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* by JACK SUGHRUE, Box 459, East Douglas, MA 01516 *
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MICKEY REVISITED

Last time in NEWAGE I spent lots of time talking about Mickey Schmitt's two books (THE ADVENTURE REFERENCE GUIDE, \$9.95 + \$2 S+H, from Asgard, Box 10306, Rockville, MD, 20848, and GETTING THE MOST FROM YOUR CASSETTE SYSTEM, \$9.95 + \$2.50 S+H, from the author - Mickey Schmitt, 196 Broadway Avenue, Lower Burrell, PA, 15068). In the interim, I've also written a lengthier article about the new and wonderful ways to use cassettes based upon Mickey's cassette book which appeared in REFLECTIONS. There are a couple of disks available for user groups (or individuals) who have cassettes still active. These two different chock-full disks include all the items referred to by Mickey and many others not yet mentioned by her and can be gotten for a \$3 shipping/handling fee each by asking for "Cassette Master Disk" from M.U.N.C.H., 560 Lincoln Street, P.O. Box 7193, Worcester, MA, 01605-7193; and "TI PD 1205.1 Cassette Utilities" from Tigercub, 156 Collingwood Avenue, Columbus, OH, 43213. Add an extra \$1 to Tigercub's disk request and ask for Jim Peterson's PD Catalog, the largest collection of the best of the least expensive treasures in the TI World.

If your user group hasn't yet purchased Mickey's cassette book and used it as a fund-raiser, then your group is missing a great opportunity to make some green.

Some other things have happened since I wrote that original article. Mickey has formed a new - NEW! - company of all TI stuff.

Doesn't that have a nice ring to it? A new TI company. The MS stands for the two partners: Mickey Schmitt and Mike Sealy. They can be reached at MS EXPRESS SOFTWARE, P.O. Box 498, Richmond, OH 43944. This dynamic duo made their professional debut at the Chicago Fair in November and released a pile of stuff:

ADVENTURE HINTS (Series I) by Lynn Gardner, which is unique in help concepts for adventurers. Each hint loads into the console in the same way the Adventure Module disks load. In addition to loading as standalone help, these hints can also be loaded into the specific programs and called up from a running program! These disks include built-in maps AND hardcopy maps. Nice feature. This first series includes some of the adventures written by Mickey and Lynn: OLIVER'S TWIST, RATTLESNAKE BEND, ZOOM FLUME. The same kind of two word (noun/verb) commands are used to ask for help, so there's no need to use all kinds of colored cellophane papers, special invisible ink pens, plastic decoding devices, whatever. Requires Adventure Module or interpreter.

GALACTIC EMPERORS by Eric Kepes, an Extended BASIC, multi-player, strategic simulation program. You and one, two, or three others are each trying to thwart opponents by accessing control to all the planets in the galaxy. Shades of the Darth Vader! There are decisions you and your opponents make beforehand (such as the number of planets) before the computer generates (new each time) the playing grid. Although many random events occur during the game play, the game is a mentally

challenging activity that can be saved to continue play at a future date.

(Both of the above are \$9.95 + \$1 S+H and require the standard minimum configuration of one SSSD drive and 32K.)

Finally from MS EXPRESS, there are SLIDING BLOCK PUZZLES (Series I) and SLIDING BLOCK SOLUTIONS (Series I) each \$7.95 + \$1 S+H and both by Norman Rokke, the same person who brought you the extraordinary Fairware graphic/text program "1000 WORDS," one of the very best of its kind ever.

In this case, Norman has transcended the "normal" sliding block puzzles with which we are so familiar. In the late 1800's Sam Loyd, America's most ingenious puzzle maker at the turn of the century, created the 14-15 sliding block puzzle. There are lots of these out for the TI. The best I've seen is Chris Bobbitt's Public Domain version of many years ago and in all group libraries.

These puzzles, however, are considerably more challenging than the originals. There are three on this disk and all can be saved in mid-game, so one doesn't have to begin all over again.

The first consists of nine different-colored tiles and supposedly can be solved in 59 moves. Puzzle #2 is made up of 10 blocks and could be completed in 81 moves. The hardest (#3, of course) has 11 tiles to shift and can be solved in 90 moves. A colored monitor or TV to go with your XB, 32K, and minimum disk drive system are required.

You need the these puzzles before you get the solutions' disk, which provides the help you need for each puzzle in little pieces so as not to ruin the game for you. Very user-friendly, like all things Norman does. And, of course, ingenuity by him is taken for granted.

Now that we have a new company supporting TIers, let's hope the TI Community supports the new company. Your support will encourage even more authors to stay with and write for the 99.

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I continue to get letters from cribbage buffs all over the TI World asking about a program I reviewed last year. The program is written by Gene Hitz. He even rewrote it after I gleefully stated how I found a way to cheat on the "Go". He chastised me for cheating our little 99 computer. Now, the computer catches me each time when I try. This program is called "Cutthroat Cribbage" and gives you a muggins if you count incorrectly. It's fun to play and is fast and friendly. The game can be purchased for \$7 from ARCADE ACTION, Program Innovators, 412 Glenway, Wawatosa, WI 53222. Actually, for \$10 you get a diskful of games, including a nice version of TETRIS and piles of others. If you are a cribbage player, I'd recommend this game highly. If you'd like to learn the game, ask for the longer version (though I think he sends both versions, anyway), because this will give you the option to have the computer count up any combinations to see how things are scored. Then get yourself a HOYLE's from the library and play your TI until you got the game down pat. Excellent midnight companion.

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Besides TIGERCUB's \$1 catalog of Public Domain disks (truly the BEST BUY in the TI World), everyone should send off for Asgard's newest catalog. Asgard's latest, particularly for Page Pro owners, is a mouth-watering collection of delectable delights. For game players, William Reiss's TOURNAMENT SOLITAIRE (which includes - along with KLONDIKE - PYRAMID, GOLF, COMERS, PILE-UP, CANFIELD, and CALCULATION) is terrific. But call or write for the free catalog and notice the high level of your droolability.

[If you use NEW-AGE/99 please put a on your exchange list.]

NEW/AGE SPECIAL

* by JACK SUGHRUE, Box 459, East Douglas, MA 01516 *

GOOD, BETTER, BEST!

There is only one program in the TI disk community that is (as my 5th-grade pupils would say) "totally wicked awesome rad to a gnarly degree." I agree with the sentiment, if not the mode of expression.

Nothing else in our world computer community has equalled the impact of the FUNNELWEB environment created for us by Tony McGovern and his son, Will. These two Australian geniuses (and I do not use the word lightly) put together what all of us deemed impossible for the TI.

FUNNELWEB just grew and grew. The original American release was a TI WRITER and EDITOR ASSEMBLER combo, more or less (actually more). Next version a few months later contained a bit more with lots of enhancements of what went on before. TIW, for example, does not contain a ruler or address recall or macro-key CAPS or LC. Tony put all these things in fairly early versions, all of which we take for granted in our word processing activities. The environment always loaded by either E/A or XB, thus making it ideal for supercards (again from earlier versions) or RAMs or whatever device hardwarers could devise. Then things like Disk Manager 1000 and Diskpatch were added and modified. As were loaders for c99, FORTH, etc. Each time Tony (primarily) would unravel the complexities caused by these needs and create new and better solutions than dreamed possible.

When he came up with the windowing effects for the CONFIG program, for example, which established a profound systems configuration (still able to be ported *en masse* to any newer version, I felt he had reached his peak. Boy, was I ever wrong.

FUNNELWEB is not a program. It is an environment which gives you, the user, some great computing tools in such a complete package that it becomes almost impossible to do without them after using them.

Probably 80% or more of normal (non-programmer) use of computers - especially the TI - is word processing. People need to communicate. FUNNELWEB turned TIW into a great word processor, adding so many features that should have been in the original cart/disk combo that when you go back to that combo you are appalled at its limitations. As I say, we have become spoiled by Tony and take for granted what is surely a remarkable achievement.

Much as I ♡ my TI, I know that if FUNNELWEB did not exist I would no longer be TIing. I couldn't. FWB's a structure equal to the best that any home computer has to offer its users at any price.

Let's face it. It serves as a Master DOS. What does a Disk Operating System do? Well, it lets you load up other programs, primarily, or lets you handle some disk management tasks. FWB does all that as a sideline.

With the new 4.31 FUNNELWEB the console 99 disk user has just leaped quantumly into an exciting era. The 40-column (standard) TI computer fan now has available to him or her a package heretofore only available to non-standard 80-col upgraders.

Before I go on, I'd like to say:

STOP!

The bad news is this: Will went over to the Amiga a long while ago, and his father will be following shortly. This will mean that the greatest single piece of software for the TI will no longer grow; nor will we be seeing any other pieces come from Funnelweb Farm; nor will there be any more great tutorials (particularly those on exploring XB). This is not only BAD news, it is HORRIBLE news. Not that I can blame Tony. Although close to 100% of all TI disk users use FWB and its

upgrades, an extremely small number has ever paid the author a penny - and a tinier number, still, has ever given a second contribution (though the original to present upgrade is similar to the difference between my salary and Donald Trump's). And a tinier number, still, have ever written to Tony to tell him how much they use and appreciate FUNNELWEB and all the other great things he has done for us.

Remember, this is not commercialware. Fairware authors need and deserve our support. Fairware authors of the stature of Tony McGovern have earned massive support financially and socially. They just don't get it.

I urge every user group to "charge" a minimum \$10 copying fee to each member for this upgrade and send the entire collected sum to Tony. Send a group letter. Write him up in your newsletter. Let's let '91 be the Year of the McGovern. Even more, I urge every single reader to sit down at your first opportunity and write (probably using FUNNELWEB) a supporting letter, enclosing the largest cash (certified check, international coupon, money order) contribution you can really afford. It'll still be cheaper than anything you'd have to pay for that would be in the same league as FUNNELWEB (if such a thing exists). People couldn't wait, for example, to shell out \$60 for PRESS (sight unseen) or \$25 to \$60 for data bases. Many of our game cartridges cost at least five times what some consider a "fair" price to pay for the finest piece of software ever for the TI.

How about this for a rule of thumb? Take the most expensive piece of software you ever bought (and probably don't even use anymore) and double it. Send that as a donation. Remember what you paid in those pre-inflationary days for LOGO and MULTIPLAN and TI WRITER and DISK MANAGER II and E/A and whatever?

Well, the new FUNNELWEB has so many new features that most of those expensive cartridges and upgrade disks can be chucked in the basket.

What's your TI worth to you? What'll it be worth to you down the road with Tony McGovern gone? Decide soon about your commitment and make the investment today in your future.

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So what are a few of these outstanding features? Well, for one, there is no more Disk Manager 1000 nor Disk Patch, because the new Disk Review performs all the functions of both (and then some) from within the FWB environment, including COPYING FILE BY FILE (to eliminate fractures) WHOLE DISKS TO MULTIPLE DRIVES! So stick a disk in Drive 1 and copy to Drives 2, 3, AND 4, while you go comb your wallaby. Disks can be FORMATTed to Quad density, if you have the right controller. Any program can be RUN right out of DR, including the huge IV254s. The Quick Directory now lets you mark a file from WITHIN the FORMATTER or ASSEMBLER. And the disk editing functions are plentiful and profound.

The whole FUNNELWEB 4.31 environment is profound. You'll realize this immediately when you see BOTH central menus displayed on the screen simultaneously and you just have to move the cursor around to either RUN the program (or VIEW and/or PRINT the text file).

This is a must for everyone!

Get it from your user group today, being aware that everything worthwhile in life costs.

(If you use NEW-AGE/99 please put me on your exchange list.)

THE NEW FEATURES OF FUNNELWEB v4.31  
described by Charles Good  
Lima Ohio User Group

It's here! It's what all 40 column users have been waiting for all their 99/4A lives. Accompanying this issue of BB&P are disks with FUNNELWEB v4.31 going to all user groups on our newsletter exchange list and all paid members of the Lima User Group. Any other INDIVIDUAL or USER GROUP can obtain these files by sending disks (4 SSSD, or 2 DSSD, or 1 DSDD) and a paid return mailer to the Lima User Group at P.O. Box 647, Venedocia OH, 45895. We charge no copy fee.

I know there are many 40 column users who have not bothered to upgrade to more recent versions of Funnelweb because the enhancements added since v4.21 have largely been available only to 80 column users. Now ALL 99/4A users can have access to the full range of features available from Funnelweb, particularly Funnelweb's special utility called DISK REVIEW (DR). Funnelweb's 40 and 80 column DISK REVIEW is so neat that most users will want to configure Funnelweb so that DISK REVIEW pops up immediately upon entry to the Funnelweb environment. The new features of v4.31 make it worthwhile for all Funnelweb users to upgrade from previous Funnelweb versions, and upgrading is easy. Load your previous version's SYSDON file into Funnelweb v4.31's CONFIGURE by pressing S(ysinfo) and then L(oad). Then press BACK and I(nstall) your old SYSDON data into v4.31's LOAD and FW files. You can use your previously configured user lists (files UL and D1) unmodified with the new Funnelweb.

40 and 80 column DR now contains a complete set of disk management functions. Disks can be FORMATED (S,D, or Quad density), VALIDATED, RENAMED, and SWEEPED. Whole disks can be automatically copied, file by file, to multiple drives. You can put your master disk in drive 1, press a couple of keys, and copy all the files to DSK2, DSK3, and DSK4 while you go have a cup of coffee. You can copy a file back onto the same disk under a different name. You can also copy file by file using a single drive with prompts for inserting master and copy disks. Single drive copying is a feature not available on the 80 column version of DR. File copy uses a 46 sector buffer and proceeds faster than file copying using DSKU and a little slower than DM1000.

Individual files can be PROTECTED, UNPROTECTED, DELETED, and (if accidentally deleted) RECOVERED. If you have a MYARC ramdisk you can CALL PART and CALL EMDK from within Funnelweb's 40 or 80column DR. If you have a Horizon ramdisk with KUS 8.1 or higher you can DN and AO/AF from within DR. If you have the Australian QUEST ramdisk you can do AON and AUF from within DR.

Funnelweb's 40 column DR also includes a full feature sector editor that does everything the 80 column DR sector editor does except display the sector simultaneously in ASCII and HEX. There just isn't room on a 40 column screen for this type of display. You just move the cursor next to a file name in a disk directory and press I (for Inspect). You are then given the opportunity to examine and edit the sectors of the file or to search for a string (ASCII or Hex string with wild card option) within the file. You can also search a whole disk for a string, or examine and edit sectors by absolute disk sector number. This is a very full featured easy to use sector editor. V4.31 of Funnelweb no longer contains DISK PATCH for sector editing, because DISK REVIEW is so much better.

The new 40 or 80 column DR gives direct access to BOTH of Funnelweb's central menus displayed simultaneously on screen. Just move the cursor next to a central menu entry, press <enter> and boot the indicated program.

You can, of course, do all of the neat stuff already available in the v4.21 40 column DR. You can bring up a disk directory, move the cursor next to the name of a RUNable file, press R, and RUN the program. This can be done for ANY kind of runnable program, including XB stuff that lists as IV254. You can view ANY file on the screen by moving the cursor next to the file name and pressing V. The view buffer has been reduced to 8K in order to make room for all the additional features described in the preceding two paragraphs. Unlike the v4.21 40 column DR, when the V(iew) buffer of v4.31 is full viewing stops. You can then either examine what is in the V(iew) buffer or continue to view the rest of the file and overwrite the top of what is already in the V(iew) buffer. You may at any time print part or all of the contents of the V(iew) buffer to a printer or to a disk file.

Besides the greatly enhanced 40 column DR, v4.31 has other new features. It is now possible to bring up Quick Directory (by pressing AID, FCTN/7) and mark a file with the space bar FROM WITHIN the Formatter and Assembler. In the case of the Formatter, the newly marked file does not appear on the formatter screen until you move the cursor one space within the work file name as it is displayed on the formatter menu. This procedure is strange, but it does work and it is certainly better than being totally unable to mark files from within the formatter.

A really nice new feature is the ability to use any alternate character set within the editors. This allows you to use a foreign language character set in place of Funnelweb's C1 and C2 character sets to display foreign

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## Bits, Bytes & Pixels

language characters on screen. To specify a special character set, go to a Funnelweb central menu and press F0/N/Y (BACK). Answer N to the QUIT? prompt, and then you will be given the opportunity to specify the file name of any alternate character set. Such file names must be two characters long and the CHAR files should already be in the appropriate T1W or E/A Funnelweb drive or subdirectory. We have included some public domain foreign language CHAR files with our distribution of v4.31 for use in this way. The little used keystrokes that normally display such things as !{[]\^\* display instead foreign characters with these files. These additional CHAR files added by us are NOT part of the official Funnelweb 4.31 package as received by us from Tony McGovern. C3=French. C4=Spanish. C5=German. C6=Italian. C7=Swedish.

Those with 80 column systems (GENEVE, or 99/4A with 80 column device) can now use the 80 column DR to View MYART pictures in up to 256 colors. Just move the cursor next to a picture name in a DR disk directory, press V(iew) and the picture pops up on the screen. The background color of the picture can then be altered to enhance viewing pleasure before finally returning to the DR disk directory. MYART picture viewing, and a simultaneous ASCII/HEX sector display are the only two features of the 80 column DR that are lacking in the new 40 column DR.

This is a major update, particularly the enhanced 40 column DR. If you use the new features of 40 column DR you should send the McGoverns an additional fairware donation (cash, traveler's cheque, or international money order) over and above what you have already paid for other parts of funnelweb. Tony McGovern writes that he is planning to get an Amiga and start programming for this device. Will McGovern already has one. Some \$\$ and an accompanying letter of appreciation will help maintain the McGovern's interest in the 99/4A.

Below is a commented directory of the Funnelweb v4.31 files in DSDD format. The comments accompanying each file name have been added by me and should aid Funnelweb users in figuring out what each file does.

| Filename   | File Type | Size | Comment                                 |
|------------|-----------|------|-----------------------------------------|
| -READ-ME   | D/V       | 80   | 47 Tony McGovern introductory comments  |
| -READFIRST | D/V       | 80   | 13 Charles Good's introductory comment  |
| AR         | P6M       | 8066 | 33 ARCHIVER v3.03                       |
| AS         | P6M       | 8192 | 33 Assembler, part 1                    |
| AT         | P6M       | 5354 | 22 Assembler, part 2                    |
| C1         | P6M       | 1024 | 5 Text editor character set             |
| C2         | P6M       | 1024 | 5 Programmer's editor character set     |
| C3-C7/ARC  | I/F       | 128  | 11 Foreign language char sets, archived |
| C99PF1;0   | D/F       | 80   | 2 use with c99 programs                 |
| CF         | P6M       | 7994 | 33 CONFIGURE, part 1                    |
| CG         | P6M       | 6226 | 26 CONFIGURE, part 2                    |
| CHARA1     | P6M       | 1024 | 5 char set for use with DSKU v4.2       |
| CP         | P6M       | 587  | 4 use with c99 programs                 |

|            |     |      |                                         |
|------------|-----|------|-----------------------------------------|
| CTBK/U     | D/F | 80   | 17 installs Funnelweb on SUPERCART      |
| D1         | P6M | 542  | 4 DISK UTILITIES user list              |
| DR         | P6M | 8192 | 33 40 column DISK REVIEW, part 1        |
| DR80       | P6M | 9984 | 40 80 column DISK REVIEW, part 1        |
| DR81       | P6M | 7422 | 32 80 column DISK REVIEW, part 2        |
| DS         | P6M | 7652 | 31 40 column DISK REVIEW, part 2        |
| DU         | P6M | 8192 | 33 Disk Utilities V 4.2 Part 1 of 3     |
| DV         | P6M | 8192 | 33 Disk Utilities V 4.2 Part 2 of 3     |
| DW         | P6M | 7424 | 30 Disk Utilities V 4.2 Part 3 of 3     |
| EA         | P6M | 1860 | 9 need on disk to boot assembly stuff   |
| ED         | P6M | 8192 | 33 40 column editor, part 1             |
| ED80       | P6M | 8192 | 33 80 column editor, part 1             |
| ED81       | P6M | 5080 | 21 80 column editor, part 2             |
| EE         | P6M | 4328 | 18 40 column editor, part 2             |
| FU         | P6M | 8192 | 33 FORMATTER, part 1                    |
| FP         | P6M | 3620 | 16 FORMATTER, part 2                    |
| FSAVE      | D/F | 80   | 7 creates assembly PROGRAM files        |
| FW         | P6M | 8152 | 33 main FUNNELWEB program, boot from EA |
| FWDOC/DR40 | D/V | 80   | 75 40 column DR doc, part 1             |
| FWDOC/DR41 | D/V | 80   | 64 40 column DR doc, part 2             |
| FWDOC/DR80 | D/V | 80   | 119 80 column DR doc, part 1            |
| FWDOC/DR81 | D/V | 80   | 89 80 column DR doc, part 2             |
| FWDOC/EASM | D/V | 80   | 37 Editor/Assembler loader doc          |
| FWDOC/EDAV | D/V | 80   | 47 80 column text editor doc            |
| FWDOC/LOAD | D/V | 80   | 49 LOAD doc, general description of FWB |
| FWDOC/REPT | D/V | 80   | 56 bug and update report                |
| FWDOC/T1WR | D/V | 80   | 32 T1 Writer doc                        |
| FWDOC/UTIL | D/V | 80   | 49 Describes FWB utilities              |
| LDFW       | D/F | 80   | 11 Boots FW from EA                     |
| LH         | P6M | 3836 | 16 Line Hunter, a programmer's utility  |
| LL         | P6M | 2064 | 10 need on disk to boot LOW LOADER file |
| LOAD       | P6M | 7661 | 31 the main Funnelweb program, from XB  |
| WD         | P6M | 2622 | 12 QUICK DIRECTORY, part 1              |
| WF         | P6M | 2544 | 11 QUICK DIRECTORY, part 2              |
| SCRIPT     | D/V | 80   | 4 sample SCRIPT LOAD file               |
| SL         | P6M | 2130 | 10 need on disk to boot any SCRIPTLOAD  |
| SYSDUN     | P6M | 1214 | 6 use with CF/C6 to store config data   |
| UL         | P6M | 542  | 4 main USER LIST                        |
| XB4HLD     | P6M | 203  | 2 boots T1 FORTH from XB user list      |

**FWB 4.31 NOW AVAILABLE**



Also see JACK'S  
"New Age" review.

FUNNELWEB 4.31 is both 80 AND 40 columns. This is the ultimate T1 software for every disk owner. Our club is asking \$10 for the complete 4-DISK SET, which includes Charles Good's docs and his additional character sets. \$9 of each \$10 will be sent as a contribution to the author.

a BBS that doesn't support MXT.

[F] Files is a simple disk catalog option that shows filenames and size, total sectors, and free sectors.

[ENTER] takes you into the terminal mode.

[U] Upload DV/80 File allows the upload of a previously prepared text file. This might be useful when entering a pre-composed message into a BBS message base.

[C] Clear download buffer, [B] Buffer capture, [S] Set/Reset Log, [V] View buffer contents, and [D] Dump download buffer are used to control the capture, viewing, and storage of text being displayed on the screen.

[L] Linefeed toggle and [E] Echo (remote and monitor) control the text presentation on the screen. These normally don't need to be changed for logging onto a BBS, but they come in handy when you're trying to connect to another terminal.

MASS-TRANSFER has its pros and cons just like anything else, although some of the pros can be cons, depending on your interpretation. Customizing the program with a sector editor can be aggravating by comparison to creating a default file that can be loaded in with the program. However, you'll never have to worry about accidentally losing or messing up your default file. This also speeds up program load since you have one less file to load. It's not as versatile as TELCO but it is more compact and the entire program resides in memory. This helps it run a bit faster since it doesn't have to load in the individual program modules from disk as is the case with TELCO. The Ymodem, MXT, and Hangup after MXT functions are compatible only with MASS-TRANSFER and MXT9 BBS, but they're a nice touch when they're available. Some people may find it bothersome to return to the menu to do a lot of the functions, but it beats keeping the docs on hand taking up desk space.

Well, that's pretty much what MASS-TRANSFER looks like. There are quite a few other goodies but most are used in the terminal mode to activate the print spooler, produce a tone, etc. You'll have to play with the program and read the documentation for those. The program is fairware so if you use it and like it, send Stu the measly \$10.00 he's asking for this great program. If your local User Group doesn't have this program, you can probably send a disk and enough money to pay for the program and return postage to the author. Be sure to ask for all the documentation. Stu's address is:

Stuart Olson  
6625 W. Cooldige St.  
Phoenix, AZ 85033

THIS IS THE LAST PAGE OF AN ARTICLE WHICH  
WAS IN LAST MONTH'S NEWSLETTER.

Ed.

## THE HOME COMPUTER By Jim Peterson

Can you stand a few more words from the last surviving advocate of the HOME computer?

And what is a HOME computer? It is a computer designed to be used in the home, to do whatever someone might do in the home that can be done better with the aid of a computer.

AND--the HOME computer is designed to be used by a person who has no particular interest in computers, who regards them as just another electronic tool to be used to make life easier or more enjoyable. Also, that person is probably just a bit intimidated by computers.

A person who is not interested in computers? Well, that eliminates everyone who is reading this, but read on anyway.

Now, what percentage of VCR owners have never learned to program their VCR? How many don't know what some of the buttons on their cable TV remote unit do? How many housewives are failing to take advantage of half the pushbuttons on their microwave, or their washing machine? I don't think anyone has the answer to those questions, but I am sure that the percentages are very large!

Many people who buy a new appliance NEVER read the manual. They learn some of its features by experimenting, and never use the rest. Most other people read the manual one time, file it away with the warranty or lose it, and operate the appliance based on what they remember from that one reading. Of course, there are an increasing number of people who are incapable of reading the manual at all, and very few people who are capable of writing a manual that anyone can understand!

The average home computer buyer, knowing nothing about computers, can easily be convinced

that he needs 640k of RAM, a hard drive, a mouse, and who knows what else. He needs all those things like he needs a hole in the head, and he is completely baffled by the technical jargon in the manuals that come with the machine.

His computer probably comes bundled with an assortment of "free" software that is alleged to be worth more than the machine itself. It is probably excellent software--but each program comes with a thick manual, hopefully written in intelligible English, which must be studied before the program can be used.

Big programs like that are fine for the workplace, where a worker becomes familiar with a program and remembers how to use it because he uses it every day. For the typical home computer user, they are totally impractical.

So, what is a HOME computer? It is a computer with no more memory than is needed to do the job, practically automatic in operation (i.e., with built-in disk operating system!), with one disk drive, and with an adequate supply of short, simple programs to do what needs to be done at the moment and no more, so simple that they can be operated by reading on-screen instructions and prompts.

I happen to own such a computer. It is called the Texas Instruments TI-99/4A HOME Computer.

FROM: SPIRIT OF 99



NEXT MEETING TUESDAY JANUARY 8, 1991. HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!!!!!

MUNCH OFFICERS AND NUMBERS (all in 508 area unless noted)

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| Tape Librarian  | Walter Nowak     | 413 436/7675 |                    |         |
| NEW-AGE/99      | Jack Sughrue     | 476/7630     |                    |         |

DECEMBER MEETING. I am sorry I could not attend the December meeting. An informal meeting was held outside our meeting hall with the main topic of discussion being RAM Discs and their problems.

JANUARY MEETING. This month's meeting will feature the new version of Funnelweb. Jack Sughrue will have a demo of all the new features of this wonderful program.

HELP WANTED!!! I will not be able to attend the February, March and April meetings because of job requirements. I need someone to take responsibility for the key to our meeting house, someone to take care of the raffle, someone to give me a short note on what went on at the meeting and what is planned for the next; I will continue to do the newsletter. We also need someone to coordinate our table at the Fayah in April.

RAFFLE. Every month we have a raffle to help defer the cost of the monthly hall rental. The number of prizes awarded depends on the number of tickets sold. This month we have some TI T-Shirts, disk holders and some games for prizes. If you have some old things you no longer use how about some donations for the raffle, our prize chest is getting low!!!

LIBRARY NOTICE. Please return any items borrowed from our library. If you can not come to a meeting or give these items to someone who will be at the meeting.

REPRINTS. Reprints are permitted as long as credit is given to M.U.N.C.H.

ARTICLES. I am always looking for articles for this newsletter, anything which interests you will probably interest other members of the TI community, so please share your ideas and opinions with all of us.

DISK LIBRARY. The disk library will be at the meetings from now on. We have copies of all disks in the library and they are available to members for just \$1.50 each.

FOR SALE. The group has a TI Count Business Software package available for sale. If interested contact Jim Cox at the above number or the club address.

DISK OF THE MONTH. The DOM for this month is the latest version of Funnelweb (4.31 or better). The charge for these 4 SSSD disks will be \$10.00, with \$1.50 going to the group (we need the money) and \$8.50 going to the McGoverns.

