.		
	Nickliffe, OH 44092	Fairview Park, OH 44126	SEPTEMBER 19, 1987	SEPTEMBER 19, 1987
SECRETARY	CHUCK POULIN 731-6473	MARY PHILLIPS 592-4009	OCTOBER 17, 1987	OCTOBER 17, 1987
LIBRARY(DISK)	ERNIE & DON NITSCHKE 888-4845	MARK McCAULEY 235-8888	DECEMBER 19, 1987	DECEMBER 19, 1987
(TAPE)	TOM NELLIS 475-4067	JOHN PARKEN 331-2830	JANUARY 16, 1988	JANUARY 16, 1988

Kids are back to school and vacations over, so dust out the old TI and see what fascinating things we can do with it this winter. For you hardware buffs, there are all kinds of new projects coming. There is a Proto Board coming from John Willforth at West Penn for about \$40 which will let you do all kinds of experimenting. There are small 8K ram cards for about \$50; you can put your XB cartridge INSIDE your computer, etc., etc. There just isn't room to carry all of these articles in the newsletter, so be sure and check out some newsletters at the next meeting and catch up on these items.

If you are afraid of programming, you should learn at least enough to let the computer know you are the boss and can tell it what to do instead of visa versa. For instance, if an educational math program was too difficult for your 2nd grader, you could change the parameters so that it would randomize within a scope for that grade. Then you could increase it as the child progresses and the program will grow with the child. Same with games, even some XB games are too fast for the toddler group. Learn where you can change the speed and you can get a lot more out of that piece of software. When it comes to utilities, if you don't like the way a program is printed, you can change it with nice headers, etc. to make it look the way YOU want, not the way some programmer envisioned you would want. Classes and SIGS can be started if enough interest is shown to learn ANYTHING about your computer.

OPPORTUNITY TO HELP DEVELOP A CHRISTMAS DISK FOR DESKTOP PUBLISHING. As you can see by the masthead this month, it is Christmas in September. I have started a disk of Christmas designs and would like to sponsor a workshop to complete the disk (for the clubs' libraries) and to learn more how to use some of the software we have. There are now several "DESKTOP" packages available to us. TI-Writer, ARTCONVERT and PRINTIT are either totally free or small FREEMARE requests. The commercial ones are CSGD, The Printer's Apprentice, and Fontwriter. ALL can use the same graphics as all can be converted to ARTIST INSTANCES. We should be able to do some great examples of Christmas letters, letterheads, cards, labels, etc. Colored inks and colored paper are available. Come to my house at 20311 Lake Road, Rocky River, OH, on September 20, anytime from 1:00 p.m. on. I have room for two other systems besides mine if anyone wants to bring one. A great source for both alphabet fonts and graphics are counted cross stitch and needlepoint

books. If there are any around your house, go through them. If not, your local library has lots. The best type of book for "small" pictures is one that features samplers.

Another fun project for Christmas would be electronic Christmas cards. I did this one year for a friend in West Virginia who has a TI, and they were very impressed. So, your children and grandchildren don't have TI's, but I'll bet they have VCR's. Anything you see on your TV screen, you can record on your VCR. I have done a "little" in the area creating Christmas songs and graphics. The same counted cross stitch books you use for desktop publishing can be used for computer graphics. I have about 30 years worth of piano and organ music and if there is enough interest, we can do that project in October and have something ready for the November meetings. So, you see, I wasn't really getting ahead of myself with the Masthead this month. ANYONE, ANYWHERE who owns a TI is invited to these workshops.

I do want to note that the graphics and fonts were printed with the \$6.95 cataloger that Dave Rose has developed for his programs. It gives you an instant reference of what pictures and fonts are on what disk. It also cross references your TI-Artist Instances, pictures, and fonts, but does not print them out. This is a permanent catalog which can be updated as needed. If you have a collection of these graphics, this is a MUST, and at \$6.95 you should be ashamed of yourself if you get it any other way than by paying for it from the author!

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## TI-CHIPS EXECUTIVE NOTES

With people away on summer vacations, attendance at the July and August meetings was lower than it has been for some months. Those members and guests who could attend, however, were treated to many interesting demonstrations.

In July, President Terry Vacha reviewed "TPA Toolbox", a supplemental program to "The Printers Apprentice." Terry had used the two programs to assemble a graphically interesting and informative agenda for the meeting. "TPA Toolbox" allows the user to more easily integrate text with graphics on the same page.

One of our newest members, Glenn Bernasek, is a TI programmer! He showed the group a program he wrote called "TI-Short Sheet." It was written in BASIC, but requires memory expansion to run. Glenn had installed the extra memory in his console. He discovered at the meeting, however, that running the program from Extended Basic and a disk system sped up the operations. He had a Utility Bill spreadsheet which he had done using his program. Glenn is currently working on "TI-Short Sheet III," which will be in Extended BASIC.

In August, Mark McCauley demonstrated "Animator" and "Archiver", two new programs in the library. "Archiver" is needed by anyone downloading programs from the bulletin board services. The programs are "packed" to save space, but must be "unpacked" for use.

Matt Andel had tried "Draw 'N Plot", by Quality 99 Software. He explained how the computer can draw GEOMETRIC shapes of any color which can then be saved to disk and/or printed on paper.

Russ Shimandle showcased three programs from the library. Two of them, "Tickertape" and "Biblebook" are BASIC programs which can be loaded from cassette. A show of hands was taken of those who have cassette-only systems and/or no Extended BASIC.

Ed Kennelly demonstrated "Director 99", a disk cataloger. This program differs from others like it because it allows for a description of disk or file if wanted. Extended BASIC, two disk drives, and a printer are needed to run it.

No CHIPS meeting is complete without a presentation by Les Kee. In July, he showed the group a musical program called "A-musing." The program demonstrated the effects of multiplying a matrix by a constant. With each run of the program, the musical notes went up in frequency. In August, Les showed the group an error-handling routine he had incorporated into a program. With this routine, the program doesn't stop when an error is encountered. Instead, the program menu appears on the screen. He prefaced his demonstration by stating that he didn't think anyone in the group needed to know how to handle errors, since no one makes any! You're too kind, Les!

We hope to see everyone back at the September meeting. Postcards are to be sent out to current and prospective members as reminders.

MARY PHILLIPS

Cleveland, Ohio  
Office of Treasurer  
James Mekeel  
11596 Forest View Drive  
Chardon, Ohio 44024  
United States of America

June 8, 1987

Mr. Will McGovern  
Mr. Tony McGovern  
215 Grinsell Street  
Kotara, NSW 2289  
Australia

Dear Tony and Will:

We here on the North Coast of United States in Cleveland, Ohio, appreciate your efforts and the service that you have provided the TI community. Your Funnelweb disk has allowed many users the convenience of disk based programs that previously were only available by cartridge.

Our appreciation can be expressed in more than just words. Please find enclosed, a check for the amount of \$98.50 which we are glad to send to you. This amount represents contributions of \$84.50 by members of our user's group and \$14.00 by our sister group, the TI Chips located in North Royalton. We hope that you will find good use for these funds.

I would also like to encourage you to take up more projects for the TI 99 computer as your demonstrated skill will certainly yield interesting and useful results. Let us know if you have something in the works.

Please convey our greetings to our fellow enthusiasts in the Hunter Valley 99ers Users Group.

One final question, what is a funnelweb? Sincerely,

James Mekeel, Treasurer  
NORTHCOAST 99ERS

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THE GRANKRACKER - FLEA COLLAR LINK?  
By Ken Gladyszewski, NorthCoast 99ers

Well, the truth is finally out, the battery used in the Grankracker is also used in electronic flea collars, or is it the other way around? That is what I learned from the lady at Duracell after I tried to find the DL2430 lithium coin cell battery two months ago. I called or visited all the large variety and camera stores before calling Duracell and then all the pet supply stores with no luck.

This all came about when my Grankracker lost its memory after a year. I finally found the battery and was about to divulge my source in this article when I found it in the new 1988 Radio Shack catalog on page 148, Part No. 23-166 for \$1.79. I have also found them recently at mass merchandisers for about a dollar.



If you did not attend the last meeting, you missed a pretty good one. I wrote the first sentence because after the last newsletter my wife said, "You start practically all of your executive notes with, 'If you did not attend the last meeting etc.'".

Well, if you missed the last meeting, you didn't miss much. Only about 15 people showed up, several executives didn't make it, and the scheduled demo wasn't presented. However, I would like to say that I had a wonderful time. Due to the fact that the regular schedule had fallen apart, I saw no reason to curtail my verbal ramblings as I try to do normally. After starting the meeting I talked about everything. Ken Gladysewski read the minutes to the last meeting. I talked more. Jim Mekeel gave the Treasurer's report. I talked for a while. Dick Alden gave a Library report. I filled some time. Deanna Sheridan gave a very interesting talk on using transliterates and graphic fonts in conjunction with TI-Writer. She also said that at a later date she would do a couple of workshops for those who are interested.

Jim Mekeel gave an impromptu demo of the free-ware loader and assistance program he has written. It looks like a very useful and interesting program.

We had one new member join, and several visitors. The credit for this should go to Earl Blewitt, and his publicity campaign. **\*>> Thanks Earl. <<\***

After all that I managed to get everyone quieted down so I could say a few words. I then gave a demo of my own system, which included a demo of the new Ram Disk program called Menu, from John A. Johnson, Homestead AFB Florida. The whole meeting must have gone well because we had a great deal of questions, comments, and general participation from the audience. And all kidding aside about my extensive talking, I'd like to thank everyone who helped make this an interesting meeting.

**VOLUNTEERS**

We are still looking for volunteers for just about every group activity you can imagine. Pick out something you are interested in and volunteer to help in that area.

**IMPORTANT**

**Concerning The BBS**

It appears that we will be unplugging the board as soon as we can make all the necessary arrangements. All members who are modem enthusiasts can switch to the Free-Net for board activities.

**NOTE:** We will probably sell the Clubs 256K Ram card which we purchased for the board. If you are interested, contact me (MS) for details.

**The Next NorthCoast Meeting**

The next meeting will feature ME!. While digging around in my garage under some seldom used yard maintenance tools I found two large boxes of words which I have not verbalized in a long time.

Therefore, at the next meeting I intend to talk. I will try to keep the conversation in the area of the TI/994A, however, we may wander from time to time.

The demo for the next meeting will actually consist of the completion of the demo I started at the last meeting. I will do a brief recap of how my system works, and then go into many of the features of the program "Menu" which were not covered at the previous meeting. I hope this portion of the meeting will be rather short. My theory is this. Something happened at the last meeting which caused a great deal of interaction between the members. I have no idea what it was, but I'd very much like to find out. Members from the audience asked questions, they made comments, and they intermingled on a much higher level than normal. After the meeting I was bombarded with questions and comments for a considerable length of time. Several members assisted me as I packed all my equipment and moved it to my car. The conversation about TI's continued and upon reaching the parking lot I noticed several small groups of members still carrying on conversations around their cars. This situation intrigues me, and I'd like to recreate it if possible.

So, here's the pitch. For the next meeting come prepared for the question and answer period. If you think of any questions, write them down. I'd like to discuss subjects such as WHERE DO YOU THINK OUR CLUB IS GOING, and/or WHERE DO YOU THINK OUR CLUB SHOULD BE GOING? What topics are you interested in for possible workshops or small seminars? Have you heard of or thought of any SIGs (Special Interest Groups) that may be interesting, etc.? I would also like to know the main use you have for your TI, whether it be for home control, writing letters, or handicapping horses. My thoughts on this matter are roughly this. TI users everywhere are growing tired of the computer, and are looking for something new. I know that some of you will disagree with me, but I feel that a computer is not time efficient for balancing a checkbook, and if you play games on it constantly you'll go bonkers. Therefore we need to come up with as many uses for a computer as possible. This list should be printed and passed around, to encourage new users and refresh old users. I'd like to personally take this project on, if you will write down your ideas and give them to me at the meeting or mail them to me directly. In other words, come to the next meeting prepared for a short demo and a large discussion about everything in the TI world.

See you all at the next meeting. Marty.

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TLFLKE3  
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TL\$FLKE4  
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TLTREE  
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TLTREE2  
▲ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲

TLWRTK  
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# A REVIEW OF MENU V 6.

By Mark F. Armstrong  
Bluegrass 99 Computer Society, Inc.

Menu V.6.0 is a Randisk Operating System for the New Horizon Randisk. Even if you do not as yet own a New Horizon Randisk, you might read this review to see that the full promise of the TI-99/4A is substantially fulfilled by this program. We have all read before and this program proves it, the people at TI did not know how good their product is. MENU V.6.0 stretches the TI-99/4A to its limits and in so doing give the user a truly first class computer system.

## "THE FULL PROMISE OF THE TI-99/4A IS SUBSTANTIALLY FULFILLED."

After the program is installed, the user has the option of CALLing AD or AF. CALLing AD turns the automatic power up routine On; AF turns it off. The Automatic power up routine takes over the usual power up routine so that you do not see the familiar color bars and TI logo. Instead you are presented with a Menu of 9 choices. The first choice allows you to View the Directory of any disk drive. This directory can be displayed on the monitor or sent to your printer using Shift 1 rather than the single keystroke 1. In addition, it is important to note that a disk directory can be printed to a disk drive. This will allow you to create a disk library quite simply. The second choice allows you to display any text file, e.g., a TI Writer file. This file may also be printed by entering Shift 2 rather than just the keystroke 2.

The third choice will Run a Program. When the keystroke

MENU: Page 1

1. SHOW DIRECTORY
2. DISPLAY A FILE
3. RUN A PROGRAM
4. DISK MANAGER
5. USER PROGRAM
6. USER PROGRAM
7. USER PROGRAM
8. USER PROGRAM
9. USER PROGRAM
- C CARTRIDGE

3 is entered, a default of DSK1.UTIL1 appears on the screen. If this is the name and disk drive desired, simply press enter. If a different program is desired, the default drive and filename can simply be overwritten and entered. One of the very handy features of this third option is that the default drive and filename can be easily changed.

When you select choice one, View the Directory, after directory is displayed on the CRT, by pressing the sp. bar, each filename in the directory is sequentially highlighted. When the file which you want to run is

### CONFIG PROGRAM MENU

Horiz Menu Sys (256K), Card at >1200

Len/Name	Len/Name	Len/Name
5 U1TIL	5 U4TIL	5 U7TIL
5 U2TIL	5 U5TIL	5 U8TIL
5 U3TIL	5 U6TIL	5 U9TIL

Screen Color: 5	Drive No: 4
Text Color: 16	Max Sectors: 992
Write Protect: N	Power Up: Y

N)ext, E)dit, S)ave, L)oad, M)isc, Q)uit

highlighted, simply press enter. Then, when the third choice is selected, Run a Program, the default name will be the disk drive and file name previously highlighted in the View the Directory choice. The only limitations on the Run a Program choice is first, that the appropriate cartridge must be in the cartridge port or selected in the widget. Second, only Option 5 Assembly language programs will run. I have had only one Assembly language program which will not run in choice three. I have had some Extended Basic programs which I have had to load twice to get a successful load and run. There are technical notes in the documentation which come with the program. In these notes, assembly language program requirements and other technical details are discussed. One program which will not run without some modification is Rapid Copy; however, the fix is clearly set forth in the technical notes and should not prove to be difficult to execute.

In the third choice, Run a Program, you can type in the program name, use the default value or create your own default value. Each of these methods require several key strokes. By customizing choices five through nine, you can load an assembly language program assigned to the selection. For example, my selection 5 is BA-Writer and choice 6 is Turbo, a copy program. To select one of these programs, merely enter the number, and the program loads with this one keystroke. This customization requires that the source code be modified and then assembled and the ROS reloaded. The procedure for accomplishing this is set out in the documentation which is clear and even a user who does not program in assembly language can do it.



The documentation consists of 17 pages. It is extensive, clear and complete. A careful reading of the documentation will lead through all of the features of the RDS. The startup procedure involves loading a Config program. There is an extended basic loader or the program can be loaded through E/A option 5. Once the program is loaded, you are presented with 3 rows of "2 UTIL" through "2U9TIL". By entering the edit mode, keystroke E, you can change these value and names. The names correlate with the second page of the Menu program. In addition to the Menu display discussed above, there is another Menu page which is accessed by pressing the space bar. Then by entering the appropriate keystroke, i.e., 1 through 9, the program selected can be loaded. The program may be either an assembly language program - E/A 5 - or extended basic program. The proper cartridge must be in the cartridge slot, e.g., XB cartridge to run an XB program. The values and names which must be edited in the Config program are the "2 UTIL" through "2 U9TIL". Change the "UnTIL" through the editor to the name of the program you want to appear on the second page of the Menu. Program names longer than 5 characters must be shortened. The program can then be loaded and run by entering the second page of the Menu display (by pressing the space bar) and then entering the appropriate keystroke, 1 through 9. In addition, the desired program can also be loaded by CALLing it. The number value in "2 UnTIL" refers to the number of characters in the name which will be used in the CALL.

**MENU: Page 2**

1. U1TIL
2. U2TIL
3. U3TIL
4. U4TIL
5. U5TIL
6. U6TIL
7. U7TIL
8. U8TIL
9. U9TIL
- C CARTRIDGE

For example, if you have a program name EMULATOR; Shorten the name to EMULR. If you leave the value of "2 EMULR" then the CALL will be CALL EM. This will load and run the Emulator program.

In addition to editing the second page of the Menu, screen color, disk number, automatic power up routine, maximum number of sectors and write protection can be set. This program automatically adjusts for the size of the ram disk you have. The program will also search for multiple MM randisks so that you can install the operating system in the ram disk with the lowest address. After setting the Config program to the values and test desired, merely exiting the program will install it. If desired the Configuration can be saved so that it can be reloaded for future use.

There are several other useful features the RDS program offers. First, on either page of the Menu, pressing C will address the cartridge in the cartridge port. If you have a super cart, pressing SC will address it. Second, pressing T will display the time if you have the Corcomp Triple Tech card. Third, you can return to the color bars by simply pressing Function 9. In the case of a cartridge like the Navarone DBM which has a menu in the cartridge, this allows you to enter the menu. Merely pressing C in this call will not allow you to address the full menu but only one selection of the cartridge menu. Fourth, you can enter console basic by entering the keystroke B. Fifth, the keystroke O will blank the screen. The documentation suggests that the program's author put this function in just to see if it would work and then simply left it in the final version. This is a useful function. There are numerous times when it is necessary to leave the computer on but unattended. Blanking the screen preserves the working environment without keeping the CRT continually on. Sixth, the automatic power up routine can be interrupted simply by holding the space bar down during the power up routine. This will return to the color bars and TI logo.

This description does not do full justice to this program. The use of single keystrokes will spoil the user. The excellent documentation gives even the novice

**"THE PEOPLE AT TEXAS  
INSTRUMENTS DID NOT  
KNOW HOW GOOD THEIR  
PRODUCT IS."**

user the chance to make full use of the program's features. The program allows full flexibility within a framework which supports any application the user desires. This is an excellent program which will give your TI 99/4A many additional years of useful life. One note of caution. There are some editions of MENU V.6.0 which have not been completely debugged. If you get one of these, do not give up. Keep trying until you get a good copy. The wait and aggravation of loading and then unloading a flawed copy will be worth it.

**ONE FINAL NOTE:**

John Johnson and Mike Ballmann have given this program to public domain. It is not even fairware. If you are impressed with it, the author request you make a contribution to the Miami Users Group. Give the contribution - we need to encourage Johnson and Ballmann.

**FORTHFONT**  
By Paul Newmeyer  
Northcoast 99ers, Cleveland, Ohio

I have just placed a new Forth printing utility disk in the club's library. It's named FORTHFONT. I think you will definitely enjoy using this utility once you become familiar with it.

Howard Arnold wrote the program which appeared, seriatim, in several 1986 issues of Micropendium. I keyed it in, made a few alterations to it, and have made it available for you. So, secure it, post haste, as an addition to your Forth collection.

The purpose of the disk is threefold: 1. It enables you to design your own fancy fonts. 2. With your fonts you can print your own labels. 3. Using your own fonts you can print your own disk mailer. Let's examine each of these utilities:

1. Design your own fonts. Use Editor Assembler, option 3, and enter "Dskx.Forth". Your program will load, in 19 seconds (at 60 miles per hour that's 1672 feet), and a menu screen will eagerly come up. Enter DES and an inviting orange screen will beam from your monitor. On this screen you design the alphabet characters, one letter at a time. The prompt asks for the letter to be designed. Enter your letter. The full screen is at your disposal to use to design the letter.

Here's how to design a letter. By using the arrow keys, you move a dot-cursor to the desired location. Make sure alpha lock is up. Then use the shift and arrow keys together to draw the font. If you need to erase, run the dot-cursor through the desired area (without the shift key).

Now that you have designed a letter, save it to disk by pressing FCTN.6 After saving a letter to disk, then hit ENTER and repeat the process for the next letter. Don't forget to design a space, by hitting the space bar and then FCNT.6.

That's all there is to it. The fonts are stored on screens 40 and 41. If you want to empty those screens and start over, simply type the screen number and CLEAR (exp. 40CLEAR). But remember, if you do that you destroy your fonts. If you want to design and store more than one set of fonts, I suggest you use a separate FORTH disk for each set and keep them all on screens 40 and 41.

I have included on the disk an elementary set of fonts so you can immediately use the disk. These fonts are by

first attempt at using the program and designing fonts. Clearly, I don't claim greatness for them, but I was happy with them as a first attempt.

2. Making labels. Now that we have a set of fonts, let's use them to make labels. Enter HELP. Whenever you wish to return to the menu screen, just enter HELP. From the menu screen, enter n RUN (n=number of labels you wish to print).

In making the label you may only type 9 characters to a label title. But you can include a 28-character message. You will receive a prompt to enter the starting number for the labels and how many you wish. Each label will then be numbered sequentially.

3. Making disk mailer wrappers. From the menu screen, enter 67 LOAD. Then enter n PRINTL (n=th number of wrappers you wish to print). At the prompt type your name (ENTER), your address (ENTER), your city, state and zip (ENTER). From there follow the menu on the screen. And "zipo" --you produce disk mailers with your return address in regular type, and a label that says, "DONT XRAY, Computer Disk Dont Bend", and the mailer number.

All FORTH options needed to run this program are BSAVED on the disk. You should have no problem speedily loading and using this impressive program.

The following is an example of a label:



And here is an example of the mailer labels:

Paul Newmeyer  
270 S. Ridge E.  
Geneva, OH 44041



With this disk only the fire of your creativity will limit the fantastic fancy fonts you can produce.

TLHOLLY

\* \* \* \* \*

TLOLLY2

\* \* \* \* \*

TLPKG

\* \* \* \* \*

TLSBOOT

\* \* \* \* \*

TLSFLKE1

\* \* \* \* \*

Merry  
Christmas





Ed Note: The following article says many things I had wanted to convey this month much better than I could have done. You will ONLY realize the REAL value of the software you are getting for pennies in comparison to other machines until you actually get one of those machines. PLEASE look through your software library, pick out the SHAREWARE programs AND commercial programs you use on a daily basis and send the author SOMETHING. If you don't, soon there will not be anything left for you to buy even if you wanted! \$20 for a good commercial program and \$5 to \$10 for freeware is unheard of on THOSE OTHER machines!!!

#### THE POWER OF THE TI

Curtis Alan Provanco, New Hampshire 99er's US  
via Northwest Ohio 99ers - August, 1987

If I had a nickle for every time someone said "why don't you get a real computer...", I'd have enough money to buy a NYARC 9640. Actually, I have gone through various stages of responses ranging from "Oh yeah!, well \$20 to you" to laughing in their face.

Let's be realistic, though. The TI has had a lot of bad PR (public relations) since it first came out years ago. Why is that? First, look at the crap that TI passed off as software. I have written BASIC programs that were more powerful than some of the modules TI sold for \$30 and up. How about peripherals? You want a PEB for \$300? It doesn't do anything except let you add other \$300 peripherals. I'll take a dozen, please.

Those were my "Oh yeah!..." days, when I felt that I had been taken. Black Friday (when TI pulled out) was like a knife in the back. However, now that I can look back on my first year (and laugh!) I can honestly say that TI dropping us was as if our chains of bondage had been broken!. Let's look at what's available...

**MEMORY:** This is frequently where the "power" of a system shows up. You can't read an ad without getting the RAM spec's, what comes with it and what it is capable of doing. I say this is the "power" of the system because anything that is done must be done by a program. The more memory available, the bigger (i.e. powerful) the programs can be. The stripped down TI only came with 8K of ROM, 18K of 6ROM, 16K of RAM (some used by the screen and BASIC interpreter) and a 256 byte scratchpad (working) CPU RAM. A cartridge adds as much as 42K of ROM - RAM - 6ROM. This was great in the early 80's but peanuts now.

Along came peripherals. Most peripherals require some type of machine code interface (disk controllers, RS232's, etc. .). These peripherals typically have at least 4K of ROM (RS232) and in some instances (CORCOMP and NYARC disk controllers) have more than one bank of 8K. Now we have a big pile of peanuts.

But wait! Look! Up in the peripheral expansion box! It's a green light! It's a red light! It's a RAMDISK!

Whether Foundation, CORCOMP, NYARC, New Horizon, Mechantronic, or whatever, RAMDISKS have revolutionized my TI life. Each with merits of its own, these cards (and more appropriately called RANCARDS since they do more than emulate disks), can put the TI back into the lead concerning powerful home computers.

You think I've lost my mind? Consider this: A modified New Horizon RANCARD (my term) contains 256K of RAM. Since

this card can occupy any CRU address, you can fill any empty slot in your PEB with one of these beauties. I have four slots open in my PEB at home - that's 1 megabyte of CPU memory available to me battery backed! These cards can be used as extremely fast RAM disks or can contain CALL routines for BASIC or Extended BASIC (with appropriate linking routine) programs. I also have a 512K NYARC RAMDISK. The machine code provided with the card makes using it as a disk or print spooler extremely easy - But I could use it to store routines if I wanted to! CORCOMP also has a similar card and has developed a word processor/formatter -spell checker which will (if the description is true) blow the overlays off an IBM or clone.

Have you heard of a "super cartridge?" This module doesn't add a lot of memory to your system, but it is usually battery backed and is like having a portable chip set. Plug it in, and your program is available (machine code, not BASIC or Extended BASIC).

I have only mentioned the memory aspect of the TI, without going into comparing the colors, speech, sound registers, etc. of other home computers.

If I may tell a short story, I believe I can get my point across: the company where I work has 38 VAX 11/711's, IBM mainframes, hundreds of micro's, etc. I have access to most of these systems through a Local Area Network. After trying MASSII (word processor) on the VAI, I broke down and brought in a TI setup. Three office buddies (including my boss) who own IBM's (or clones) started the ribbing. I plugged in my Gubert cartridge and showed them the graphics - they stopped laughing. I plugged in the Terminal Emulator and let the TI talk to them - they listened. I played "Axel F" with three sound registers and a noise register (IBM can only make one noise at a time). One of them wanted me to see "CENTIPEDE" as written for the IBM. It was pitiful. I walked them over to my cube and demo'd the real thing for them. They haven't asked me to look at any more of their programs.

Sure TI has far better games, but what about Lotus? Flight Simulator? dBASEIII? You've got me there. I admit there aren't programs of that magnitude available - yet! These RAM cards I mentioned are still in the infant stage. Give programmers some time (and incentive) to develop programs that use TI's new-found power.

The TI is capable of programs such as these, but we must want them! Millers Graphics has developed a fantastic emulation program called Explorer. A finer program hasn't been written for the TI (personal opinion). Yet, within a few months (weeks?) of its release, there was a pirated version available. If TI owners supported BOTH commercial developers and fairware authors, instead of pirates, MORE excellent programmers would have stayed with us. Unfortunately, judging by the speed in which pirated programs make it around the country, I'd say as a large group of computer enthusiasts, we have a bad reputation.

Moral of the story. For the price of a RANCARD (couple of C notes), you could have it all. You must also 1) not support pirates (which costs you nothing) and 2) support commercial developers and fairware authors (which typically costs \$10 to \$20 for a GOOD program). If you can't do either of these, go buy a clone (\$600 to \$2000) and start shelling out hundreds of dollars for "the neat stuff"

BACK TO BASIC  
FROM PUNN, PORTLAND, ORE, JULY, 1987

Sometimes we all have to go back to school. For TI-ers that means back to BASIC

One reason that Basic (Beginner's All Purpose Symbolic Instruction Code) is so popular is its conversational nature. A BASIC program is very similar to the instructions you would write for a person. BASIC makes communications with a computer natural, simple and straight forward.

Another advantage of BASIC is its many built-in conveniences. Handling a large table of numbers can be very difficult in other programming languages. In BASIC you can command the computer to print a table of instructions. In addition, BASIC has excellent file-handling capabilities, although sometimes painfully slow in execution.

To get you started, here are some BASIC computer programs. If you do not completely understand all the details of the instructions yet, relax; get the flavor of programming and the more you work at it the more you will understand.

BASIC can be used like a hand calculator. If you want to find the circumference of a circle with the diameter of four inches, you multiply 4 times 3.14159 (pi). The following BASIC program will make this calculation:

```
10 C=4*3.14159
10 PRINT C
30 END
```

Type RUN and press ENTER. The program will print:  
12.5664

You can also instruct the computer to read data and make computations before the results are printed. Here is a program that will calculate a 15 percent commission C, on sales, S:

```
10 READ S
20 C=.15*S
30 PRINT C
40 DATA 400
50 END
```

Type RUN and press ENTER. The program reads the sales amount 400 from the DATA statement, calculates the commission in line 30.

How could you modify the above program to calculate the commission for each sale during the month? Assume you make the following sales in dollars: 400, 100, 2000, 500, 1062.47, and 342.61. Of course, you could write the above program six times to calculate the commission on the six sales, but there is a much easier way. The only change is a GOTO 10 statement added to the end of the program (40 GOTO 10) that instructs the computer to read the next value in the DATA statement, after which the program continues as usual.

```
10 READ S
```

```
20 C=.15*S
30 PRINT C
35 GOTO 10
40 DATA 400,100,2000,500,1062.47,342.61
50 END
The program will then print:
60
15
300
75
159.371
51.3915
DATA ERROR IN 10
```

The GOTO statement in line 35 creates a loop that cycles once for each value in the DATA statement. If we had 100 sales amounts in several DATA statements, this program would loop 100 times, calculating and printing the commission for each sale. After all the data is read and the results printed, there will be an "out of data" error message. You will see in a future article how to avoid this condition.

Assume that the sales manager decided to offer a \$100.00 bonus above the normal 15 percent commission for any sale that is \$1000.00 or more. This new bonus offer can be incorporated into the above program as shown in the following program. All we have to do is add two new lines to achieve this result. Here's how it's done:

The first sales value to be processed is 400. This value is read in line 10 and commission calculated in line 20 as usual. Since 400 is less than 1000, line 24 directs the computer to go directly to line 30. The commission is printed and then line 35 sends us back to line 10 for the second loop, which is processed the same as the first loop. The third loop, where S is set to equal 2000 in line 20 is different. When we get to line 24, since 2000 is not less than 1000, the computer goes to line 26 and adds 100 to the commission. Thus, whenever S is 1000 or greater, 100 is added to C.

```
10 READ S
20 C=.15*S
24 IF S<1000 THEN 30
26 C=C+100
30 PRINT C
35 GOTO 10
40 DATA 400,100,2000,500,1062.47,342.61
50 END
DATA ERROR IN 10
```

Learning BASIC is like learning a foreign language, except it is infinitely easier to learn. The average pocket dictionary contains about 50,000 words, but there are fewer than 50 commands in BASIC. As with any language, knowing only the grammar of the language is not enough. You must also know how to construct the commands into a functional program. The challenge can be fun but also frustrating. The key to success is to learn from your mistakes and don't give up. READ YOUR MANUAL!





## GREAT REVIEWS FOR HOME CONTROL 99

We introduced Paul Wheeler's Home Control 99 a couple of months ago in our newsletter. At least two people purchased this software based on our review and, as you can see, by the excerpts below, were very pleased. I have skipped the parts which tell what the X-10 Powerhouse does and have gone directly into the review of Paul's program.

FROM THE WEST JAX 99'ERS - June, 87 - by Thomas LeMay

"...Home Control 99 by Eagle Software is a disk-based 20k program with some assembly language routines used to interface the TI with the X-10 Powerhouse. Home Control 99 uses text exclusively to an advantage, emulating the capability of X-10's software for the IBM. (sic please excuse the word). The user types any amount of locations and device descriptions up to the controller limitation of 256 devices. In comparison, the CorComp cartridge allows only 14 choices of locations and 9 choices of device types for a total of 126.

Using the software, the controller is programmed for up to 128 timer events. Each timer event consists of an on, off or dim command for up to 16 devices within a single housecode (while the module allows for only one device per timer event).

The best feature of this program is the ability to save collections of timer events to disk as a file. This allows one to have a file for vacation, summer, winter, etc. These files can be edited, printed and downloaded to the controller to randomly turn on and off the lights while you are away to give your home that lived in look.

I took an old cable from my RF Modulator, purchased a 25-pin connector from Radio Shack for \$1.49 (this goes into the modem port of the RS232 card). Using the cover (for the 25-pin connector) from the cable that comes with the X-10 powerhouse, you can have a completed (long) cable very cheaply.

The wiring diagram that comes with the documentation was a little vague for this novice. Mr. Wheeler was kind enough to give me help in this area. He told me that he was going to make up a better diagram for the docs. Making it idiot proof should just about get me by.

I have dealt with these people a lot and have found them very helpful and courteous. You had better hurry and get in on this one. Mine is up and running flawlessly. I don't turn on or off any lights in my house any more."

FROM THE GREATER OMAHA NEWSLETTER- July, 87 - John Johnson

X-10(USA), INC> is marketing the X-10 Powerhouse system with disk-based programming software for Apple IIe/IIc, Commodore 64 and IBM PC's. CORCOMP came out with a cartridge-based program called "Home Sentry Interface

Cartridge" over a year and a half or so ago which allowed one to interface the X-10 POWERHOUSE to the TI 99/4A. This cartridge system only required the TI computer, a TV, and a special interface cable (supplied by CORCOMP) which connected the X-10 through the TI joystick port. This was great news for us loyal TI computer owners, except for a couple of things. First, CORCOMP was awfully proud of their system, to the tune of \$79 to \$80 (including the X-10 Unit). Second, the cartridge does not allow you to fully utilize all of the capabilities of the X-10 interface and provides no additional features (ie., file developing) if you have an expanded TI system.

I ordered the X-10 unit from DAK which included a cable and software for an IBM or compatible computer. I remember at the time saying I wished someone would develop a disk-based software package to program the X-10. Well, about two months ago, Jerry Bentzinger showed me an article in a newsletter from another TI user group back in Ohio. It was a review of a program called "Home Control 99" which was being sold by Eagle Software. I quickly mailed off my \$40 and received the software plus instruction manual back in less than a week! Well, the Home Control 99 program does everything the review said it would.

I have now tried both the CORCOMP Home Sentry cartridge and the Home Control 99 program. I find the Home Control 99 program definitely superior if you have a fully expanded system. It is indeed a nifty bit of Extended Basic programming! It uses text exclusively instead of the "crude" icon picture system used by the CORCOMP Home Sentry. In fact, it emulates the IBM version's capabilities very closely. The user types any amount of locations and device descriptions in up to the controller's limit of 256 devices. In comparison, the cartridge allows only 14 choices of locations and 9 choices of device types for a total of 126 (still quite a few though).

Using the Home Control 99 software, the controller can be programmed for up to 128 timer events. Each timer event consists of an on, off, or dim command for up to 16 devices within a single house code. The best feature of this program though, is the ability to save collections of timer events to disk as a file. This allows one to have a file for vacation, summer, winter, etc. The files can be edited, sent to a printer for a hard copy, and downloaded to the controller.

Home Control 99 is provided on a 5.25 disk with documentation, including instructions on how to rewire the IBM RS-232 cable to work with the TI RS-232 card. The program is \$10, the address is:

EAGLE SOFTWARE  
1269 E. 349th Street  
Eastlake, OH 44094



## INSTALLING EXTENDED BASIC INSIDE

YOUR CONSOLE..... John F. Willforth  
of West Penn 99

For many of us there has been much frustration over the last several years about the "HANG-UPS" that occur to the TI-99/4A using extended basic, just as the most critical part of a program or game is reached. There are those who would lead you to believe that the power supply has been the culprit in the majority of the console locking in their club. This may have been the problem experienced in the microcosm they are in. I have experienced the problems with inconsistent and noisy D.C. voltages issued from the TI supplies also. A few months ago I ran through 5 straight VDP memory problems in a row, and could have made the statement that most if not all TI console problems will be found to have defective 4116 dynamic ram chips. This would have been absurd! I'm making this statement only to try to reassure you that of all the possible causes for console hangs, the grom connector/cartridge connection is far and away the most common, and in particular the mating (or lack of) between the Extended Basic and Grom Connector, is the greatest culprit. The purpose of this article is to assist those of you who would like to move the Extended Basic on-board.

----- DO THE FOLLOWING AT YOUR OWN RISK !

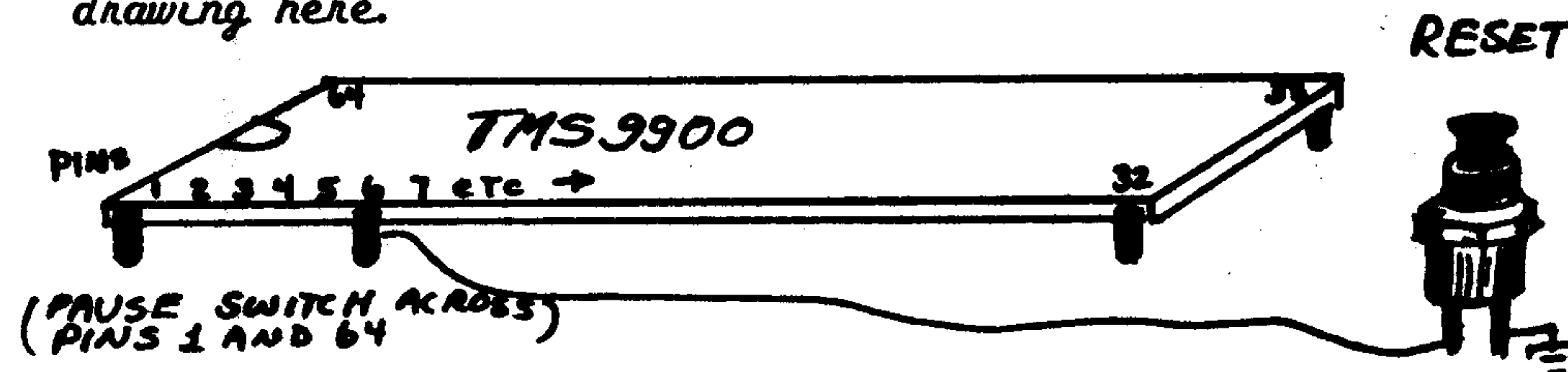
- PARTS; \* 1' ribbon cable (36 Lead) or 2 lengths of 25 Lead cable  
\* 1 Extended Basic Cartridge (shell removed)  
\* 1 Double-pole, single throw slide switch (for enabling/disabling ext.-basic)  
\* Solder, iron, wire cutters, etc

I'm not going to get into the details for I feel if by now that you can't remove your CPU from your console, you shouldn't be attempting this. Get someone who can. Remove the Grom Connector from the unit, and attach the ribbon cable to the pins of the rear of the circuit card that the Grom Connector is attached. Attach all but pins 4 and 6 to ribbon cable. 4 and 6 are unused here. Now, keeping the length of the wire to less than 8" attach the other ends of the corresponding wire to the Extended Basic card edge connector lands, remembering the relationship between the two. i.e.; pin 1 must go to pin 1, 2 to pin 2, and so on. (not 4 or 6) Before you attempt any further modification to the machine, reassemble and see if Extended Basic comes up on the menu, and still functions, SIZE, ACCEPT AT, etc. If you are still functional continue.

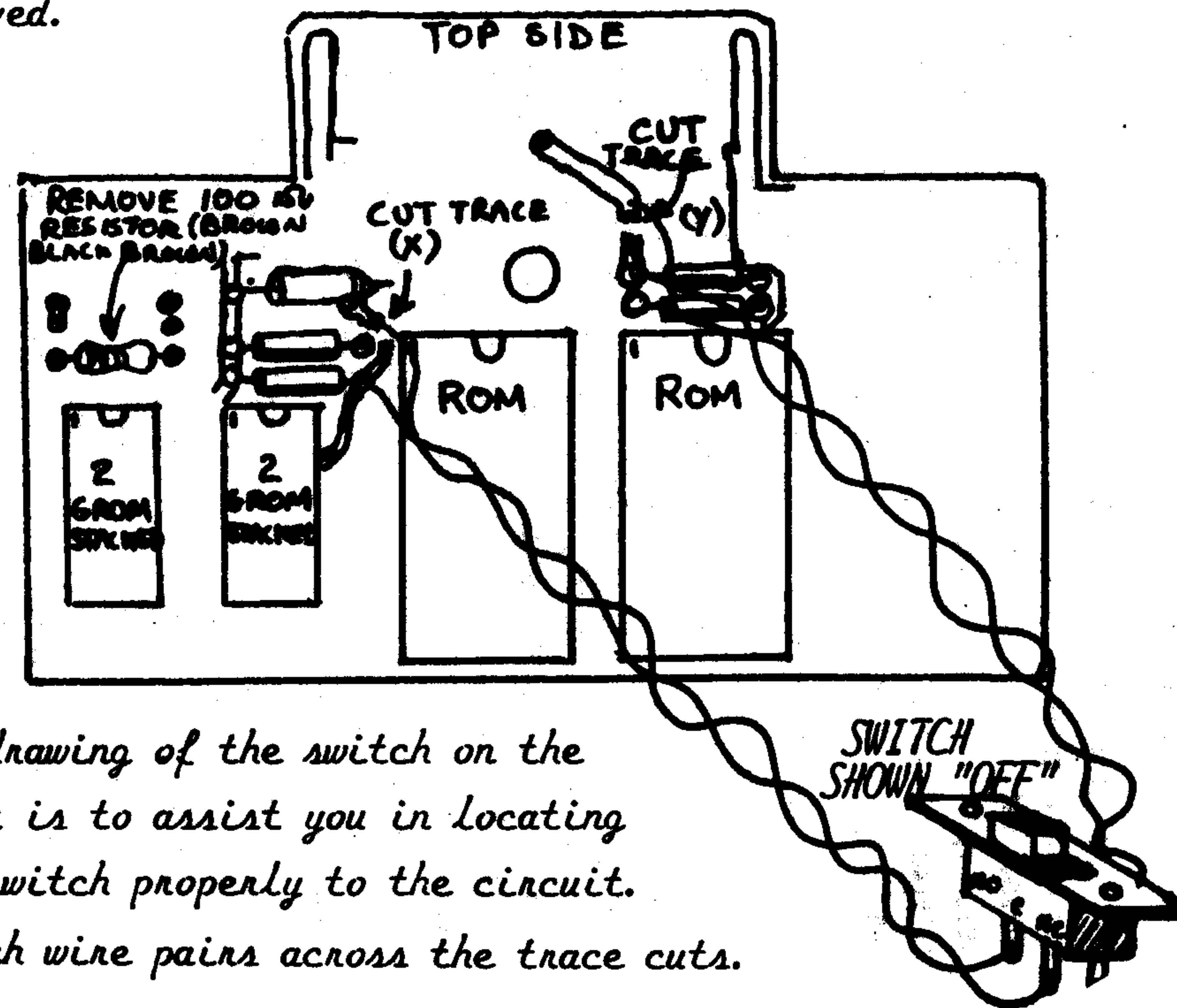
Remove the 100 ohm resistor indicated, and cut the two traces where shown. Now you may solder 4 equal lengths of wire to the switch (not longer than 10" in length). Attach two of the wires across the cut in the trace (x) and the other two across (y), making sure that the pairs are on the same switch pole set. Now, test the results again.

If the extended basic works when the switch is closed, and the cartridge slot will accept cartridges (meaning that a variety of GROM/ROM cartridges will function), when the switch is open, then your almost home. Mount the switch in a convenient location, and insulate the bottom of the Extended Basic Cartridge and locate on TOP RF SHIELD to left of grom conn. Reassemble. It would also be of benefit to you at this time to install a reset button across pin 6 of the CPU chip and ground. Trust me.

The reset switch will be particularly useful, in that you will now not be able to reset the machine by inserting the Extended Basic cartridge. You may find that without the RESET switch, you will have to turn the console power switch off and then on to begin operation after switching from basic to xbasic or other cartridges. This is an easy option to install with a momentary contact switch across pin 6 on the CPU chip (TMS9900) and ground. Reference drawing here.



The view below is here to help you find the two traces that must be cut, and the 100 ohm resistor that must be removed.



The drawing of the switch on the right is to assist you in locating the switch properly to the circuit. Attach wire pairs across the trace cuts.



: 1

MESSAGE FONT CATALOG  
FONTS ARE PRINTED IN NORMAL MODE - CDOIS - 2

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DISKNAME : LIBRARY

CANE : CHRS-44 - HGT-3 - WTH-3 - UALID-UNP

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

CANE2 : CHRS-44 - HGT-3 - WTH-2 - UALID-UNP

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

HOLLY : CHRS-44 - HGT-3 - WTH-3 - UALID-UNP

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
XYZ

XMAS : CHRS-27 - HGT-4 - WTH-3 - UALID-U



NOEL

PAGE : 1

GRAPHIC CATALOG

CREATED ON : AUG 14, 1987

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DISKNAME : LIBRARY



**SUPERBASIC**  
Computer Bridge, St. Louis

SUPERBASIC adds several new commands and function keys to Extended Basic. There are DOS-type commands, additional editing functions and 32 (not 10) user-programmable keys. SUPERBASIC resides in low memory expansion, so the commands are immediately accessible, but no memory space is taken away from your Extended Basic program. In fact, the program in memory is left undisturbed when using the new commands (except for DEL and RENUM). The commands are as follows:

- DIR - Displays a disk directory on the screen.
- RENME - Rename a file on disk.
- LOCK - Turn on write protection for a disk file.
- UNLOCK - Turn off write protection.
- COPY - Copy a file to another file, another disk, or printer.
- APPEND - Append a file to the end of another file.
- TYPE - Display a text file (TI-Writer, etc.) to the screen.
- ENTER - Reads a program listing (text file) into program memory.
- FIND - Find all lines in your program which contain a certain pattern (variable names, line numbers, etc. in any combinations)
- DEL - Deletes part of a program (a specified range of lines).
- RENUM - Renumbers part of a program, leaving the rest of the program undisturbed (all references to

the renumbered lines are changed as well).  
GOFF - Disables the QUIT key.  
GON - Enables the QUIT key.

Most of the functions can also be called from your program (for example, CALL LINK("DIR",1) will display a directory of drive 1).

Also included is a program to recover your Extended Basic Program in case of a system crash. In addition, there are editing keys for tab, backward tab, clear to end of line, and clear to beginning of line. There is a special SAVE key which saves the program to the last file specified in an OLD or SAVE command. Control-i through Control-6 will display a directory of drives 1 through 6.

There are 32 user-programmable keys (Control-A through Control-z plus 6 others). Each key can be assigned a string of up to 40 characters; keywords, printer name, anything you want.

To order, send \$25 plus \$2 shipping/handling to:

Steve Krasak  
855 Diversey Drive  
St. Louis, MO 63126  
Phone 8(314)961-2052

Also available: Texas Taxes, a tax calculation program or the TI/99/4A. Only \$19.95 + \$2 shipping with yearly updates for \$10. Requirements: SUPERBASIC - Extended Basic, disk, memory expansion; TEXAS TAXES - Extended Basic, disk or tape.

**CLEVELAND AREA 99/4A USER GROUPS**  
C/O DEANNA SHERIDAN  
20311 LAKE ROAD  
ROCKY RIVER, OH 44116

**PLEASE NOTE - NEW ADDRESS**

**CHECK YOUR EXPIRATION DATE.**  
**THIS MAY BE YOUR LAST ISSUE!!**