THE MSP 99 NEWSLETTER

ANNUAL ELECTIONS

January's meeting is a very important one for all MSP 99 members to attend, for election of officers for our second year will be held. Be sure to come to the meeting so you can cast your ballot.

The selections of the Nominating Committee and those nominated from the floor at the December meeting are listed below.

	NOMINATING COMMITTEE	Floor Nomination
Pres.	Diane Kavanaugh	Bob DeMars
V.Pres.	Bill Lovegren	Kerm Steffenhagen
Sec.	Dean Sorensen	
Treas.	Mike Larson	Dick Irwin

Dean Sorensen is the current secretary of MSP 99, and Bill Lovegren is the current treasurer. For the past year, Diane Kavanaugh served as chairman of the Education Committee, Mike Larson as chairman of the Program Committee, and Dick Irwin as chairman of the Software Committee.

Be sure to attend the Jan. 18 meeting held at 7 p.m. at the Brown Institute Computer Building, 27th Avenue & East Lake Street, Minneapolis. If you are unable to attend and wish to vote, fill out and mail the proxy ballot immediately.

SPECIAL INTEREST SECTIONS

Two new special interest sections are in the process of being formed. The groups plan to hold their own meetings to discuss specialized and more technical information than is dealt with at the regular MSP 99 meetings. They may also decide to elect their own officers and charge an additional membership fee.

A Business, Management, and Professional Section is being organized by Dick Irwin (926-9401) and Dick Clementson (926-8083). A Computer-Assisted Investment Section is being started by Dean Sorensen (425-7154). Call them if you're interested in joining either group.

Anyone interested in organizing another kind of special interest group should make a written request to the MSP 99 board. Mail your requests to: MSP 99 Users Group, P.O. Box 12351, St. Paul, MN 55112.

HELP!!!!!

We need someone who is familiar with the procedure of applying for nonprofit status for our group. We also could use the help of someone who knows postal regulations and other such money savers. If you have any experience with either of these, call Jim Kavanaugh, 644-5940.

HIDDEN STATEMENTS IN EXTENDED BASIC

The September issue of the International 99/4 Users-Group Newsletter had an article on some undocumented statements that can be found in Extended Basic with use of the control (CTRL) key.

To experiment with this, use line numbers for your program. The symbol @ will be used to show you hold the control key down while typing the next letter, number, or symbol. For example, type:
```
100 @U  (enter)
```
On your screen, the above line will look blank. Now, type LIST. What the line will now look like is:
```
100 RANDOMIZE
```

TI told the International Users-Group they don't recommend using this system for programming, but the author said he tried it and it worked well. In order to use in programming, you must precede each statement with an exclamation mark (!) as if it's a REM statement. Later you must remove the ! characters.

Here's a sample program to try:
```
100 !@A=1@1l00  (enter)
110 !@:A          (enter)
120 !@VA          (enter)
```
Now type LIST and you'll have:
```
100 FOR A=1 TO 100
110 PRINT A
120 NEXT A
```

Key to hidden control key statements in Extended Basic:

1 TO	E GO	G GOSUB
2 STEP	R INPUT	H RETURN
3 ,	T RESTORE	J DIM
4 ;	Y DELETE	K END
5 :	U RAMDONIZE	L FOR
6)	I DEF	: PRINT
7 (	O UNBREAK	K REM
8 OPTION	P TRACE	X STOP
9 OPEN	/ AND	C !
0 THEN	A ELSE	V NEXT
= CALL	S DATA	B ::
Q UNTRACE	D IF	N BREAK
W READ	F GOTO	M LET
		> ON

```
+++ ++ ++ +++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++
+++ ++ ++ +++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++
```

JANUARY 18

ELECTION OF OFFICERS -- *This is the annual meeting of the MSP 99 at which we'll be selecting our leadership for the coming year.*

DISK MEDIA -- *Mr. Tom Gabrik of Control Data Corporation will be presenting a program on disks.*

The presentation will include a film and information on caring for your disks.

FEBRUARY 15

DATA COMMUNICATIONS -- *This program will include information on the use of your 99/4A to access data bases and services like The Source (including TEXNET); also the use of a modem for communicating across town or country.*

Information utilities provide many varied services, including airline schedules, stock quotes, electronic mail and many more.

NOTE: Due to the large increase in membership in recent months, the Program Committee would appreciate your ideas and suggestions for future programs and activities. Please write to: MSP 99 Users Group, P.O. Box 12351, St. Paul, MN 55112, ATT. PROGRAM COMMITTEE.

```
+++ ++ ++ +++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++
+++ ++ ++ +++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++ ++
```

TECHNICAL DATA MANUAL AVAILABLE

A Technical Data Manual for the TI-99/4A is now available. It includes sections on: General Description of TI-99/4A Home Computer, I/O Pin Description, Memory Allocation, CRU Allocation, Interrupt Handling, Electrical Characteristics, and a Glossary. Illustrations included are: TI-99/4A System Block Diagram, I/O Read Timing, I/O Write Timing, CRU Timing, Connector Pin Identification Diagram, TI-99/4A Logic Board Component Location Diagram, and TI-99/4A Schematic Diagram.

To get a copy of the Technical Data Manual, send $15 plus applicable sales tax, and $2 postage and handling to: Texas Instruments Incorporated, Dealer Parts Department, P.O. Box 53, M/S 5833, Lubbock, Texas 79408.

PROXY BALLOT

If you can't be at the Jan. 18 meeting to vote for officers, you may use this proxy ballot to cast your vote. Circle the candidates of your choice for each office:

	NOMINATING COMMITTEE	Floor Nomination
Pres.	Diane Kavanaugh	Bob DeMars
V.Pres.	Bill Lovegren	Kerm Steffenhagen
Sec.	Dean Sorensen	
Treas.	Mike Larson	Dick Irwin

Enter your member # _____
(top, left-hand number on your mailing label of this issue)

Mail ballot immediately to:
Jim Kavanaugh, 1368 Idaho W.,
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108.

99/4 NEWSLETTERS
by Marilyn McPartlin

I belong to the International 99/4 Users-Group in Oklahoma. This group has a large software exchange catalog with prices similar to those of our own software committee. The current catalog, which is updated regularly, is almost 50 pages long. Available programs include games, graphics and demos, music, educational, business and professional, engineering, home ideas, miscellaneous, and a few LOGO procedures and patterns.

The group also sends members a newsletter about every other month. The newsletter has been expanding and has been 10 pages long the last few issues. The latest issue included information about printers and graftrax, and reviews of some new games and an assembly language guide, among other things.

In addition, this group offers discount prices of TI and third party hardware and software and accessories.

Membership cost $12 when I joined. Write for current information to International 99/4 Users-Group, P.O. Box 67, Bethany, OK 73008.

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I'm sure there are a lot of good newsletters (besides ours) that members could subscribe to. If you receive any you like, please review them for our newsletter. Include cost of membership and the organization address. Send to Marilyn McPartlin or give it to me at the next meeting.

THE TAPE EXPERIENCE
by Glenn Young

I first became interested in computers 2 years ago when our 2 children were starting math and English. I chose the TI 99/4 because I felt I got the most for my money. I'm not an expert programmer or anything else with computers; I am interested in electronics and have an advanced ham radio license.

When I first used the unit, my Panasonic model RQ2107A worked well, although it does not have an on-off switch for the computer or a counter. After a month of success, I could no longer get anything to load. I then bought a Realistic CTR37, which also worked for only a short time. Tape cleaning and demagnetizing tape and a tool for demagnetizing the heads helped somewhat but were not the answer. A Sears recorder met with the same problems.

I felt it was in the amplifier or the filters that let the right frequency through. I noticed that when I loaded first it would work, but after playing games it would not load, which seemed like a heat problem. About the same time, the computer changed tuning--it no longer came on channel 3 but I could get it on 4. I exchanged the computer in Edina and returned to using my original Panasonic recorder and have been happy ever since. The new unit seems to do everything we ask of it. Our family is totally sold on the 99/4. If anyone is having a problem I'd like to help. I can be reached at 703 Park Ave., Litchfield, MN 55355. Home phone is (612) 693-8571.

SIZE COMMAND IN TI BASIC
(from Houston Users Group)

TI Basic does not have a size command, but you can approximate it this way. Enter your program, but don't use Lines 1 and 2. Add these lines to the program:

```
1 A=A+B
2 GOSUB 1
```

Then RUN the program. After a few seconds, the program stops and the message "MEMORY FULL IN 1" is displayed. Type the following command: PRINT 14,800-A;"BYTES USED":A;"BYTES REMAINING". When you press enter, the approximate size will be displayed. Be sure to delete Lines 1 & 2 before running your program.

FOR THE REST OF US BEGINNERS....
by Wayne Page

One of the best suggestions I've heard for those of us learning Basic is "experiment." You'll find there are as many ways of getting your computer to do a particular task as there are people interested in seeing the results--everyone could and probably would do it differently.

With that in mind I'll talk a little about what I like to do best. This issue's article will describe some ways to jazz up your program title screen (headers).

```
100 CALL CLEAR
200 PRINT TAB(10);"THE HEADER"
    :::::::::::::"WMP 12/21/82"
300 FOR DELAY=1 TO 1000
310 NEXT DELAY
```

This is an example of a very simple, straight forward header. It has all the primary information needed. Line 200 holds the title of the game or program, followed by 12 colons (to center the title vertically). I also include, after the colons, my initials and the date the program was written. Lines 300 and 310 give a time delay to allow enough time to read the screen before the game or program starts. Now add different background color combinations:

```
300 FOR SCRN=3 TO 16
310 CALL SCREEN(SCRN)
320 FOR DELAY=1 TO 100
330 NEXT DELAY
340 NEXT SCRN
```

To add a little sparkle to your headers, try this program:

```
100 RANDOMIZE
110 CALL CLEAR
120 CALL SCREEN(2)
130 FOR X=1 TO 12
140 CALL COLOR (X,15,1)
150 NEXT X
160 PRINT TAB(10);"MY PROGRAM"
    :::::::::::::"WMP 12/21/82"
170 FOR STARS=1 TO 100
180 ROW=INT(RND*24)+1
190 COL=INT(RND*32)+1
200 IF ROW<>11 THEN 240
210 IF COL<10 THEN 270
220 IF COL>20 THEN 270
230 GOTO 180
240 IF ROW<>23 THEN 270
250 IF COL>14 THEN 270
```

```
260 GOTO 180
270 CALL HCHAR(ROW,COL,42)
280 NEXT STARS
```

Here's one more to try...a little more complicated, but worth it for that special program:

```
100 CALL CLEAR
110 CALL SCREEN(8)
120 CALL COLOR(13,1,1)
130 CALL COLOR(14,1,1)
140 CALL COLOR(15,1,1)
150 PRINT TAB(10);"MY PROGRAM"
    :::::::::::::"WMP 12/21/82"
160 A$="3C7EFFFFFFFF7E3C"
170 CALL CHAR(128,A$)
180 CALL CHAR(136,A$)
190 CALL CHAR(144,A$)
200 CALL HCHAR(1,2,128,30)
210 CALL HCHAR(24,2,128,30)
220 CALL VCHAR(1,2,128,24)
230 CALL VCHAR(1,31,128,24)
240 FOR X=2 TO 31 STEP 3
250 CALL HCHAR(1,X,136)
260 CALL HCHAR(1,X+1,144)
270 CALL HCHAR(24,X,136)
280 CALL HCHAR(24,X+1,144)
290 NEXT X
300 FOR X=1 TO 24 STEP 3
310 CALL VCHAR(X,2,136)
320 CALL VCHAR(X+1,2,144)
330 CALL VCHAR(X,31,136)
340 CALL VCHAR(X+1,31,144)
350 NEXT X
360 FOR FLASH=1 TO 24
370 CALL COLOR(13,15,1)
380 CALL COLOR(14,5,1)
390 CALL COLOR(15,6,1)
400 FOR DELAY=1 TO 10
410 NEXT DELAY
420 CALL COLOR(13,5,1)
430 CALL COLOR(14,6,1)
440 CALL COLOR(15,15,1)
450 FOR DELAY=1 TO 10
460 NEXT DELAY
470 CALL COLOR(13,6,1)
480 CALL COLOR(14,15,1)
490 CALL COLOR(15,5,1)
500 FOR DELAY=1 TO 10
510 NEXT DELAY
520 NEXT FLASH
```

Try some of these, adapt them, use them as building blocks for headers of your own. If you have some interesting things you've done in TI Basic that you'd share with "The Rest of Us Beginners," write them up with a little article and share it in our newsletter. There's much we can learn from each other.

GATHERING AND ANALYZING INFORMATION
by Dean Sorensen, MSP 99 Secretary

When I bought my computer about three years ago, I did so for two reasons. First, I wanted to become computer literate, and second, I was convinced that one could save and make money by having a computer. How and why, you might ask.

Basically, most of us can make intelligent decisions if we have good information on which to base our decisions. Unfortunately, a lot of us also happen to be a little lazy when it comes to gathering information and analyzing things. The computer, with appropriate software, makes the process of gathering and putting information together easy and, for me at least, fun.

You can start out with a program as simple as a loan amortization program. If you're considering financing a major purchase the use of such a program could either save you hundreds of dollars by comparing financing costs or convince you to make do with what you have.

Since the computer can be used to gather information (keyboard/modem), do recordkeeping (cassette/disk), or analyze or compare data, it is ideally suited for investment analysis. This is the area of most interest to me.

Obviously, the software is important when you start using your computer to help you make decisions about your money. However, there is not much software available for purchase. That's too bad--right? Not necessarily. Personally, I believe that programs for the investment area have to be tailored to the individual user's needs and philosophy of investing. After all, if you're going to make decisions involving thousands of dollars, wouldn't you like to understand how the computer arrives at the answers it gives?

My solution to the software problem has been to take ideas from other programs, books, or magazines, as well as my own ideas, and then to blend them together to get output I want. Don't get scared off if this sounds too difficult, at least not yet. The rewards may well be worth the effort you put into it. There are a few good books available on the use of personal computers for investment work.

If you're interested in getting started I would recommend two books. The first, *Basic Programs for Home Financial Management* by W.B. Goldsmith Jr. (Prentice-Hall 1981), is well written and easy to understand. It has listings of over thirty programs covering checking, loans, decision making, stock and bond analysis, etc. Several of the programs are designed around the same data file so that they can be used as a system. At the end of the book a file management program is included to control all the programs as a complete financial management system. The second book, *Guide to Computer-Assisted Investment Analysis* by W.B. Riley Jr. and A.H. Montgomery Jr. (McGraw-Hill 1982) deals with stock, bond, option, and portfolio analysis. This is a college-level companion text for courses in investment analysis. It does offer listings of twenty-five BASIC language programs.

ON-GOTO AND ON-GOSUB CORRECTIONS

(from TI User's Newsletter)

If you type ON-GOTO or ON-GOSUB statements with blanks between the numbers, the statements may not execute properly even though they look correct when listed. The solution is to edit the line, retype the first character, and press enter. This will cause the line to be saved correctly.

For example:
    100 INPUT N
    110 ON N GOTO 100,100 ,100

The program will work with input of 1 or 2, but will fail with input 3. The line will show in a listing as:

    110 ON N GOTO 100,100,100

The statement appears correct, but it will not execute properly.

JOYSTICKS THAT ARE A JOY
by Dick & Carla Clementson

Ok, so you have grown tired of the Invaders and Car Wars modules. You've tried every combination of keyboard entry and TI joysticks. Perhaps, you've grown so weary that the modules are gathering dust on a shelf somewhere. Well, there is hope to revive your interest in these old game modules.

One of the things we have seen in magazines are adapters that allow you to use different brands of joysticks on the TI Home Computer. Some MSP 99 members have been using the ATARI™ joysticks on the 99. These have generally proved successful.

The DENALI™ adapter is a little box that plugs into the joystick jack on the side of the 99 console. The adapter is fitted with two jacks so you can plug in the particular joysticks you have chosen. One of the items we noted with this adapter was that the cords exit from the box and drape over your keyboard.

We had heard about some joysticks made in Niles, Illinois. The Chicago Users Group had a demonstration of the units earlier this year, so we knew they would be compatible.

Apparently many people decided to buy the WICO™ joysticks because the supply in the MSP area was quickly depleted. We made numerous searches for the WICO™ adapter for the TI. It was the day before Christmas and there to my wondering eyes appeared the adapter but no joysticks. The price was reasonable by comparison with the others "available" by mail.

The WICO Command Control™ is a nice little black box. It has a cord and plug that goes directly into the jack on the side of the console. The box is fitted with two jacks so you can attach two WICO™ joysticks if the budget will permit. Incidentally most of the latest games seem to be for only one player anyway.

WICO makes three different types of joysticks. We didnot see any RED-BALL™ joysticks in this area. Most were the Model 15-9714 Joystick with the red "bat-type" handle. There is another model which has a heavier base called the "deluxe" but *this* was not seen in this area either. So as is often the case "decisions" are made by default-availability.

One feature we like is the option of using a "fire-button" either on the stick or on the base. There is a slide switch which provides a choice of either. The handle is very nice with a comfortable feel. The base is large enough so you can sit the unit on a table and it is quite stable. The base is perhaps too large to hold in your palm as you would with some other units. The handle appears to be a bright red plastic with a metal tube insert. WICO™ is a large designer and manufacturer of control devices for commercial arcade games so they should know how to make the joystick durable.

The accurate response and control makes those "old" modules a new and enjoyable experience. Perhaps, a necessity for full enjoyment of game modules like TI's PARSEC™.

You will find that a single WICO™ joystick will cost you more than the dual TI joysticks. We also have the "old" TI Command Controls with the little ball handle that we can use on "slower" games. Still work after a year of "service".

WICO makes things rather nice. The unit has a five foot cord and optionally you can purchase either a six or twelve foot extension cord if you want to get away from the TV. It would be nice if you had projection TV setup.

Another interesting WICO product is the TRACKBALL™. It has a phenolic ball that provides 360 degree movement in infinite positions. It can also be used to vary the speed of an on-screen object. Model 72-4560 is specifically designed for the Texas Instruments System and includes an AC power supply. What new generation of games would become possible with this hardware is exciting to imagine as it would take us beyond the eight directions of movement which the now ordinary joystick provides.

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`···· ATTENTION ····`

- Want to purchase TI modules at 20% off? or
- Want to distribute software for all home computers? or
- Want to sign up others, & participate in generous multi-level commissions?
- For $20 a year you can do any or all of the above.

JOIN NOVATRONICS

- Do you write software or know of others who do? Novatronics is looking for you! Also, contest for teen authors through grade 12.

JOIN NOVATRONICS

- For more information call:
  BOB McLANE   926-9432

MSP 99 USERS GROUP
P.O. BOX 12351
SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA 55112

A HOME COMPUTER INTEREST GROUP