
THE GUILFORD 99'ER NEWSLETTER

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APRIL 1986

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The Guilford 99'er Users' Group Newsletter is free to dues paying members (One copy per family, please). Dues are \$12.00 per family, per year. Send check to P.O. Box 21691, Greensboro, NC 27420. The Software Library is for dues paying members only. (Herman Geschwind, Editor)
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OUR NEXT MEETING

DATE: April 1, 1986. TIME: 7:00 PM PLACE: Glenwood Recreation Center, 2010 S. Chapman Street.

April's program will demonstrate TI-Writer in uses other than as a word processor. The program will focus on how to use TI Writer to write Basic or Extended Basic as well as Assembler program. Part 2 of the TI Writer Tutorial ("The Formatter") will follow the regular meeting. (This was originally scheduled for the March meeting but was pre-empted by too much fun with the FUNLWRITER, no Bob we don't mind, FUNLWRITER is just too good!)

TI SHOPPER

by Bob Carmany

There are so many new products and programs available on the TI marketplace that it is becoming increasingly difficult to keep up with them all. First, where once there were none, there are now three "cartridge savers". The GRAM KRACKER from Miller's Graphics, MAXIMEM from Canada, and the GRAM KARIE from Germany have all entered the market in the past several months. The Miller's Graphics product still leads the way in both price and versatility, however.

In the area of graphics generation, the field is equally as crowded. DITHAC, GraphX, TI-Artist, and many others now exist. There are various supplementary disks to go along with these programs that provide all sorts of clipart "slides" and pictures. All of them have some means of dumping the picture to a dot-addressable printer. The pictures and images that they produce are really quite sophisticated when compared to the graphics programs available as recently as a year ago. The price range is also fairly substantial, from \$19.95 (TI-Artist) to about \$40.00 (GraphX). They are all available through the mail order catalogs (TENEX, et. al.). You just have to shop around for the best price on the package that best suits your needs. And, don't forget about the auxiliary clipart that is also offered. They can really save you some time!

If you are into adventure gaming, there is still a wide menu to choose from. There are package deals for the complete 13 game TI series (\$49.00 from TEX-COMP) and the INFOCOM adventures (ZORK I,II,III, Hitchiker's Guide, etc.) are still being strongly advertised. They run about \$35.00 each. The INFOCOM series, however, is much more sophisticated and challenging than anything that Scott Adams has produced for the TI. There are some new adventure games out (SPIDERMAN, THE HULK, BUCKAROD BANZAI, etc.) in the \$19.00 range. They are also available from the mail order catalogs.

For the less serious gamer there are always the "good old stand-bys" that TI formerly produced. Caught with millions of dollars of inventory on its hand (and the GRAM KRACKER on the horizon) TEX-COMP has drastically reduced its prices on TI game modules. There is a large number of them on sale for \$4.95. The titles are just too numerous to list here but you can check with the advertisements in MICROpendium or order one of their catalogs yourself (\$2).

If you haven't picked up an XB cartridge, there are several sources available. The TI original is still available from

TRITON and TEX-COMP for \$49.95. TENEX is offering the TI-licensed version from Exeltec for \$69.95 with a word processor and database program (TYPEWRITER and NAME-IT) from Extended Software. Separately, they are worth about \$150.00. There is MYARC's XB IV that gives you a series of extended commands in addition to the regular Extended Basic but it requires the MYARC 128K card. And, from Germany is the XBII+ that is probably the best buy of the entire group. It gives the user some 60 additional commands including some "nifty" high resolution graphics commands and screen dumps (this is in addition to everything you have in standard XB). It is \$79.95 from T.A.P.E. (see the February newsletter).

Finally, check the "freeware" market for some outstanding bargains! I have to mention Danny Michael's screen dump again because it is, quite simply, the best "pure" screen dump program that I have seen --- most definitely worth the \$5 that he asks you to send him for it. There are several revised versions of Forth available on the "freeware" market as well as dis-assemblers, de-buggers, file utilities, games, and just about everything else. MICROpendium has a listing of new "freeware" programs in every issue and they will send you a complete listing for \$1 or \$.50 and a self-addressed, stamped envelope. It is well worth checking out. These programs are all worth the \$5 or \$10 that the author asks!

There are really only two decent publications available for the TI right now (HOME COMPUTER MAGAZINE has once again started its one issue every six months distribution). MICROpendium, P.O. Box 1343, Round Rock TX 78680 is probably the "best of what is left". The subscription price is \$15.00 for third class and \$18.50 for first class per year. The newsletter/magazine runs about 45 pages per month and contains short programs and articles on a variety of topics. There are usually several reviews of products and programs, some information on Forth, and various other topics. It is TI specific and doesn't have "garbage" about other computers in it. Back issues are available.

SUPER 99 MONTHLY is another TI specific newsletter/magazine. It is produced by Bytemaster Computer Services, 1/1 Mustang St., Sulphur, LA 70663. The subscription rate is \$12.00 per year and it covers the same wide range of topics that MICROpendium does but the newsletter is roughly half as long. It, too is running behind schedule as far as the issue being current with the month it is supposed to be delivered in.

This is running a little bit long this month so I'll <FCTN => and let Herman "go to press". . .

MICROSOFT MULTIPLAN (tm)

by Tom Kennedy

(Continued from last Month)

Now that the cell formats are defined, it's time to start entering data. Begin by labeling your rows and columns, as necessary. To enter data, either text or values, move the cursor to the desired cell and hit either "A" or "V", depending on the type. The command line will disappear and you'll be prompted for either text or value. Type in your entry and hit enter either <ENTER> to return to the command line, or use the appropriate FCTN-ARROW key to move to the next cell. With the FCTN key, when you land on the next cell, you are prompted only for text/value entry. In this case, you do not hit A or V to declare type, but when you begin entering data, Multiplan decides what style the data is, and responds accordingly. The only disadvantage is that there's a slight delay between the first character of your entry and the remainder, so if you type in, for instance, the word "TOTALS" too quickly, all you'll see in the cell is "TTOLS". After a bit of use, a "stutter" habit is developed in how you enter data, so this becomes less apparent. When entering data, if an error is made, do not use the FCTN-S key to backspace for correction (as programmers are used to), the backspace key is CTRL-H (as telecommunication folks are used to).

If, after creating part of a worksheet, you need to add or delete rows or columns, three commands apply. DELETE completely removes any number of rows or columns. BLANK just removes the data in the cells, the row/columns remain and retain their formats. INSERT creates a new row or column set to the default settings.

Formulas are used to perform a mathematical computation upon the data in a cell or group of cells. One example is in a sales order form, where you have a column of data that is totaled at the bottom, multiplied by a tax percentage, and the tax added to the result. The cell in which the sub-total is to appear would contain a formula describing a sum of the data in the columns, expressed as either a chain addition problem, (R3C5+R4C5+...+R10C5) or using the SUM() function and a range of cells. (SUM(R3C5:R10C5)). The formulas can become quite complex, depending on the work performed.

Formulas can also consist of names of cells as the operand, as in "SUBTOTAL x .079", to calculate the entry for a cell named TAX. Names are assigned with the name command. Names can be any continuous string of alpha-numeric characters, but must begin with a letter. Simply place the cursor over the cell to name and press N. Type in the desired name to the response field, and TAB to the next field. The current cell will be shown as the proposed response. If a range of cells is

desired, hit the FCTN key, at the cell response, to move the cursor from the current location to the end point, then hit <ENTER>. In this manner, a whole row or column can be named. Names can also be used in the GOTO command to aid in moving quickly to a location. "GOTO TOTALS" for example.

Windows allow you to view more than one area of your worksheet at one time. You can split a row or column of titles to form a window over the data, so as the cursor is moved throughout the worksheet, the headers remain in place to see what data is shown. Also, separate worksheets can be developed in one and divided into windows so all can be seen at once. After selecting the window command, four options are shown. SPLIT is what opens the windows, either horizontally, vertically, or at preset titles. LINKing two or more windows scrolls them together as you move through the worksheet. BORDER is used to put a border of any character surrounding the windows, to make them easier to read. A window is cancelled with the CLOSE

Once you have finally created the worksheet, and all the data has been entered, what do you do with it? In a sense, the end product is the worksheet, because you may refer to it constantly as new data is applied, and a printed copy might become outdated quickly. After all, that's part of the reason you are working on an Electronic Spreadsheet in the first place, the instant and easy update of information.

In some cases though, a printout is desired, either in the form of a disk file that can be incorporated into a document on a word processor, or a hard-copy printout for reference. The printer command has four options used in printing the worksheet. FILE prints the worksheet to disk in display variable 80 format, which can be loaded into a word processor. Before printing a hard copy, you must first set margins and print options. The MARGINS option sets the limits of rows and columns in the printout, along with indentations and paginations. OPTIONS defines the portion of the worksheet to be printed, using a range of cells. The set-up field contains the device name of your printer. The last two fields let you print the formulas "hidden" in cells, and whether or not to print the row/column numbers. After margins and options are defined, select the PRINTER option to begin the print-out. If the width of the worksheet exceeds the width of your printer carriage, the left half will be printed entirely, then the right half below that, so the two can be cut-&-pasted together.

In some cases, you may be working on a number of worksheets that are related to each other, such as in a business with SALES/PAYROLL/INVENTORY spreadsheets. These separate files can be linked together so data can be drawn from, as an example, the INVENTORY file to be used in the SALES worksheet and information from SALES could be used in PAYROLL.

The EXTERNAL command. (press "X" at command line) is used to COPY data from an inactive sheet into the active one. You are prompted for the filename of the source sheet, the name (or R/C reference) of the source cell, the destination cell of the data, and the LINK option. If LINK is selected, then the two sheets will become linked so that when the destination sheet is loaded, the source sheet will automatically be used to supply data where needed. The LIST option displays the names of all sheets supporting the active sheet. The USE option allows you to switch which inactive sheets will support the active sheet, so long as they are in the same format. As an example, the SALES sheet would call upon different INVENTORY sheets for each month, all created in the same format, with different data.

Multiplan is one of the most powerful tools to be used on any computer. It's versatility allows it to be used in many different applications. Word Processing, record keeping, budget/accounting, etc. Any application that requires storing data in a tabular format. The instant update of information and the advanced mathematics capability can be used in a variety of ways.

Versatility is the main attraction of the many spreadsheet programs used on various machines, and in fact, Multiplan can even use files stored in VISICALC(tm) format. VISICALC, one of the "first" major spreadsheets, is similar to Multiplan in many ways: the screen display; cursor positioning; error correction; and entering data and formulas. The referencing of cells is more detailed with Multiplan, including the ability to name cells for ease of use. It has been shown that Multiplan can be easier to pick up and use for the person not familiar to spreadsheets, although once the concepts are mastered, the usage is similar in all. With a familiar knowledge of a program like Multiplan, you could do away with a word processor, a database manager, or even a pocket calculator, although each has it's specific advantages.

I have tried to cover the basics of getting started in working with spreadsheets, but I have still only scratched the surface of the wealth of information within the manual supplied with Multiplan. A walk-thru in the first half provides a very good introduction, and the second half documents each command and function in detail. There also a number of good books available on Multiplan, and the software is the same on nearly every machine.

SPEAKING ABOUT SPEECH

by Ron Albright

The more I read about the "new" developments and software for other machines, the more I impressed/infuriated I become with Texas Instruments. Whether you realize it or not, TI was light-years ahead of the remainder of the home computer industry in virtually everything except, of course, consumer marketing and common sense. One of the features which remains the industry leader and is, at the same time, the most neglected and overlooked feature available for our machine is the text-to-speech access. With the speech synthesizer and the Terminal Emulator II cartridge (or disk-based text-to-speech program for XB), you have a feature unrivaled on any other machine. Sure, others have "speech" and some even boast "unlimited vocabulary", but, if you ever heard these facilities on another machine, you realize how far ahead TI was (and still is) in synthetic speech. What I would like to do in this article is to give you an overview of speech synthesis on the TI and, hopefully, revive some interest in this incredible facility.

The chip used in our speech synthesizer is the TMS 5220. A P-channel MOS device packaged in a 28-pin DIP. It is a second generation speech chip, which followed the TMS 5100 used in the Speak and Spell toys appearing in 1977. While the TMS 5220 is capable of all three types of synthetic speech (linear predictive coding, wave-form modulation, and phoneme-stringing), our machine uses the most memory-efficient form: linear predictive coding, or LPC (but has the capability for allophone-stringing). LPC in our machine requires a small amount, 3k of memory, to hold the 128 allophone library, 7K to accommodate the 650 rule text-to-speech set for translating English-language text into allophone equivalents and for contouring inflections with the help of pitch modifiers to make the speech more natural. The allophone library and the rules for stringing them are held in the TE II GROM chips. The synthesizer holds the speech chip and the resident speech vocabulary (memory location >9000). The system is not perfect (as you may have learned hopefully by experience) but even with this small ROM requirement, TI achieved 92% translation accuracy. You can correct the remaining 8% with changing text.

Let us digress for clarity. Of what do we speak when we discuss allophones? Allophones are the most fundamental of any of the other linguistic components, including phonemes, diphones, and morphs. An analysis of the English language shows that about forty allophonic sound characteristics can provide the needed variations for all 45 standard phonemes. For example, the phoneme for the letter "P" in English is rounded and aspirated in the word "Poke", rounded and unaspirated in "Spoke", aspirated in "Pie", slightly aspirated in "Taper", released in "Appetite". These acoustically different "P"'s - so-called voiceless bilabial stops - are allophonic variations of the phoneme "P". Thus, allophonic speech produces better quality than phonemics because the allophones provide the most of the subtle variations each English phoneme can encompass and use each variation in the appropriate relationship. Phonemic speech sounds mechanical and is limited. Allophonic speech is much better though still not perfect...the transition between allophones make the speech sound unnatural and intonations are characteristically monotonic. But allophonic speech is an ideal compromise based on size of vocabulary, memory requirements and quality and versatility of speech.

So, knowing that we use an allophone speech system, how does it work? In general, text from keyboard input is converted into the appropriate allophones which are then converted into LPC data which activates the TMS 5220 to generate immediate speech. Well, it's not quite that simple. For the text to be converted to the "appropriate" allophones, rules must be applied: 650 rules, to be exact. The rules, based on a US Navy laboratory system are complex to say the least. For example, in the process of translating the word "space", the allophone-stringing algorithm looks first at the "s" and supplies a initial allophone for /s/. But for the "p" it finds a rule where the left environment is an "s". Also, since the "p" is not a final sound, the algorithm translates the "p" accordingly. Next the rule is invoked that applies to an "a" where the right-sided environment consists of a single consonant and the word ends with a word-final silent "e". This rule selects the appropriate "long-a" allophone. Finally, the rule for the "ce" inserts an /s/ component in the allophone string to replete the "c" in the text: the rule says the "e" is silent. As we have stated, 92% of the time the rules work... not bad! Compound words give it problems, often easily corrected by hyphenating...e.g. "Base-Ball".

Not only does the TI system convert text to component allophones, it also, through the rule set, translates secondary and primary speech-stress points into pitch variations. Contouring algorithms divide sentences into two major stress profile types: a falling mode where the pitch levels drops following a primary stress point (as occurs in a normal sentence making a statement), and a rising mode which occurs in sentences terminating in a question mark. This adds even more normal quality to speech. Remember how many times you have hears "Ready to start?"...Notice how the pitch varies in a rising tone on 'start'.

(To be continued next month).

THE FORTH FORUM
by Bob Carmany

This month, we are going to give you a screen to produce lowercase letters in TI-Forth. The coding follows a relatively simple format. The characters are defined, loaded into VDP RAM and then the coding is "forgotten" to re-allocate the memory that it occupied. This makes the most economical use of the memory given.

The screen conditionally loads the word "VMBW" (if it hasn't been already loaded previously, changes the base to hexadecimal, and creates the variable "LOWERCASE". What follows are the hexadecimal character definitions for the lowercase letters.

The last two lines of the screen control the actual loading of the characters into VDP RAM. The letters are loaded beginning at HEX B0B (the beginning of the Pattern Description Table) plus 97 (value of lowercase 'a') times 8 (number of bytes per letter). The number bytes loaded is 208 (HEX D0) which is the number of alphabetic letters (26) times the number of bytes per letter (8). The coding for the letters is the "forgotten" to re-allocate the memory space.

Incidentally , this same screen works quite well in Wycove Forth as well. The only changes that must be made are to use the character definition for a single letter per line to fit into the 24 X 40 Wycove Forth format.

For those of you who would like to use Forth but do not have an E/A cartridge, we have the XB public domain "freeware" program available. As it was delivered, it still had some of the errors mentioned by Tom Freeman in it and the EDITOR screen didn't have an auto-repeat function. These shortcomings have been corrected and the system has been re-configured to access DSK2 for screens numbered 90-179. There are also some 30 screens available for the system which included sound generation and some auxiliary words as well as some disk copy utilities.

If anyone is interested, they can contact me for further information. Without any further digression, here is the lowercase alphabet screen (it is also added as a menu option in the XB-Forth system).

SCREEN #89

```

0 ( LOWERCASE ) 33 CLOAD VMBW BASE->R HEX 0 VARIABLE LOWERCASE
1 0070 , 0838 , 4874 , 0040 , 4078 , 4444 , 4478 , ( a&b )
2 0000 , 0038 , 4440 , 4438 , 0004 , 043C , 4444 , 443C , ( c&d )
3 0000 , 0038 , 447C , 403C , 0018 , 2420 , 7020 , 2020 , ( e&f )
4 0000 , 0438 , 4438 , 047C , 0040 , 4078 , 4444 , 4444 , ( g&h )
5 0010 , 0030 , 1010 , 1038 , 0008 , 0018 , 0808 , 4830 , ( i&j )
6 0040 , 4048 , 5070 , 4844 , 0030 , 1010 , 1010 , 1038 , ( k&l )
7 0000 , 0078 , 5454 , 5454 , 0000 , 0058 , 2424 , 2424 , ( m&n )
8 0000 , 0038 , 4444 , 4438 , 0000 , 0078 , 4478 , 4040 , ( o&p )
9 0000 , 0038 , 4454 , 4834 , 0000 , 0058 , 6440 , 4040 , ( q&r )
10 0000 , 003C , 4038 , 0470 , 0010 , 3810 , 1010 , 1408 , ( s&t )
11 0000 , 0048 , 4848 , 4824 , 0000 , 0040 , 4428 , 2810 , ( u&v )
12 0000 , 0044 , 5454 , 5428 , 0000 , 0040 , 2810 , 2844 , ( w&x )
13 0000 , 0044 , 2418 , 1060 , 0000 , 007C , 0810 , 207C , ( y&z )
14 LOWERCASE B0B D0 VMBW ( Write to VDP char def table )
15 FORGET LOWERCASE R->BASE

```

R->BASE

SYMMETRICAL REDEFINED CHARACTERS
by Jim Peterson

This tutorial will help teach you how to create random symmetrical redefined characters. I doubt that I'm the first one who ever thought of this, but I've never seen it in anyone else's programs and I don't think it can be done in BASIC on any computer other than the TI.

In its basic form it goes like this:

```

100 DIM A$(16)
110 DATA 00,18,24,3C,42,5A,66 ,7E,81,99,A5,BD,C3,DB,E7,FF
120 FOR J=1 TO 16

```

```

130 READ A$(J)
140 NEXT J
150 FOR L=1 TO 4
160 RANDOMIZE
170 X=INT(16*RND+1)
180 B%=B%&A$(X)
190 C%=A$(X)&C%
200 NEXT
210 CALL CHAR(65,B%&C%)

```

Now, no one should ever use a routine without understanding it, because you won't be able to debug it and you won't be able to modify it. So, let's go through this. If you take a good look at the chart on page 109 of your "BEGINNER'S BASIC", or page II-77 of the "USERS REFERENCE GUIDE", you will see that those pairs of hexadecimal numbers in line 110 represent rows of bits which are mirror images of each other. Therefore, if we assemble a character from these pairs, it will have left-right symmetry. So, lines 100-140 read these pairs into an array. Then, lines 120-200 go through a loop four (4) times, each time picking one of these pairs at random, by randomly picking a subscript number between 1 and 16. The top half of the hex code of our redefined character is built up by adding these pairs to the end of string B%, which starts out as a blank. For instance, if on the four (4) loops the random values generated for X are 1, 2, 3 and 4, the pairs selected are 00, 18, 24 and 3C, and B% is successively built up as 00, 0018, 001824, and finally 0018243C. At the same time, C% is built up with the same pairs in reverse order, as 00, 1800, 241800, 3C241800. Finally line 210 redefines ASCII character 65 as being string B%&C%, which is "0018243C3C241800", and which is symmetrical top-to-bottom as well as left-to-right.

Now that you understand how it works, let's program it a bit more efficiently.

```

100 FOR I=1 TO 4
110 RANDOMIZE
120 X%=SEB%1*0018243C425A667EB199 A5BDC3DBE7FF",INT(16*RND+1)*2-1,2)
130 B%=B%&X%
140 C%=X%&C%
150 NEXT
160 CALL CHAR(65,B%&C%)

```

You can cram that into one line of Extended Basic! So, what's it good for? Well, let's add:

```

90 FOR CH=40 TO 152 STEP 8
change 160 to CALL CHAR(CH,B%&C%)
170 B%=""
180 C%=""
190 NEXT CH

```

Now we've redefined the first character of sets 2 through 16. Don't forget lines 170 and 180. Since B% and C% are formed by adding onto themselves, they must be cancelled out before we start over or they will just keep on adding onto themselves. Next, let's give each character set a foreground color and a different background color.

```

200 FOR SET=2 TO 16
210 X=INT(15*RND+2)
220 Y=INT(15*RND+2)
230 IF Y=X THEN 220
240 CALL COLOR(SET,X,Y)
250 NEXT SET

```

Now for the fun...

```

80 CALL CLEAR
260 CALL SCREEN(5)
270 CALL HCHAR(INT(24*RND+1), INT(32*RND+1),INT(15*RND+1)*8 +32,INT(10*RND+1))

```

```
280 CALL VCHAR(INT(24*RND+1), INT(32*RND+1), INT(15*RND+1)*8 +32, INT(10*RND+1))
290 IF INT(10*RND)<>0 THEN 270
300 CALL CLEAR
310 GOTO 270
```

Or if you're in Extended Basic, let's change:

```
90 FOR CH=40 TO 136 STEP 4
155 SP=SP+1
160 CALL CHAR(CH, RPT$(B*%C$, 4))
165 CALL SPRITE($SP, CH, INT(15*RND+2), 1, 1, INT(10*RND+2)-INT(10*RND+2), INT(10*RND+2)-INT(10*RND+2))
85 CALL SCREEN(5)
200 FOR D=1 TO 100
210 NEXT D
220 CALL MAGNIFY(INT(4*RND+1))
230 GOTO 200
```

and delete 240-310.

(To be continued next month).

SOFTWARE NEWS

by Herman Geschwind

FUNLWRITER V3.0: When I first saw Bob Carmany demonstrate this software at our last meeting, my first reaction was "How hum another Extended Basic loader for TI-Writer". After the Tom Knight version, the Massachusetts version and the Italian version, now we have one more from Australia.

What quickly changed my mind, though, was when Bob showed the implementation of Option 3: Utility with such goodies as Editor/Assembler, DM1000, TI Forth, etc. This perked my interest sufficiently to get a copy from Bob and take it apart to see what makes it tick. The upshot of an evening's worth of work is that I now have not only TI Writer, but also Editor/Assembler, Disk Manager 1000 V2.3, FastTerm V1.15, Navarone Disk Fixer, TI-Forth Loader and a general purpose loader installed as menu options under FUNLWRITER.

The heart of FUNLWRITER is an "environment" assembly language utility which bridges the gap between Extended Basic and just about any condition under which an assembly program can run. Except for the fact that FUNLWRITER will not copy cartridges, it is truly the poor man's GRAM CRACKER by making it possible to have a wide variety of software available on one disk at the press of a menu key!

If you do not have the E/A cartridge and in the past you had to pass up the opportunity to key in and assemble assembler language routines because XB would not run the E/A, no more, FUNLWRITER makes it possible. The key to installing additional software as a menu selection is a very short XB Load program which passes parameters to the main interface program. The program is very flexible and the main limitation is disk space (with my selection I managed to fill up all but two sectors of a 5SSD diskette!). Fortunately there still is the option to run a any program even though it is not listed on the menu. The options here are not only to load and run assembler programs of the memory image (Program File) but also DIS/FIX 80 (Load and Run) type programs!

All in all, FUNLWRITER represents a valuable key to a wide variety of assembler routines and programs for those of us that only have the Extended Basic cartridge and best of all it is FREE.

A REBUTTAL ON THE EXPLORER ISSUE

by Craig Miller

Under normal circumstances we would not have written the follow rebuttal. However, we have been unjustly accused of stealing the name EXPLORER from Tex-Comp in their recent letter writing campaign. We also feel that the article in MicroPendium did not cover the whole story. So, we would like to present the "TRUE FACTS" so you can form your own opinion.

FACT - In 85' we attended the June LA 99'ers UG Meeting and showed a version of EXPLORER. Jerry (Gerald) Price, Tex-Comp also attended the same meeting. At the end of the demo Gerald commented to me that our "EXPLORER was the best piece of software he had ever seen for the 4A." PERIOD. NO comment was ever made as to the supposed trademark! Why not, if it was true?

FACT - Right AFTER we released EXPLORER, we received the following letter. Why was it sent AFTER we released EXPLORER?

"As you are aware, I recently appeared as a guest speaker at the South Bay User's Group and you were on the same program demonstrating a new program you plan to market shortly which you referred to as EXPLORER.

While I was impressed with the programming effort behind your new product, I am disturbed over your choice of a name for same inasmuch as Tex-Comp has been marketing a disk editor program since late last year under the trademark "The Explorer". While it has not been one of our major products as utility programs have limited appeal, we are concerned that your use of such a similar term will cause confusion in the marketplace and destroy the value and distinctiveness of our mark. Please understand that I am not accusing you of attempting to trade on our mark and that your adaptation of same was in anything but good faith. We do however request that you use another term as your mark to avoid potential confusion and infringement of our common law rights.

Upon receiving your written confirmation that you will be using a different term as the mark or designation for your forthcoming program, we will consider the matter closed. If you want to discuss any aspect of this matter with me personally feel free to call me at (818) 781-6029 daily between 9:30 AM and 4:00 PM.

Thank you for your anticipated cooperation in resolving this matter. Very Truly Yours Gerald L. Price"

FACT - Enclosed with the letter was a copy of his APPLICATION for Trademark, not a completed and accepted Trademark registration but just an APPLICATION. We have yet to see an actual Trademark Registration that has been approved by the State! The APPLICATION was BACK DATED to Dec 16 1984. Upon receipt of the letter we called a number of users and dealers and asked them about this. THEY HAD NEVER HEARD OF THIS SUPPOSED PROGRAM!!

FACT - A customer of ours has a copy of "DISK EDITOR" that was purchased in late JAN 85' and it is called DISK EDITOR (not "The Explorer") as Gerald states. Once again, if this was true why is Gerald marketing the program under two different names? What made him change the name AFTER his program had been released? Was it our demo? According to the copy our friend has, Gerald's disk editor was Copyrighted in 84' as DISK EDITOR by Starsoft!

FACT If this supposed Tex-Comp program was being marketed by Tex-Comp as "The Explorer" since Dec 16 1984, why wasn't it mentioned, announced or advertised until the SEPTEMBER 85 issue of Micropendium. This is LONG AFTER our demo and release. And why does the third paragraph in Tex-Comp's ads for "The Explorer" specifically reference "The Disk Editor" instead of the supposed trademarked name?

FACT - The "copy" of the manual that Gerald sent us along with his letter is FULL OF references to "Disk Editor" and "The Disk Editor". Example excerpt: "insert the Disk Editor disk into drive 1, and invoke Extended BASIC by selecting "2" from the master selection list. The Disk Editor will then automatically load and execute. The Disk Editor may also be invoked from Extended Basic by typing: RUN "DSK1.EDITOR""

Why is the load file name "DSK1.EDITOR" not "DSK1.EXPLORER" if "The Explorer" was truly the trademarked name?

In a recent letter that Gerald sent to a number of Users Groups he states: "I first learned learned of Miller planning to call a forthcoming program "The Explorer" in mid-summer of 1985 at a local users group meeting and after promptly verifying that Miller had not sold or introduced his program I put him on notice so he could change his proposed name before introduction and avoid the possibility of any conflict or confusion."

WHY didn't he "promptly" tell me at the meeting? Why did he wait ALMOST 1 MONTH until HE KNEW I HAD PRINTED THE MANUALS AND LABELS AND RELEASED EXPLORER? He knew at the meeting that I had not released the program yet because I stated that the manuals were going to press NEXT WEEK at the end of the demo! What took 1 month to verify that wasn't VERIFIED at the meeting? The program had been introduced at the meeting, it had also been talked about on our CO here on Compuserve in March of 85'. There were rumors floating all around about EXPLORER long before. If Gerald is so attuned to the rumors why did he wait? Why didn't he "promptly" tell me at the meeting about this SUPPOSED trademark, before everything was printed and the program was released, if he TRULY has "no desire to injure" us "financially" and if he TRULY wanted to "avoid the possibility of any

conflict or confusion."???

The TRUE facts have now been presented, please form your own opinion as to who is trading on whose mark! The 4A community does not need this kind of dribble!

If anyone would like copies of the above mentioned documents we will be more than happy to send them to you in the hopes that you will reproduce them for ALL to see the "TRUE FACTS". We have NOTHING TO HIDE and NOTHING TO FEAR!!

Thank You for allowing me the opportunity to present the facts.

Craig Miller

(Editor's note: While we cannot be judge and jury in this case in a court of law, Bob in his TI Shopper column previously had commented on some strange business practices of TEX-COMP. MicroPendium presented TEX-COMP's arguments in the above case to a wide audience. Craig Miller was not given that opportunity..... What the TI community now needs more than ever is good hardware and good software and support at reasonable prices. What we don't need is capers such as the one above. With a shrinking market and paperthin profits it would seem that the last thing that our suppliers need is to make the lawyers rich, needlessly.)

RANDOM NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

An editorial

During our last meeting there was quite a lively discussion on the subject how to make our group more effective, better known and more attractive to new members.

One suggestion that was offered and approved by the group was to place an ad in the classified section - computers - , telling who we are and what we have to offer. The second suggestion was to have a "Fair" in one of the shopping malls in Greensboro (Four Seasons, Carolina Circle Mall, or Forum IV) on a Saturday. The idea is to set up several systems to demonstrate such varied capabilities as games, speech, music, wordprocessing, spreadsheets, communications, etc.

The first idea is very good and relatively easy to accomplish---all that it is going to take is money and not even too much at that for a classified that will run for a week or so.

The second suggestion is much more ambitious and will require the ACTIVE participation of just about everybody in the group. Let us face it, it is going to require the use of equipment, YOUR EQUIPMENT, software, YOUR TIME and a lot of HARD work to make it a success.

Carl is going to make the initial contact with the Merchant's Association and if he is successful it will be up to us, all of us, to make this Fair THE drawing card for our organization.

Our group has a lot going for itself, our library of good software is second to not many other groups in the country, we have a lot of expertise in many areas of TI computing and a willingness to help one and all to make the TI computing hobby more productive and more enjoyable.

Unless we tell it (or better yet, show it) to the world, the world will not know of us!