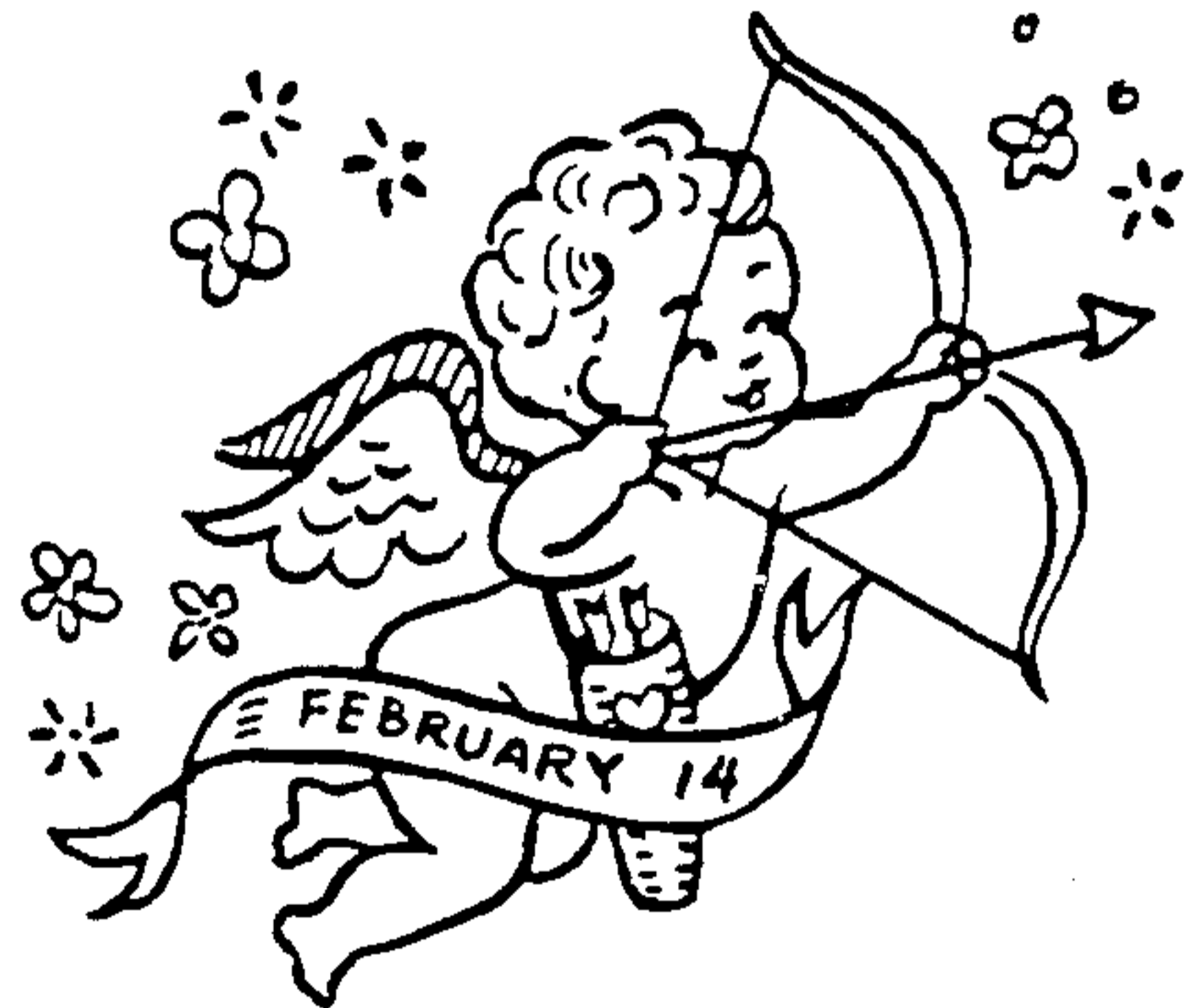# Spirit of 99

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE CENTRAL OHIO NINETY-NINERS INC.

PUBLISHED IN COLUMBUS OHIO

FEBRUARY

MONTH OF THE GREATS

Central Ohio Ninety Niners Inc. is a non-profit organization comprised of MEMBERS who own or use the TI99/4A computer and it's related products and have paid a yearly membership fee of $20 and whose main objective is the exchange of Educational and Scientific information for the purpose of computer literacy.

C.O.N.N.I. meetings are held the 3rd saturday of each month at Chemical Abstract, 2540 Olentangy River Road Columbus, OH. Meeting time is 8:30 AM til 2:30PM. Meetings are open to the public. Membership dues ($20.00) are payable yearly to C.O.N.N.I. and cover the immediate family of the member. Please send check to our membership registerar and join C.O.N.N.I.
Please address it to:
John L. Parkins
2215 Bayfield Drive
Columbus, OH 43229

C.O.N.N.I. MINUTES
Wednesday, Dec. 23, 1992.

President John Parkins opened the meeting at 8 p.m. Jim Peterson described a letter he received that indicated that the 4A can work with a 24-pin dot-matrix printer, using all 24 pins. (Star 2410)

A brief rundown followed of the previous Saturday's meeting. A variety of topics were then discussed: a rectangular ruby in the head of the Gemini 10X printer, re-inking cartridges, shrinking availability of oil-based ribbons for printers, the prevalence of throwaways nowadays, hackers vs. poor or lazy security, the movie &Sneakers, items ordered at the Saturday meeting (Rave kits and speech synthesizer cards), ROS(8.13) problems with the Horizon ramdisk, status of our portable 4A, repairs (ramdisks and watches), etc.

Irwin Hott gave two outstanding demos: a computerized dictionary (Franklin) with good clear speech and fine sound effects; and the Type on Speak, a new release for the blind that provides many of the same capabilities of the Braille 'n Speak but in addition is accesible to those who are not familiar with Braille.

The meeting was adjourned at around 10:30 p.m. Happy Holidays!

Respectfully submitted,
Dick Beery, Co-Secretary

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MINUTES OF C.O.N.N.I. MEETING Saturday 16 Jan. 1993

The meeting was conducted by Co-Secretary Dick Beery in the absence of John Parkens.

During the Question and Answer period, Chuck Grimes informed us that Bud Wright's TIAB BBS has been down because of his trip to Puerto Rico, and will probably not come online again because Bud is moving to a location which would be at long distance rates from Columbus.

Chuck Grimes explained the use of Telco and Fast-Term with the RAVE keyboard, and we viewed the video of Don O'Neil's presentation at the Lima Fair.

The group discussed an article in the Southwest 99'ers newsletter which objected to the wording of our letter announcing the cessation of newsletter exchanges. Sources of printer ribbons were also discussed.

Dick Beery recapped the proceedings of the previous Wednesday night meeting. In the absence of the treasurer, he also gave the treasurer's report, and reported the nominations of the nominating committee. He announced that Bob Devilbiss would continue as newsletter editor through June, with Jean Hall's assistance, after which Jean will take over with Bob's assistance.

Ken Marshall announced that Jean Hall had donated several modules to the library.

Chuck Grimes reported on renewals of our DOM membership, which now totals 48, and described the contents of the current DOM. He also reported the death of Mrs. Lloyd Parkens, wife of our long-time member Lloyd Parkens and sister-in-law of our president John Parkens. A motion was passed to send a cash memorial donated by C.O.N.N.I. members present at the meeting.

Dick Beery circulated a list of MIDI music available by download from the Chicago BBS. Jim Peterson mentioned several pieces of MIDI music he had converted from XBasic and uploaded to the TIBBS BBS. He also described a new assembly NLQ font downloader being released by Harrison Software, and circulated a demo sheet of 100 fonts that will be available.

Chuck Grimes then demonstrated the installation of the RAVE keyboard.

Respectfully submitted,
Co-Secretary Jim Peterson

C.O.N.N.I. CALENDAR

February 1993

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8 PRESIDENT'S DAY	9	10	11	12	13
21	22	23	17 CONNI MEETING	18	19	20 CONNI MEETING
21	22	23	24 CONNI MEETING	25	26	27
28						

SATURDAY MEETING 20 FEB 1993

Chemical Abstracts Building — Columbus

8:30AM Setup, coffee, and doughnuts

9:00AM Disk of Month,   10:30AM Business
       MICROpendium,   Meeting
       Libraries open   11:15AM Demos:
                                 Dictionary for blind users
                                  Irwin Hott
9:30AM Question and   Type and speech
       Answer Period   Irwin Hott
                                 Re-inking printer ribbons
                                  Jim Peterson
                                 DV80 file reader
                                  Jim Peterson
                         1:30PM Tear down
                                and go home

WEDNESDAY MEETING — 24 FEB 1993
McDONALD'S — Cleveland and Main — Westerville

7:30PM MEETING TIME
Demos:
Open at this time

A NEW TROJAN HORSE?
    Bill Gaskill
A reprint from Lima
    Users Group

Just about everyone who uses a computer has heard about the viruses which plague the PC Community and to a lesser extent the Apple Macintosh world. The media's treatment of the Michaelangelo virus last March is now notorious for the marvelous job it did scaring computer users into spending millions of anti-virus software to combat it. But Michaelangelo is only one of 20 or more known viruses floating around the PC World.

We are much more fortunate in the TI Community. Some year's back I remember hearing about a game named FREDDIE that turned out to be a Trojan Horse because it was really a destructive piece of handiwork by some scam that wiped out disks. I also remember hearing about SUPERTRACK back in February 1987. It was another Trojan Horse program that masquaraded as a track copier, but in fact turned out to be a disk destroyer.

Perhaps there have been others, but I haven't heard about them. Maybe I'd be better off today if I had?

This past weekend (the first week of January) I ran into what I have dubbed the "I Gotcha" virus on my TI-99. My problems with this virus started quite innocently, and unexplainably. I was saving an Extended Basic program that should have been small enough to fit within the PROGRAM IMAGE limitations imposed by VDP Ram, but it showed up on disk as an Int/Var 254 file the way programs do that are so large they run in two parts, one part in VDP Ram and the other in the High Memory portion of memory expansion. As a general rule I've found that this occurs with programs that are larger than 12,000 bytes (around 47 sectors, that are saved on a disk based system. My program was only 41 sectors but still showed as an Int/Var 254 file?

Okay, I thought, maybe something's wrong with my Extended Basic Module, or maybe it has something to do with the fact that I saved the program to my hard disk? Let's see if the program will run anyway.   It would not!Syntax Errors

throughout the XB code that were so numerous I knew they could not all be my making. So I now knew I had real problems. I just didn't know what the problem was yet.

Later on in the day I tried to create a new subdirectory on my hard disk but was not able to. Instead, the MDMs5 disk manager just told me there was some unidentified error. Cataloging the hard disk I noticed to my horror that the 155,000 sectors on my hard disk were suddenly showing up on the "USED" side of the directory display instead of being on the "FREE" side where they belonged, and the "FREE" side told me I had only 672 sectors of usable hard disk space left.
I had just reformatted the hard drive 5 days before and hadn't gotten around to fully restoring all the programs and data from floppy, so I knew I could not possibly have consumed all but 672 sectors of a 40 mb hard disk!Now I was sure that the hard disk was the problem (wrong!) so I shut it down and went about finishing my business using the Horizon Ram Disk and two floppy disks in my system.

Surprise, Surprise! This is when the fun really began. I loaded DM1000 and attempted to copy the programs and files that I was working on from DSK1 to DSK2, with a DS/SD initialization of the disk in DSK2 to take place before the copy. Everything went just fine until the 720 sector initialization process ended. As soon as it did the screen suddenly changed from showing 720 sectors free on the floppy in DSK2, which was named QFILEV_1, to 360 sectors used, zero sectors free and it now sported a disk name changed to !I60TCHA! I'd finally been hit square in the face with a baseball bat, but that's what it took to get my attention and make me realize it wasn't my hard disk at fault, it was a $#$%(+(computer virus. I had NEVER even suspected a virus in the TI Community, but the "!ICOTCHA!"message was pretty convincing evidence that scum exist in the world who own TI-99 Home Computers too. The PC and Mac Communities   don't   have   exclusive ownership on low-lifers

I   went   back   and   tried to re-initialize the floppy in DSK2 but it

did the same thing. Then, I putt in another floppy and tried to delete a file from it, again using DM1000. Guess what? The new disk was immediately wiped out and the 360 sectors used, zero free, and "!I GOTCHA! is activated by ANY WRITE TO DISK process, whether it is SAVING, COPYING or even DELETING. At this point I have no idea if writes to disk of data are included in the assessment.
Probably the most fortunate part of the whole affair is that a virus cannot infect the TI's operating system since it is in ROM rather than on disk like PC's. Thanks TI!.

So... you're probably wondering if I'm going to tell you where the virus came from? Well, I only wish I could. During the two days before my encounter with the virus I happily and ignorantly downloaded a couple of Miltiplan templates from a major on-line information service, I received a shareware program purchased directly from the author, I purchased a disk with Computer War, Submarine Commander and River Rescue on it and I purchased 6 or 7 disk full of assembly language games from the software library of one of several User Groups I belong to. I copied virtually all of the programs to my hard disk first thinking, as I always do with any software I intend to use and it was on my hard drive that the problem started. The shareware programs and some of the games were archived so I used my Horizon Ram Disk to unarc them, which is the most plausible explination of how the virus got onto the HRD too. In all, there were probably more than two dozen programs and/or files that I dealt with, which makes it pretty difficult to isolate the culprit.

I don't really suspect the shareware programs because as ? said, it was purchased directly from the author and people who create viruses don't like to be identified. so I've decided that it was not the source. I don't know about the Multiplan templates for sure, but they were ones that ? had written and uploaded myself back in 1988, so it's a pretty good bet that they were,'t the source since no one (except a Sysop) can upload a file with my ID. That leaves the game disk. ? don't suspect the Computer War disk because it came from a commercial   vendor who would almost

certainly have received other complaints about the virus by now, and they've received none.

That leaves the disk received from the software library of a User Group I belong to. I see no benefit to anyone in revealing the name of the group but I have notified their librarian of my experience so they can evaluate the information and give it what weight they decide is appropriate. Since my articles appear in several)User Group newsletters on a regular basis I do want to avoid any speculation,accusation or trepidation that this issue might cause. Therefor, I am stating for the record that the games disk DID NOT come from the LA 99ers library, they DID NOT come from the LIMA 99ers library and they DID NOT come from the Mid-South 99ers library, all of which I belong to.

I have destroyed the disks in question, I've reformatted my hard disk and any Horizon Ram Disk and reinstalled all software from origional disks to ensure that the virus is gone. Since we have no anti-virus defenses in the TI community (that I am aware of) there seems to be no other option.

END

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DM 1000 V6
An update
by Jim McLaren
courtesy of SUNBURY 99'ERS

I was on Compuserve the other night checking out the gamers forum, Just before I was going to log off I decided to check out the TIFORM, I had a gut feeling that maybe there was something new. I checked the library files under New Uploads and to my surprise I saw a file called DM1000.ARC. I had read in the Southwest 99ers newsletter that Jack Mathis had been working on DM 1000.

The first thing you will notice is that all the menus appear on page one as listed below:

Disk Manager 1000 6.0

Selection: 1

1. File Util   5. Sweep Disk
2. Copy Disk   6. Initialize
3. Rename Disk   7. Box Format
4. Delete   8. Mis Util

Right below this is the credits for updates (Ralph Romans and Jack Mathis) and the Ottawa user group's address.

Once you choose an option the credits and address disappear and is replaced with Diskname info:

Drive #1

Diskname: MISC/FILES
           FREE USED
DSSD   366 357

The diskname appears for a few seconds (long enough for you to read) and then the next screen is show.

Other improvements of DM 1000 V6.0:

Disk Initialization : has deen speeded up especially double density. Apparently the decrease in speed was caused by the number of drives accessable (Horizon). Copying speed has also been improved.

File Catalog : brings back the file catalog with all the Copy, Move, Delete, information still intact. Jack had to spend some time on this nice feature to find the right memory needed.

Type/Print : returns to file catalog after you finished printing or displaying a file.

Screen/Color : screen colors background/foreground can be altered and saved into program.

Defaults : disk initialization and printer configuration.

Drive Selection : you can save any configuration to the drive of your choice.

Jack says in his docs "I hope those who have suggestions for improvements will contact me. I can't guarantee there won't be another version. I keep learning more about assembly language and Disk Manager 1000. I like to share improvements."

On that note I would like to see two improvements.

1) Jack, is it possible to have DM 1000 displayed in 80 columns?
2) Probably the only reason I don't use Jack's updated version of DM 1000 is that there is no provisions to "Return To Funnelweb". I have to quit DM 1000 and return to basic and reboot my menu on my ramdisk. It is much easier to return to Funnelweb using V3.5 of DM 1000.

No doubt many others would like to see this incorporated. Especially those of us who have ramdisks.

Thanks to Jack Mathis DM 1000 has improved over the last couple of years. Hopefully if we encourage Jack, maybe other modifications can be incorporated.

Note: DM 1000 V6.0 appeared on the C.O.N.N.I. November 92 DOM -ED..

END

TI-SORT reviewed by Jim Peterson

This program has been around since 1989, but hasn't received much attention. I've had it for a couple of years, but only recently had a need to use it. I was MUCH impressed - but also much disappointed by one serious flaw.

Sorting is a job for a computer, but it is not an easy job for a computer. Let me explain.

You can quite easily and quickly sort a dozen playing cards into sequence in your hand, by pulling them out and shoving them back in where they belong. But suppose those cards were spread out face down on the table. You are allowed to hold one card in your hand. You can peek at the others, find the lowest one, swap it for the one in your hand, pick up the first card in the row and replace it with the lowest card, and then start peeking for the next one. That is roughly how the computer performs a sort. It takes a lot of moves. For twice as many cards, it doesn't take twice as many, but several times as many. I once wrote a program called SORTWATCHER (it is in Tips From The Tigercub #33, with a correction in #34) which lets you watch different kinds of sorts actually taking place on the screen.

Now, the TI-99/4A is handicapped as a sorting machine, not only by its slowness but by the fact that in XBasic it can only store strings in that puny 16k of memory in the console - and not even all of that. That would limit it to about 150 80-character records.

J. Peter Hoddie wrote an assembly program called Sort Experiment which very greatly speeds up the operation and allows use of the 24k of expansion memory, or about 300 80-character records. His program has one very dangerous bug - when it has read in as many records as memory can hold, it starts sorting - without warning you that it does not have the complete file!

But suppose you need to sort a file that is larger than 24k? Dennis Faherty came up with the ingenious solution. His TI-SORT uses a single FIXED file as a batch file. Records are read into memory, sorted, and then written to the scratch file in consecutive blocks,

keeping track of where each block begins. Then the first record is pulled from each block, sorted, the lowest record written to the sorted file and another record pulled from the block it was taken from, etc.

The size of the file you can sort is limited only by the capacity of the disk that holds the scratch file. Since it is a FIXED file, it usually becomes considerably larger than the file being sorted - a 40-character record in a D/V80 file takes only 40 bytes, but it takes 80 bytes in a D/F80 file. A DS/DD disk could handle 4300 records, a ramdisk even more, and a hard drive would be limited only by the 32767 record limit of the program itself.

The program is very well written. The main menu screen offers you a choice of sorting a TI-BASE file, a delimited file, a fixed record file, or a file created by Basic. The program was actualy written because of the poor sorting capability of TI-BASE, and will sort any size record that TI-BASE will support, according to the documentation. Other types of files are limited to 255 bytes, but can be fixed or variable, display or internal.

A delimited file is one which has fields of variable length, separated by a character such as an asterisk. A fixed field file is one in tabular format. I'm not sure what a "file created by Basic" is, because almost any kind of file can be created by Basic, but they seem to be handled in the same way as a fixed field sort.

The main menu also offers the option of sorting in descending order (from the highest down), or cataloging the disk (thanks for that!), or quitting.

If you elected a delimited sort, you are asked for the delimiting character. Then you are required to set up a structure file, unless you already have one, even if you just want to do a simple sort on the first character. If you asked for a TI-BASE sort, the program expects to find a structure file created by TI-BASE.

You are taken step by step through the creation of the structure file, for as many fields as you want, up to 17. For a fixed field file you must know the length of each field, and you are also

asked for this information for other types of files. You are also asked whether the field is character or numeric and, if numeric, how many decimal places you want to sort to.

The documentation tells you, although the screen prompts do not, that you exit this part with FCTN 8. You have the option of saving the structure file for future use.

Then you select the field or fields that you want to sort on, in the sequence that you want - the program can perform nested sorts up to 8 levels.

Then the sorting begins. You are shown on screen just what is going on, and it is fast! Reading from disk is very fast, sorting is extremely fast, writing to the scratch file a bit slower, the final merge and writing somewhat slower yet but, just for instance, 500 80-character records can be sorted in 90 seconds on a Horizon RAM disk, in 8 minutes and 11 seconds on a SS/SD drive.

But now for the bad news. I was unable to perform a numeric sort on any field of my fixed field files. I sent them to Dennis Faherty and he soon identified the problem, which no one had told him about in the years this program has been on the market. It was written for TI-BASE, which right-justifies its numerical fields. The fixed field files created by tabbing in Funnelweb, or by most any other means, are left-justified, and those in a delimited file are not justified at all!

The documentation also states that TI-SORT will not correctly sort display data which have strings with imbedded blanks. This could be a serious deficiency, but I have sorted such files with no problems.

I do not have TI-BASE, so did not test it with TI-BASE files. With delimited files, it seems to expect fields of fixed lengths, which defeats the whole purpose of a delimited file.

But, if you need to sort ASCII fields in large files, this program will really do the job. The documentation is thorough and well written. You can get it from Inscebot Inc., P.O. Box 291610, Pt. Orange FL 32029, for $14.95 plus $2.50 S&H.

MANAGING YOUR MONEY -4
copyright 1992 by Bill Gaskill
reprinted from LA 99ers Topics

Editors Note: This is one of 5 articles on financial management that Bill submitted. Since April 15 is just around the corner I decided to print this one first because of the timeliness of it's contents. The rest of the articles will appear in subsequent issues. While Bill makes no claim to being a professional advisor in the world of finance, he is more than a professional in the TI community. He is well known for contributing many articles and programs on a wide variety of subjects. Personal Auditor, a complete home accounting system, and Check+ are two of his contributions that can help you manage your money. He is a frequent contributor to MICROpendium and has published an excellent newsletter on TI BASE. We welcome his inputs and hope to hear more from him in the future.

Author's Note: This series of articles dealing with personal finances is based solely upon my own opinions and my own experiences. I am not a trained financial advisor nor am I an investment counsellor. You are cautioned to always seek the advice of a finance professional before making any decision or taking any action that would involve what to you is a significant amount of money.

PLANNING FOR INCOME TAXES:

Tax planning is not a simple matter because the tax laws are not simple laws. However, any effort applied in this area is probably better than no effort at all. I start my tax-planning efforts by making sure that I am claiming the maximum allowable number of dependents each year. I do this because I want to have my money throughout the year rather than letting the government use it. This means that I get less back from Uncle Sam at the end of the tax year, but it also means that I am making more effective use of my money. If you are among the thousands of Americans who like that "vacation check" tax-return from IRS, then don't change just because I said so. I just don't like doing business that way because it deprives me of the money

throughout the year and it costs me any interest earnings I might have made, since I have given the government free use of my money all year long. Thatkind of strategy is simply not in line with my financial management game plan. My money is MY money, and I intend to use it to MY benefit

The second part of my tax planning efforts involves good record keeping. Because I know that I may have to justify my tax return in an IRS audit, I make sure that my personal records accurately reflect everything that my tax return does. Next, I stay abrest of the changes in the next laws that impact the everyday things that I have come control over, such as taxable income items, deductible expenses and income tax credit items. This of course has become more demanding with the Tax Reform Act of 1986 because many of the time-honored deductions have been eliminated and others modified so that they are deductible only in declining percentages or percentages of Adjusted Gross Income. Nonethless, it is an important part of my financial game plan.

Next I use a tax accountant to prepare my return and advise me throughout the year on things that I can do to improve my situation. I am not suggesting that you do the same, I am simply sharing my game plan with you. I have an obvious interest in my tax situation, but I don't possess the experties nor do I have the time, to do the job totally on my own. It is simply a sound investment in my case to contract with a professional in the field to help me optimize the use of my money from an income tax perspective.

Because I maintain accurate records of income and expenses throughout the year I am able to take advantage of virtually everything I am entitled to in the way of deductions and credits, since I also use a tax professional for advice, I have a resource at my disposal, who knows my situation, that can help me to make mire effective decisions on what I do with the money that I have control over.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR TAX LIABILITY:

Everyone who earns money in the form of income has an income tax liability. It is why most checking and budgeting programs have the capability of tracking deductible expenses, so the cumulative total of those expenses can be identified and then later applied to the income tax formula to more accurately determine Tax Liability.

In very basic terms, your Tax Liability is the amount of money you must pay in taxes after adjustments, deductions, credits and other taxes owed are factored in. From that amount you subtract the amount of income tax already paid during the year through withholding, estimated tax payments et cetera and you arrive at the amount owed by you or to you. If this amount is a negative number then you are owed a refund, if it is a positive number then you owe that amount to the IRS in addition to any income taxes already paid during the year.

Using IRS rules under Form 1040, which is the form deigned to handle every taxpayer's situation, regardless of the size of your economic activity, your Tax Liability is determined by the following steps.

```
        ANNUAL GROSS INCOME
     minus ADJUSTMENTS to income
     ---------------------------
    equals ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME
     minus STANDARD DEDUCTION or
          ITEMIZED DEDUCTIONS
     minus EXEMPTIONS CLAIMED
     ---------------------------
       equals TAXABLE INCOME
       minus TAX CREDITS
       plus OTHER TAXES OWED
     ---------------------------
>>> equals TOTAL TAX LIABILITY <<<
     minus PAYMENTS ALREADY MADE
     ---------------------------
    equals AMOUNT OVER/UNDER PAID
```

The name of the game for the individual tax payer is of course to reduce the Tax Liability to as low a point as possible. This is accomplished through adjustments to your gross income, income tax deductions and income tax credits.

ADJUSTMENTS:

Adjustments are really just deductions, except that they are used to figure Adjusted Gross Income rather than being subtracted from Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) to figure Taxable Income. They include things like IRA deductions, alimony paid, Keogh retirement plan deductions, 50% of your self-employed tax, penalties paid for early savings withdrawals and self-employment health insurance costs.

There are some rather uncommon adjustments available too, such as amortization of cost for forestation of reforestation, expenses for certain performing artists and the like that I will not go into.

DEDUCTIONS:

Itemized deductions consist of things like Medical/dental expenses which exceed 7.5% of your Adjusted Gross Income, State/local income taxes paid, real estate taxes, interest and points paid on home mortgages, interest paid on investments, charitable contributions, casualty or theft losses for the amount that exceeds 10% of your Adjusted Gross Income, moving expenses (see IRS form 3903), the amount of unreimbursed job expenses and miscellaneous expenses such as travel, education and union dues, tax preperation fees, safety deposit box fees and investment fees that exceed 2% of your Adjusted Gross Income and some other miscellaneous expenses, that may be used to reduce your Taxable Income.

TAX CREDITS:

Tax Credits are expenses such as Child/dependent care to a maximum of $720 for one qualifying individual or $1440 for more than one, elderly or disabled credits up to a maximum of $1125, income taxes paid that were imposed on you by a foreign country or U.S. possession.

Of the three, TAX CREDITS are the most beneficial in my opinion because they have the most impact upon your Tax Liability. They are dollar for dollar reductions in that liability. This means that a $500 Tax Credit reduces your Tax Liability by $500, regardless of which tax bracket you are in, The down side to Tax Credits is that there aren't many situations where they apply, so the "average" taxpayer may not qualify for them.. Tax Credits were designed specifically to reduce the tax burden for people with permanent total disabilities, people who are over age 65, people who must work and pay someone to care for their under 13 year old child/children and people who are in Dependent Care situations. There are a few other situations where Tax Credits are available too, but they are pretty obscure. For example, a one time Tax Credit is available for the original purchase of a diesal powered car bought after 1985.

Adjustments to Gross Income reduce the amount of money that you must report as "Income" for the tax year and are the second most useful means of reducing your Tax Liability (again,, in my opinion). The most common vehicle used in this area are 401(k) plans and IRA's. The 401(k) plan is a retirement vehicle that allows you to put pretax dollars away for retirement and then subtract the amount put away from the amount of gross income earned during the year. While this is certainly beneficial, it had $7,700 per year ceiling, which makes it less useful than a Tax Credit. But the realistic up side to it is that it is available to anyone (who can afford to divert the money).

Lastly, there are Income Tax Deductions. These are expenses that you have incurred during the tax year that the Tax Reform Act of 1986 says you can deduct from your Gross Income in order to lower it. These are the income tax variables that people are most familiar with, even if they don't really understand them all. Here's a quick primer.

    -Medical and dental expenses are

deductible only after their cumulative amount exceeds 7.5% of your Adjusted Gross Income. So if your Adjusted Gross Income were $50,000, then you could only deduct those Medical/Dental expense dollars over a $3750 floor. To illustrate, using the same figures just given, if you accumulate $3800 in Medical/Dental expense during the tax year, then you would be allowed to deduct $50 from your AGI ($3800-$3750).

    -Mortgage interest is 100% deductible.

    -Property taxes are 100% deductible.

    -Casualty and theft losses are deductible, but only that portion of the loss amount that exceeds 10% of your Adjusted Gross Income. So using the $50,000 AGI, the floor here is $5,000. That means that you would have to have $5,001 in Casualty or theft losses to get a $1 deduction.

    -Moving expenses incurred because of a job change are deductible and not subject to the 2% of AGI floor that the Miscellaneous Deductions listed below are subject to. Complete and accurate records of all expenses are a must however, as the IRS tends to scrutinize these deductions closely.

    -Miscellaneous expenses such as those related to your job (union dues, uniform cleaning, the cost of tools purchased for the job etc.) are deductible after their cumulative amount exceeds 2% of your Adjusted Gross Income.

                    END

NEWS & VIEWS #2 (Jan. 1993)

by Jim Peterson

When I wrote an article entitled "I Like Brain Games", I neglected to mention three of the best - the Sliding Block Puzzles series programmed by Norman Rokke and sold by MS Express Software. In their Winter 1992 catalog (P.O. Box 498, Richmond OH 43944), Series I contains 3 puzzles, Series II contains 5, and Series III contains 13, and each Series sells for $7.95 + $1 S&H. Since they are infernally difficult, you may be glad to hear that you can also obtain the solutions to each series, at $7.95 + $1 S&H each.

The article mentioned that no one had put out a diskfull of cryptograms. Since then, Larry Tippett released as fairware a diskfull of humorous sayings, with a program to encode them as cryptograms and dump them to a printer, to be solved the old-fashioned way on paper with pencil and plenty of eraser. The sayings are rather too short, therefore quite difficult.

This inspired me to dig out and upgrade a cryptogram program I had written several years ago, which enables one to solve cryptograms on screen, with several help options. I needed a source of phrases of suitable length and the handiest source was the Bible, so I released a diskfull of 100 Bible Cryptograms. Since I followed the convention of quoting the book and verse number at the end of each verse, those who are familiar with the Bible find them quite easy to solve. Therefore I created a second diskfull of Song Cryptograms, using verses from songs. These are available from Tigercub Software (156 Collingwood Ave., Columbus OH 43213) at $1.50 each plus $1.50 per order S&H.

Since then, Bruce Harrison has released a diskfull of cryptograms called Code Breaker which is rather bare-bones in appearance but lightning-fast in execution, as it is written entirely in assembly. It also offers several levels of difficulty including a super-difficult level in which the letters are grouped into series of five regardless of spacing or word length. It is still available from Harrison Software (5705 40th Place, Hyatsville MD 20781) for $8 ppd.

The same article mentioned that no one had yet programmed the TI to play an intelligent game of checkers. Asgard Software has now released Classic Checkers, which still does not play at all intelligently. It does offer the option of playing against an intelligent human, if you can find one who would rather play on a monitor screen than a checkerboard. The instructions say that it can be played with the Asgard mouse, joystick or keyboard. I do not have a mouse, and my joystick is broken; from the keyboard it does not allow diagonal moves although all checker moves are diagonal.

Asgard Software is also offering TI-Pei, a solitaire version of Mahjongg, programmed by Bill Reiss. I have not seen it. Both are available from Asgard (P.O. Box 10306, Rockville MD 20849) at $14.95 each.

In a couple of articles recently I mentioned, based on what I had been told, that the TI-99/4A could not drive a 24-pin printer unless the printer had a 9-pin emulation, in which case only 9 pins would be used. Several people have written to tell me I was wrong about that, and even sent printouts to prove it.

Bruce Harrison has written a fast assembly routine to convert screen fonts to download fonts, and download them to his NX-1000 printer. He sent it to me, to try out on my NX-1020R. It put my printer off-line so thoroughly that the on-line command wouldn't even work - the printer had to be turned off and back on. So I loaned him my manual. He discovered that the NX-1020 in IBM mode uses somewhat different codes than the NX-1000 to download characters - and in standard mode uses ENTIRELY different codes. Wouldn't you think they could have standardized by now?

Woody Wilson notified me of a bug in my Printall V1.8, which will crash it if you attempt to print a DV 254 file you have previously printed to disk. In fact, it should crash the program in any case because I used a single variable which had been dimensioned and pre-scanned as a subscripted variable, but for some reason it didn't. Anyway, please fix -

```
300 LINPUT #2:M$(J):: PRINT #1:M$(J)&
CHR$(10):: IF EOF(2)<>1 THEN 300
310 RESTORE #2 :: NEXT J :: CLOSE #2 ::
GOTO 250
```

Also, if you are going to use download characters, remove the PRINT #1:X$&"@" in line 240.

I have previously mentioned a serious bug in J. Peter Hoddie's Sort Experiment. The documentation states that it will sort up to 24k of records, but fails to mention that when it has loaded 24k it will go into the sort - without warning you that it could not load the complete file!

Dolores Werths is preparing to send out the first disk of material of the MIDI SIG. If you are interested in Midi Master 99 and haven't yet sent her your dollar, be sure to do so! the address is 5705 40th Place, Hyattsville MD 20781. While you're at it, enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope for the Harrison Software catalog, and then order some of her superb MIDI disks.

The Boston Computer Society's TI-99/4A User Group has announced the next New England TI-99/4A Home Computer Fair will be on Saturday April 17, 1993 from 10 AM to 4 PM at Waltham High School, 617 Lexington St., Waltham, MA. Admission $3.00. For more info, call Mike Francis (617) 965-5653.

If you are interested in genealogy, do you know about the NGS/CIG BBS? It is devoted strictly to genealogical research, no games or chit-chat or dirty jokes or whatever, but you can post messages requesting info about anyone you are researching and your message will be ECHO'd to many boards and read by many people with similar interests. The number is (703) 528-2612 and it's free.

END

MORE ABOUT MIDI MASTER 99

by Jim Peterson

Bruce Harrison advises that Service Merchandise carries the Casio Model CT-700 (catalog number CT700ECD) at $277.94 and the Yamaha model PSR 500 (catalog number 500YMA) at $399.97. They also carry the power adapters for these models under catalog numbers AD5ECD for the Casio and PA5YMA for the Yamaha, at $19.97 and $22.63 respectively. Each of these is a five octave (61-key) instrument, with MIDI interface, and each has 100 selectable instrument voices.

Service Merchandise has 365 stores in the U.S., 14 in Ohio, including one on South Hamilton Road in Columbus. To find the closest store, or to place an order by VISA, DISCOVER or MASTER CARD, call toll free 1-800-251-1212.

I had been rather dissatisfied with the results I was getting with Midi Master 99, and didn't know whether to blame Midi Master 99 or my Casio MT-240 keyboard. After listening to the two disks of "pop classics et al" written by Dolores Werths and released by Harrison Software (5705 40th Place, Hyattsville MD 20781, $10 each ppd). I realize that I should have been blaming my own lack of skill in writing SNF files.

Dolores has been doing some wonderful things with MIDI, and I hope that she will write some articles to teach the rest of us. She has learned all kinds of neat tricks, such as beginning with a short rest too avoid "clipping" the first note of the music.

Dolores tells me that I was wrong in saying that the organ is almost inaudible in the lowest octave - when heard through a good sound system, rather than through the keyboard's speaker, it is indeed audible and effective.

Maksimik's documentation mentions that Midi Master 99 can be run from any drive, but he takes it for granted that you will know how to do so - the diskname must be MIDI. If you want to run it from your ramdisk, the ramdisk must be named MIDI - and if your ramdisk also contains another program that only runs from a specific disk name, you will have to do some renaming back and forth. If you want to avoid that, Bruce Harrison told me how. Use DSKU to edit the file MASEXB. Change DSK.MIDI.CHARA1 to DSK4. .CHARA1 - presuming that your ramdisk is drive 4. Change DSK.MIDI.OPTIONS to DSK4.OPTIONS and then, in hex mode, change 0F44534B to 0844534B and 1044534B to 0C44534B. Then change the LOAD program to run DSK4.MASEXB.

If the disk that Mike sold you is like mine, it also contained some sample pieces of music and some work files and odds and ends. The necessary files that you must transfer to the ramdisk or whatever are LOAD, MASEXB, CHARA1 and OPTIONS.

The copy of Midi Master 99 that Maksimik sent to me had the percussion patched into three of the other instruments. You might want to check to make sure that yours has not been tampered with. To do this, select 6.Program Patch Librarian from the main menu. It will ask you for a program number from 0 to 127 - what it wants is an instrument number. These are normally numbered from 0 upwards, from left to right, on your keyboard panel. Enter 0. It will show you the current value; if that is other than 0, it has been patched. Anyway, enter 0 for the new patch value, then

continue with 1 and so on for as ma instrument voices as your keyboard ha Then use FCTN 9 to escape back to t main menu.

If you corrected any patches, you mu now select 5.Program Setup to make th permanent. It will ask you for a for ground color and then a backgrou color, from 0 to 15. These are the as embly color codes, which may confuse XBasic programmer and will confuse non-programmer even more, resulting some strange color combinations or eve a blank screen. Use 15 for foregrou and 5 for background, to keep the usu white on dark blue.

You are then asked for an RS232 por number. If you use a Y-cable to connec your modem and Midi Master 99 to th serial port of the RS232, you can selec 2 and keep both hooked up permanently.

Finally you are asked for the duratic value, which is usually 400. Then yo have the option to make these change permanent.

If you also purchased Midi Album 99 you may have to fix another of Mike' mistakes. On my disk, although th README file says the MALDOCS documen tation file is a DV80 file, it is actu ally a DV254 file which cannot be prin ted through Funnelweb etc. However, i is in 80-character format, so can b converted by this little program -

```
1 OPEN #1:"DSK1.MALDOCS",VAR
IABLE 254,INPUT :: OPEN #2:"
DSK1.DOCS80",OUTPUT
2 LINPUT #1:M$ :: PRINT #2:M
$ :: IF EOF(1)<>1 THEN 2 ELS
E CLOSE #1 :: CLOSE #2
```

✳✳✳

I GOOFED AGAIN!

IF YOU TRIED TO RUN A PROGRAM CALLED "TI-WRITER FONT MAKER" THAT APPEARED IN THE OCTOBER ISSUE ON PAGE 9, YOU NO DOUBT RAN INTO TROUBLE UNLESS YOU WERE ABLE TO FIND THE ERRORS AND MAKE THE THING WORK. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN THE CORRECTIONS, HERE THEY ARE:

```
190 CH=CH+1+(CH=129)*2 :: CA
LL HCHAR(R,C,CH):: FOR I=1 T
O 30 :: NEXT I :: GOTO 170

200 GOSUB 350 :: FOR C=9 TO
```

```
24 :: X=64 :: FOR R=4 TO 10
:: CALL GCHAR(R,C,G):: IF G=
129 THEN A=A+X

210 X=X/2 :: NEXT R :: FOR J
=1 TO LEN(STR$(A)):: CALL VC
HAR(J,C,ASC(SEG$(STR$(A),J,1
))):: NEXT J :: M2$=M2$&CHR$
(A):: A=0 :: NEXT C

230 X=X/2 :: NEXT R :: FOR J
=1 TO LEN(STR$(A)):: CALL VC
HAR(17+J,C,ASC(SEG$(STR$(A),
J,1))):: NEXT J :: M$=M$&CHR
$(A):: A=0 :: NEXT C :: CALL
```

```
DELSPRITE(ALL):: CALL MAGNI
FY(1)
```

WELL THERE YOU ARE, THAT SHOULD MAKE IT WORK. WHAT DO YOU DO WITH IT NOW THAT IT WORKS?
YOU CAN MAKE UP A FONT AND THEN PRINT IT OUT TO SEE WHAT IT WILL LOOK LIKE AND THEN SAVE IT TO A DISK. (YOU HAVE TO PRINT IT OUT BEFORE YOU CAN SAVE IT). IT WILL BE SAVED AS A DV80 FORMAT. WHENEVER YOU WANT TO USE IT IN YOUR TEXT FILE JUST ENTER IT INTO YOUR FILE USING THE LF COMMAND.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER #12
by Jim Peterson

The hard part of learning to program is not in learning what the commands do - it is learning how to put them together to make them do what you want them to do! Key in this little program and run it to see what it does, then study it to see how it does it.

This is an example of a mergeable subprogram, and is from my Nuts & Bolts Disk No. 1. The subprogram, lines 20082-20085, should be SAVEd to disk by typing SAVE DSK1.TITLE,MERGE . You can then load any program, enter MERGE DSK1.TITLE, call it by line 100, and display the title of up to 28 characters on a screen of whatever color you choose, in sprites of all colors except the screen color, diagonally across the screen.

```
100 CALL CLEAR :: CALL TITLE
(2,"MY PROGRAM")::  FOR D=1 T
0 900 :: NEXT D :: CALL DELS
PRITE(ALL):: CALL SCREEN(8)
20082 SUB TITLE(S,T$)
20083 CALL SCREEN(S):: L=LEN
(T$):: CALL MAGNIFY(2)
20084 FOR J=1 TO L :: CALL S
PRITE(#J,ASC(SEG$(T$,J,1)),J
+1-(J+1=S)+(J+1=S+13)+(J>14)
*13,J*(170/L),10+J*(200/L)):
: NEXT J
20085 SUBEND
```

Line 100 clears the screen and CALLs the subprogram , in this case specifying screen color 2, which is black, and title "MY PROGRAM". You can substitute any color from 2 to 16 (see the Basic manual for the codes) and any title of up to 28 letters and spaces.

When program execution returns to line 100 after the call, the delay loop D holds the display on the screen for as long as you specify, and then erases all the sprites and restores the normal XBasic cyan screen.

The subprogram uses high line numbers so that it can be merged into an existing program without overwriting line numbers.

Line 20082 receives the call to the subprogram, places the specified screen color in the variable S and the specified title in the variable T$.

Line 20083 colors the screen, counts the number of characters in the title by LEN and places that number in L, and enlarges all sprites to be a single character occupying 4 print spaces.

Line 20084 does all the work. The J loop is executed once for each character in the title. The TI-99/4A can display up to 28 sprites at once, but only four can be in a row horizontally, or the part of a higher-numbered sprite that overlaps a lower-numbered sprite will be erased. That is why it is necessary to display the title diagonally.

The first parameter of the CALL SPRITE must specify the sprite number being created, from 1 up to 28. The count in the J loop is used to number them, by #J.

The second parameter must specify the ASCII character to be used as the pattern for the sprite. SEG$(T$,J,1) takes the title apart, character by character, as the J loop executes, and ASC finds the ASCII number of that character.

The third parameter must specify the sprite color. In this complex bit of code, the "true and false" values are used to give each sprite a different color in sequence from 2 to 16, but skipping the screen color, and then start over. Remember that a true statement has a value of -1, a false statement has a value of 0. The formula adds 1 to the value of J in the loop, therefore the first sprite would be color 2, then 3, etc. However, if that would cause the sprite to be the same color as the screen, then J+1=S would be true and have a value of -1 and since -(-1) is +1, the color number is incremented by 1.

When the J loop counts past 14, J>14 becomes true, or -1, and is multiplied by 13 to subtract 13 from the count and go back to 2. Similarly, J+1=S+13 insures that the second series of colors will not duplicate the screen color.

The next two parameters are the dot-row (down) and dot-column (across) for placing the sprite. For this purpose, the screen is 192 dots deep, 256 dots across, of which 170 and 200 are used here. Dividing by the number of characters in the title gives the correct spacing between sprites, regardless of title length, and multiplying by J spaces them evenly.

END

****

3 1/2 INCH DRIVES ON THE TI-99/4A
By Frank Aylstock
reprinted from the BREA USERS GROUP

The 5.25" (360K) drives are becoming another orphan, like our TI. The disk controllers do not know if you have a 3.5" or 5.25" drives. The only thing they know is what your input is, and the only control you have is the number of tracks per sector, number of sides and density. The TI disk controller will handle double sided but only single density. The Corcomp controller will handle double sided and double density. The Myarc card with the QUAD CHIP installed will handle disk drives up to 720K. The 5.25" quad density drives are another orphan but you can use 3.5" disk drivers. The 3.5" drivers can be up to 1.44meg this means that you will have 2880 sectors or the equivalent of 8 SSSD floppy disks. the only drawback to the 3.5" drive is that all the programs you receive come on 5.25" floppy disks. However you can set up your system so that you have at least one 5.25" disk drive and the others 3.5" drivers. The HFDC by Myarc will also accept up to quad density disks.

I would recommend that you switch over to the 3.5" drives as they are a superior form of storage for the following reasons.

1) The disks are enclosed in a shell/cover which hold them rigid and will not allow the disk to get bent. You can even write on the disk directly without harming the data.

2) They contain there own sliding reusable "write protect tab". By merely moving the tab up or down the disk can be protected.

JACK'S JOTTINGS

by Jack Sughrue
Box 459
East Douglas, MA 01516

It's been a long time between Jott-ings. Almost a year ago I was in a car accident that resulted in lots of metal plates in my head to hold it together, and I'm still in the throes of recovery. But I'm extraordinarily lucky: the EMTs were fast, the doctors incredible, the support from so many people (including my wonderful TI Family Worldwide) just unbelievable. I want to thank all the ASGARD NEWS readers and all the other 99ers everywhere for their caring and support. It certainly made me a lot better a lot quicker.

But while I was sitting on the side-lines cursing the tree that leaped out in front of my new car, I had ample op-portunity to think about my TI and what it means to me and, I assume, to a lot of other people.

Like the vast majority of the 2 1/2 million purchasers, I wanted a toy. Now we can SAY we wanted this machine for our businesses or for our professions or for our kids' education or for some-thing specific (like wordprocessing or database activities). But I truly think the majority of us purchasers wanted to play. I don't mean games, necessarily. I mean PLAY! Have a computer just for the FUN of it; for no particular reason, though we had to justify it to our spouces or parents or friends or kids by giving all the practical reasons why home computing with our 99s was essen-tial "in this Electronic Age." My bigg-est argument almost a decade ago when I couldn't think of any legitimate reason for my early (expensive) purchases was, simply, "We are almost into the 21st Century, for crying out loud! Don't you realize that?" As if that were an answer to everything. It certainly was an effective deterrent to further discuss-ion on the matter.

Fun is why I still keep my TI.

At work (I teach fifth grade.) we have Apple and IBM and TS machines. I also have a couple TIs. The kids inevit-ably choose the TIs for their free com-puter time. Sometimes the Apple, if there is something software specific they'd like to do. Never the IBM. The TSes they use strictly for

wordprocessing.
Why the TIs?

More options, for one thing. They can load something up from tape (like Turtle Tracks or Square Pairs or Tiny Logo or any of the Moonbeam Software or piles of Jim Peterson's great educational/fun stuff or Romeo [still one of my favorites] or any number of excellent TAPE programs, including the Tunnel of Doom and Adventure tapes. Or they can throw in a cartridge. The kids love the robotic talk of the Spelling series. They never tire of Yahtzee or Othello or Video Chess. They play the arcade cartridges like Parsec and Munchman and the educational modules like Reading Rally and Stargazer and the math series. Or perform LOGO II activities for hours. All of the above options (still available) are on the basic machine with tape recorder. No disk drive. (I have speech and a 32K sidecar on one machine, the P-Box and works on the other. Speech and 32 are not necessary for 99% of the good stuff on tape, though Extended BASIC is.)

Besides the options of tape and mod-ule on the basic setup are the options to learn how to program and how to cre-ate programs. The TI with so many built-in subprograms (CALL SOUND, CALL COLOR, etc.) and a powerful resident BASIC is easy to learn, particularly as TI provided so many simple, direct text and tape materials for learning how to use the machine. So simple even adults can do it.

There are are a pile of options n the TI that Apple and IBM do not rovide for computer buffs seeking un and learn-ing and hobby pportunities. Remember, if you turn n an Apple or an IBM there is othing there. Literally. There are o tapes, no modules. You have to op in a disk to even get BASIC. Once ou have BASIC, you don't have the fficiency of the TI. Nor do you ave the powerful speaking, coloring, haracter-making tools. Nor do you ave automatic number-ing. Nor esequencing. Nor...

These things we 99ers take for granted.

Oh, I also forgot the other option, the only one that those other machines have: disk drives. The TI has all kinds of disk controllers, including hard drive. There are all kinds of artificial drives, too: Ramdisks, Supercarts, Zeno-board chips that make operation instant-

aneous and a joy. Supercarts, of course, are not part of those others, either.

But, apart from 40 megabyte hard drives and all the high-tech wizardry that can be a part of any TI upgrading (including the very powerful GENEVE), what about the normal, non-techie, fun-loving 99er? Once he or she decides there is a necessity to get into disk drives (and I don't think there needs to be for all the applications mention-ed above and many more not mentioned), of course, another whole, large world opens up. People with modems tell me that other TI worlds are out there to explore, too. I'm quite overwhelmed with the one I got. My imagination doesn't extend to what else is out there for our little machine.

Don't get me wrong about disks: I would never want to go back to my pre-disk computing for a few good reasons: FUNNELWEB, PLUS!, ARCHIVER, DISK UTILITIES, TI PRINT SHOP (TIPS), MUGLOADER, MAX-RLE, DM-1000, to name a few. All of the above are Fairware or Public Domain. FUNNELWEB is an environm-ent that includes the best version out of TI-Writer (with so many options not on ANY other version that it would be impossible to list). It also includes an Editor-Assembler version I prefer to the cartridge and loaders for Forth and C and supercarts, among other things. PLUS! is an additional environment I put together that, primarily, enhances wordprocessing, but includes so many other programs that it has gone way be-yond. ARCHIVER lets me store MASSIVE amounts of information on disks. It also unloads such disks and does a pile of other functions. DISK UTILITIES is just what it says and is the best of all the disk utility disks I have encountered. TIPS lets you make banners, greeting cards, posters, etc. (slowly), but has provided the largest collection of graphic images (thousands) that have ever been put together for the TI. All of these images can be converted to PAGEPRO and TI-ARTIST formats (see below) for a humongous library. These images include fonts and frames as well as an alphabetical listing that prints out a huge text of pictures 40 to a page. MUGLOADER gives you some fabulous menu options. It loads a screen menu which lets you create and print direc-tories, load more menus, read text files, load E/A and XB programs, and

more. MAX-RLE loads graphics, colors them, prints them out, converts them from one form to another (GRAPHX to TI-ARTIST, for example). DM-1000 is a super all-purpose disk manager (1000 times more useful than the disk manager cartridge, which may be how it got its name) that lets you manipulate disks and files in all kinds of ways, such as copy, move, format, delete, rename, protect, and so on.

All of the above can be gotten from user groups worldwide. Joining a user group is the best advice I would give anyone. I can't imagine how limited my TI opportunities would be without a user group. These can be joined through the mail. I belong to a few, including one in Australia, and my local MUNCH group in Worcester, Massachusetts. But all of the above Fairware and PD programs came from the Lima, Ohio group. (c/o Dr.^Charles Good, Box 647, Venedocia, OH 45894). Membership there of $15 a year is a best buy, newsletter is excellent, disk and TAPE libraries are extensive (and free to members). But any group, particularly a local with monthly meetings, is almost essential to anyone with an urge to find new ways to enjoy our computer.

Options are what we're talking about, and, while on the topic, I do not want to neglect the commercial enterprises that have provided me with more options and with lots of that good old fun, which keeps TI my computer of choice in a world full of such seriousness and intensity and downright hostility.

Over all the years of writing columns about the 99, I have always voiced two major complaints: no good cribbage game and no decent Printshop-type software. I complain no more.

First, Arcade Action (4122 Glenway, Wawatosa, WI 53222) provides the best cribbage game you can imagine for the TI. For all you cribbage freaks (and there are many, according to the letters I've received) you can send AA $7 and get rewarded instantly.

Second, the Printshop-type software. Broderbund made PS the single most-popular piece of software for any computer because it was 1) easy 2) fast and 3) gave professional results. It also had lots of utilities and fonts and images. It made banners and greeting cards and posters and (not very effectively) single-page thingies.

So, what kind of commercial software is easy, fast, and gives professional results? For me, PAGEPRO. I have only the original naked version, but it was the dream of a computer lifetime for me. It is easy. It is fast. The results are professional. And it's WYSIWYG (pronounced "wizzywig" and means What You See Is What You Get)! I understand the newer versions and the PP companions allow all kinds of things, including rotations for easy greeting-card making and a catalog function. Sounds good. But the original I have is perfect for newsletters, school publications (including those done entirely by students because of the ease of use), dramatic graphic letters, signs, posters, etc. The various fonts are easy to load and can be loaded into the page during creation to change the entire page's fonts in one swoop, making it very easy to test the right font for the right occasion. The graphics (Remember the thousands from TIPS? Well, there is also a converter in PP to use ARTIST graphics for thousands more. Also, there are PP companions.) can be placed anywhere on a full page, can be surrounded by text of two sizes, two different fonts, anywhere on that same page, including right across graphics, and so on. Except for the word processor itself (FUNNELWEB), I have found nothing so valuable to me as PAGEPRO. I use it even to write letters now.

Add to PP the latest TI-ARTIST PLUS (for the creation and manipulation of art work) and you'll have a very effective publishing system. I have to add CSGD to that package for banners and labels, though I'm sure some of the utilities for PP and ARTIST will eventually permit these to operate out of the same systems.

I used to use GRAPHX forever, but the latest ARTIST is preferable. Some friends of mine have written to me about PICASSO, but I have never seen any version of it to date. It has been highly praised by all users.

I found The Printer's Apprentice to difficult to work with, and I have not seen the Comprodine stuff, which I understand is excellent, also.

The only other essential commercial item necessary to my limited computing is TI-BASE, the best data base I have ever used on this machine. BASE and ARTIST are sold by Texaments, PICASSO and PAGEPRO by Asgard.

Now let's say you really didn't need a large data base. Just something simple, for a class list. Let's say you only needed a word processor for screen work (or you had a sidecar printer). And you liked playing good games or want to teach your grandchild subtraction. And, let's say you were perfectly happy with very simple block graphics or LOGO for art work. Well, all these things are still available in tape form. Let's say you just want this machine for the simple pleasures of life. Tapes, books of programs to type, cartridges all can be purchased (at a tiny price) or borrowed from user groups.

We're back to where we started. A TI with a TV set and a tape recorder and a book or two and some new, inexpensive cartridges (XB is under $30, LOGO II under $15, Personal Record Keeping under $10, TI Invaders, MUNCHMAN, Parsec for under $3, for examples) can still do a lot more for you and your desire for fun and learning than any number of IBMs, ATs, IIGSes, BLFSPKs, or any other very expensive non-option.

END

D.O.M. #66 November 1992.

This month's DOM has many files that the average 4A user cannot access. It is a feast for Geneve and MidiMaster99 users; what is on the disk for the 4A is, however, so superior, that you will want it anyway.

Case in point: the new (November 92) release of Disk Manager 1000 (v 6.0). Unpacks to a SSSD disk (including docs). Features: all 3 menus from the earlier versions now on one screen, so easier access and fewer keypresses—in other words, disk utilities, file utilities and "other" (protection, color change etc.) are all available on the main menu screen. Much faster disk copying for those users with Myarc or Corcomp disk managers and double density. Want to view or print a text file quickly? Select File utilities. To the left of the filename, replace the N with T (type) to view on screen or P to send to printer. Disk initialization and

printer configuration defaults plus color selections can be saved into the program(even though it is in Assembly!).! It's still fairware, so send the Ottawa users' group their due.

The next 3 files on side A are for the Geneve: LHDROS121, formats and loads some MDOS versions to your Horizon ramdisk(9640 can thus boot from ramdisk); LOAD/SYS, a new version that fixes some old bugs; and QDE31 from Clint Pulley, the "best little quick and dirty editor for batch files going".

Last on side A: W/HOCKY^--I think this is the same version of Westig ice hockey that was released earlier, but many people missed it. A really good game--the graphics will win you over. Try it.

Side B features ENLARGAR^, a program that takes both fonts and instances for TI-Artist and enlarges or reduces them to suit your needs. I've tried it, and

it is spectacular. Next is M99-MUSIC^, which contains 14 files of Midi music for use ONLY if you have and can use MidiMaster99. Have you heard Midi yet?

QS/99V3^ is next. Only for use with Gram-Kraker, P-Gram or similar devices. It is a utility-type file to aid one in writing E/A type files(programs).

Last on side B is the READ--THIS file in DV-80 format. Don't forget my suggestion for setting the printer to elite/condensed so you can, by cut and paste(literally, not electronically) you can get it all on one page.

Well, that's it for this month's offering. I sincerely feel that it is worth purchasing even if you can only utilize DM1000 v.6, Enlarger, and WHockey. See you next time. Bye.

END

THE COMPUTER and VCR

(Thanks to North County 99 UG)

The following is an excerpt from Barry Traver's Classic Computer Column in the Computer Monthly.

"Have thought about introducing your computer to your VCR? Although the two may be, in some sense, competitors (e.g. for consumer dollars) they actually work very well together.

"Example: suppose you have a minimal system (say, a console and a few cartridges, including the Terminal Emulator II), and you've gotten interested in telecommunications. You've purchased an inexpensive modem and become a subscriber to CompuServe, Delphi or GEnie. Since it costs you dollars per hour for the time you're on

line, is there any quick and easy way without a disk system, cassette system or printer that you can capture your sessions while on-line and then view later at your leisure what you saw earlier in the screen?"

"It's simple if you have a VCR. Just hook up your VCR between you computer and your TV, set your VCR to record channel 3 or 4 (whatever is appropriate in your area), and you're in business. After you are off-line, you can play back the tape just as you would any other videotape and, unlike other capyure methods, you have captured the audio as well as the video, the sounds as well as the sights. This is exactly what I did myself in the early days before I had a printer or a disk system, and it accomplished itsds purpose well."

I should note that the hook up

connections for recording are a bit different, dependent on whether you are using a TV or a monitor. If you are using a TV, you will hook up your RF modulator to the "antenna in" connection on your VCR, setting your VCR to channel 3 or 4. Hook up the VCR to the TV in the normal fashion.."If you are using a monitor, the situation cahnges somewhat, but it's still rather simple. Instead of using an RF modulator, you'll be using a video cable, hooking it up to the 'video in' and "audio in" connections on your VCR. In this case, you'll need to set your VCR to 'line' rather than to a TV channel. Again, you would hook your VCR to the monitor in the normal way.

END

"THE BEST TIME TO TELL YOUR WIFE YOU LOVE HER IS BEFORE SOMEBODY ELSE DOES."

MINUTES
Wednesday, January 27, 1993.

President John Parkins opened the meeting at 8pm. Acting treasurer Dick Beery received from him several checks for membership renewal and then gave the treasurer's report. At the January Saturday meeting the acting president had read aloud an article that appeared recently in the Southwest 99ers newsletter criticizing C.O.N.N.I. for the wording of the notice sent to clubs whose newsletters were being dropped from our newsletter exchange program for economic reasons. The article objected to the tone of the message as well as the criteria chosen to separate those dropped from those retained. At today's meeting, Dick read the exact text (obtained from Jean Hall, exchange librarian) that was sent. The membership present felt that the message was kindly and appropriately worded. Criteria were not mentioned there, but WERE mentioned in a subsequent article by Jim Peterson that appeared in our newsletter by way of explanation. We are sorry if we have unintentionally offended anyone. The measure was totally an economic one.

Following a recap of the events of the previous Saturday meeting, Dick mentioned that those members who had recently switched to the Rave keyboard should switch from Fast-Term to Telco in modeming, since the keyboard will not accept multiple keypresses (e.g. Fctn-Shift-X, Fctn-Shift-B). (Jean Hall has since the meeting discovered how to handle all but the last-mentioned type.)

John Parkins discussed the Hewlett-Packard inkjet printer and the merits of single vs. double cartridges.

Harley Ryan, who is entering the field of printer repair on a limited basis, mentioned a reference work that he has found to be useful titled &Computer^Printer^Repair^and^Troubleshooting(author unknown).

We were delighted by the appearance of Art Morgan at the meeting. Art was one of the founders, but rarely makes it to meetings nowadays. He reports that Fred Tietzel, former member who moved to Colorado and is now a member? of the Front Range 99ers, is restored to health and has resumed his skiing and other pleasurable activities.

Ken Marshall has uploaded to the Clearinghouse BBS a file that he downloaded and edited from the Chicago TI BBS. It quotes Mike Maksimik regarding progress on MidiMaster 99 version 3. I have not seen it yet, but it reportedly states that the new version will not work with the 4A's 32k but rather requires the use of either a Rambo on the Horizon ramdisk or similar 128k supplements. More on this as information is made available. Mike has reportedly offered to refund the $45 already paid by registered owners of version 2.3 if they do not wish to further upgrade their machines.

Under new business, Irwin Hott, SysOp of the BBS, moved that we discontinue the uploading requirement for those who wish to download from the BBS, since in a time of dwindling file/program production for the TI, this creates an unnecessary hardship. The motion carried unanimously and the change is expected to be implemented immediately.

Jim Peterson explained downloadable printer fonts and displayed a number of such that he himself had recently created. He recommends the purchase by all of the 2-disk set offered by Harrison Software for $10. One tradeoff is that the user loses the printer buffer space, which must be turned off by means of a dipswitch before the new font is sent to the printer. Harrison currently has versions for both the Star NX-1000 and NX-1020 printers, and is willing to make versions available for any printer that supports NLQ downloads. When using wider-than-normal characters with proportional spacing, you should find that the characters are set farther apart, eliminating any overprinting or crowding that might be thought to result. In such cases, the user is warned to use DV72 in place of the regular DV80 file.

After the regular meeting was adjourned, Jim Peterson showed the inside of a ribbon cartridge for the NX-1020 and explained in detail how such cartridges may be re-inked, with a saving in expense. He set up his Casio keyboard then and played a number of selections using MidiMaster99. Most were music that he had converted from Extended Basic (many programmers) to the Midi SNF file format. Especially popular among the members present were the new transcriptions for Bumbleboogie and Dizzyfingers. The conversion process required five or six steps and involved Jim's creating a couple of new programs designed specifically for that purpose.

Finally Jim demonstrated a numeric brainteaser puzzle called Supermensa that was also well received.

The end of the program took place at a little prior to ten pm, at which time the membership departed. It was an excellent meeting, in this reviewer's opinion.

Respectfully submitted,

Dick Beery
Co-Secretary

* *

DRIVES from page 11

3) The size is a large consideration as they require a lot less space to store or transport them.

4) They contain a sliding door which protects the storage medium at all times. This door opens and closes automatically when the disk is inserted or removed from the drive.

5) The size also helps to read and write data faster than the 5.25" floppy disk drive.

6) The disks are coated with superior oxide which is less vulnerable to data loss.

7) They are considered more reliable than 5.25" disks especially important when dealing with quad density disks.

8) The drives take less current during the reading and writing process. In fact some of the 3.5" drives use only the 5 volts.

Last but not least is the price. Around this area (Los Angles) the drives can be purchased for as little as $50.00 and there is no conversion or other hardware change to be made and they will replace the existing drives with very little labor.

Look into these drives!

END

MEETING DATES
FOR
1992 — 1993

C.O.N.N.I. BOARD MEMBERS

3RD SATURDAY

20 FEB 1993
20 MAR 1993
17 APR 1993
15 MAY 1993
19 JUN 1993
17 JUL 1993
21 AUG 1993
18 SEP 1993
16 OCT 1993
20 NOV 1993

4TH WEDNESDAY

24 FEB 1993
24 MAR 1993
28 APR 1993
26 MAY 1993

Pres. — John Parkins	614/891-4965
Treas — Everett Wade	614/262-6346
Sec/Sat — Jim Peterson	614/235-3545
Sec/Wed — Dick Beery	614/459-3597
Membership — John Parkins	614/891-4965
Librarian — Chuck Grimes	614/268-8821
Disk — Dick Beery	614/459-3597
Cassette — Everett Wade	614/262-6346
Cartridge — Ken Marshall	614/876-1670
NL Exchange — Jean Hall	614/885-4223
TIABS BBS	OFF THE AIR
Vice Pres. — Chuck Grimes	614/268-8821
Spirit of 99 BBS	614/263-3412
Irwin Hott	614/263-5319
Dick Beery	614/459-3597
Co-Editors/Spirit	
of 99 Newsletter	
Jean Hall	614/885-4223
Bob DeVilbiss	614/891-0566

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