The Ottawa T.I.99/4 Users' Group

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 4/NUMBER 02......FEBRUARY 1985

Contents

NEXT MEETING....
THURSDAY the 7th of MARCH, starting at 7:30pm at the Merivale High School, 1755 Merivale Road in Nepean.

EXECUTIVE NOTES....
Intermediate and advanced tutorials progressing, Multi-plan, Forth workshops continue, contact JANE for BBS BLITZ session.

FEATURE ARTICLES....
MYARC another "saviour" company is in the spotlight interview this month and do they have news for us!!!... R.A.GREENE continues with part 2 on the PRK module...A CORCOMP update...B.CARON is back with part 4 on DLM and some ADVENTURE hints...B.BOONE with system development and library update...SHAWN and JANE too! and a special mystery writer talks about.:..............

DEADLINE....
The 15th of MARCH is the cutoff date for submissions.

The Ottawa T.I. 99/4 Users' Group · 2144 Station D Ottawa, Ontario

CHAIRMAN'S TWO CENTS WORTH

by Bill Sponchia

General Meeting:

Good news (or bad — depending on the way you happen to feel), the proposed amendments to the Constitution were passed at the last meeting.

Thanks goes out to John Altorio and Bob Boone for their demonstrations on MBX — baseball and DRAW A BIT. From the discussion I have heard from various members it would seem these demos were very appreciated.

Our next general meeting will be held on Thursday, March 7th so please try you hardest to attend. By popular request Bruce Caron and Bob Boone will be showing us others "Maintenance".

1985 Membership Dues:

For all those receiving the February Newsletter it means that you have paid your 1985 Membership Dues. For all the new members let me say welcome and I believe that in the coming months you will find that your small investment was well worth it. For those who have friends that have not yet renewed pass the message along that we miss them already and would like to see them back.

Survey:

The survey forms are coming in very well and for those that have already sent them in let me say thankyou. For those still thinking about it please fill in the form and send it in as soon as possible.

Tutorials/Workshops:

Presently the Intermediate and Advanced Tutorials are still progressing. If information is required on either phone Berry Minuk at 234-5472.

The workshops presently being held are the Multi-Plan workshop and the FORTH workshop. For information on the Multi-Plan please contact John Altorio at 224-8440. Information on the FORTH workshop can be obtained from Berry Minuk.

If anyone is interested in any other type of workshop please let some member of the executive know. If enough interest is generated and someone will set it up it will be done. No use just sitting there saying that you wish there was a workshop on something -- put the suggestion in.

HOTLINE NUMBERS

The executive has expressed a desire to assist all members should you have some problems or have some questions,do some library swapping or borrow a book. This will be the place to look. Of course if you wish to be placed on the list just give me a call...I know there is a lot of expertise within our Group. I hope to add to this list and improve the coding. Please respect normal hours unless you specifically know that someone doesn't mind a call at 3am or use the BBS to leave a message at 738-0617, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

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ART GREEN......................ASL..........................837-1955

SHAWN MILLAR......YOUTH CO-ORD............................(M)684-3466

                  MEMBERSHIP CO-ORD..........................
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SOFTWARE:::ASL=ASSEMBLY LANGUAGE   Mp=PLATO
           B=BASIC   Mea=EDITOR ASSEMBLER
           F=FORTH   Mmm=MINI-MEMMORY
           L=LOGO   Mmp=MULTIPLAN
           Lb=BOOKS/MAGAZINES   Mwp=TI WRITER
           Lc=CASSETTE LIBRARY   S=SALES
           Ld=DISK LIBRARY   XB=EXTENDED BASIC

HARDWARE:::BBS=SYSTEM OPERATOR   MBX=VOICE RECOGNITION
           CC=CORCOMP EQUIPMENT   MY=MYARC EQUIPMENT
           I=INSTALLATION   R=REPAIRS
           M=MODEM EQUIPPED   SS=SALES

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SPOTLIGHT ON YOUTH by Shawn Millar

   I don't have too many scores for you yet. They are coming slowly
but surely. Philippe Tanguay is planning to have a TENNIS (By Nicesoft)
championship in the near future. We need enough participants to make it
worth having. It will be held at someone's home because the games take
too long to play at a meeting. If you are interested either call
Philippe at 830-1718 or me at 684-3466. The high score listing is open
for everyone, not just kids. It is divided into five age groups. They
are: 0-5 6-10 11-15 16-20 21-. Remember: The more games that we have a
high score for the more fun we will have trying to get a higher score.
Until next time, Happy gaming!

High Scores of the Month

Game	Score	Name	Age
1--Guardian	12,470	Mike Berlinguette	8
2--Pole Position	28,300	Mike Berlinguette	8
3--Pole Position	90,920	Paul Berlinguette	37
4--Pinball	98,620	Paul Berlinguette	37
5--Dig Dug	23,070	Kathy Berlinguette	11
6--Hustle	19,900	Tanya Craig	10
7--Barrage	264,390	Philippe Tanguay	14
8--Parsec	369,000	Benoit Tanguay	18
9--Miner 2049'er	15,865	Shawn Millar	14
10-Starfort	12,150	Shawn Millar	14
11-Defender	252,650	Dominique Laflamme	14
12-Hen House	56,330	Dominique Laflamme	14

FLASH FLASH...
It has been just reported to me that Jane Laflamme aged 29 has
just scored 162 in TI INVADERS...will this be accepted SHAWN????

EDITOR COMMENTS

Is spring really going to happen? Speaking of things going to happen, are we ever going to see our own equipment? Are we going to find a new home for our BBS? Are we going to change the name of our UG when the 99/128 comes out? The 99/128 you say? This is what it is called at MYARC down in NEW JERSEY. THE 99/8 was a model made by TI but it never made it to market. If you want the full story check the MYARC REPORT and the interview done by BRUCE with the president of MYARC,LOU PHILLIPS.   TVM guys its a goodder!!!Rumour has it that it will·be under $500. and upward compatible with all TI99/4a stuff and planned introduction is aimed at the CONSUMERS ELECTRONICS SHOW in JUNE of this year.

For some reason TI likes bailing out of things as they have just done it again by pulling the plug on the new VIDEO DISPLAY PROCESSOR and have left some people scrambling around again!!!

Lets give BOB BOONE and his crew some support as they tackle the MUCH NEWS MORE OFTEN PROJECT with latest news off various BBSs'.How about hitting CHICAGO as it seems there are quite a few TI users down there,anyway to defray costs it only costs .50 cents to get the latest. All monthly interviews are also available.

Volunteer required for membership co-ord position..we need you now so lets hear from you...and a new home for our BBS preferably somewhere with a 738 prefix. There is a lot of used equipment available and the UG does need some. Three separate systems of various make-ups so check the trading post and let us know what you want so we can purchase as a unit and disperse equipment separately.

If you have any youth in your bones keep SHAWN updated with your family scoring statistics..you know what I mean!!!

FLASH FLASH...
A late TRADING POST just arrived in the mail from DEEP RIVER.
LESLIE LEWIS wants a disk drive or if one cannot be bought
then will sell a stand alone disk controller for $100.00.
Phone number is 1-584-2605.

A LOOK AT PRK PART 2 by R. A. Green

The "A" and "D" subroutines provided by the PRK module can be freely used in any TI BASIC program to provide a facility similiar to Extended BASIC's ACCEPT AT and DISPLAY AT statements. These two subroutines are fully described in Volume 1 Number 4 of the 99ER Magazine, page 72. A short description of each is given below.

Display At

The BASIC CALL statement to invoke this subroutine is:

        CALL D(R,C,L,VALUE, ...)

where:

        R — is the row number for the display,
        C — is the column number for the display,
        L — is the length of the field into which the value is to be
            displayed,
    VALUE — is a numeric or string constant or variable that is the
            value to be displayed.

The four parameters may be repeated as many times as desired to do several displays in a single statememt.   A single display is restricted to a single row on the screen.

Accept At

The BASIC CALL statement to invoke this subroutine is:
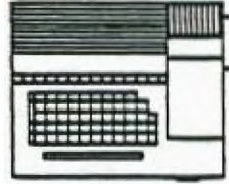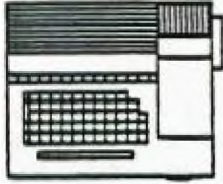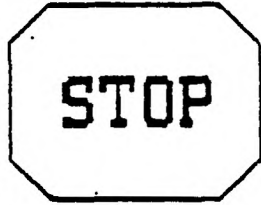
        CALL A(R,C,L,F,VAR,MIN,MAX)

where:

        R — is the row number where the accepted data will appear,
        C — is the column number where the accepted data will appear
        L — is the length of the field into which the entered value is
            to appear,
        F — is a function value set by the accept at subroutine to
            indicate how the input request was ended; the value will
            be one of:
                        1 ENTER key pressed,
                        2 CLEAR key pressed,
                        3 AID key pressed,
                        4 REDO key pressed,
                        5 PROC'D key pressed,
                        6 BEGIN key pressed,
                        7 BACK key pressed,
      VAR — in the numeric or string variable into which the accepted
            value is placed,
      MIN — is the minimum value acceptable for numeric input,
      MAX — is the maximum value acceptable for numeric input.

Subsequent articles will describe other PRK subroutines.

```
* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *
*                     TRADING  POST                                       *
*                     _____                                        *
*.FOR SALE;TI SPEECH SYN...$60.00..DAVID WALKER..EVENINGS....825-4451      *
*                                                                         *
*.FOR SALE;TI TE II MOD....$20.00......."............."............."....  *
*                                                                         *
*.FOR SALE;WICO TRACK BALL $45.00......."............."............."....  *
*                                                                         *
*.FOR SALE;TI ALIGATOR MIX.$10.00..BOB BOONE...................623-6970    *
*                                                                         *
*.FOR SALE;TI MICROSURGEON.$15.00....."............................."....  *
*                                                                         *
*.FOR SALE;TI STAND ALONE..$185.00.BRUCE CARON................733-7675     *
*          SSDD DISK DRIVE WITH PS/CASE/CABLE.                            *
*                                                                         *
*.FOR SALE;TI CONSOLE 99/4a$110.00.KEN BROWN..................236-3318     *
*          W/CASSETTE/CABLES/BOOKS/ALMOST NEW                             *
*                                                                         *
*.WANTED;EDITOR ASSEMBLER..$60.00..PHILIP CASTLES............526-1083      *
*                                                                         *
*.WANTED;EDITOR ASSEMBLER..$60.00..ROBERT SOUTAR.............830-5402      *
*                                                                         *
* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *
```

MYARC REPORT

Since 1982 this company has been in the TI business and according to president LOU PHILLIPS the oldest company and the best kept secret in the TI market place. He says "We are in technology not the advertising business". Endorsed in 1983 by TI at the CONSUMER ELECTRONICS SHOW for their WDS100 WINCHESTER SYSTEM(hard disk system)they produced the system for the 99/8 when TI pulled the pin and they went on to build things for the IBM PC jr. and then found themselves back into TI with the mini peripheral sytem,disk controller card,RS232 card and now just off beta testing the 32/128k RAM card.

MYARC is a privately owned company employing ten people and have all assembly work done on the outside. They do all the testing,chipping and shipping. They are at the million dollar level for sales and their main distributors are TRITON and C and R DISTRIBUTING. They do sell to dealers and will have USER GROUP specials.

MYARC is starting to ship out their new 32/128k which appears as a true RAM DISK, price is comparable to the FOUNDATION card, the DSDD controller card is also being shipped out that will run circles around the present CORCOMP version as it is reported to use the standard 9 sector SD format, CC's 18 sector DD format and do its own 16 sector DD format,plus a few other things and this comes with a new disk based disk manager program.

MYARC and C AND R DISTRIBUTING will form another company to get the new 99/128 computer to market. Testing is presently under way,sofware is being written,the GPL interpreter is being purchased from TI,they have signed lots of non-disclosure agreements with TI with reference to GROM and they will be seeing SOFTECH,TRITON AND MICROSOFT. A BASIC orientated machine with emphasis on speed;there will be two 16 bit processors,one of the 8080 series, making it IBM/MS DOS compatible and the other a 16 bit TI 9995 with the 10MHZ clock making it fully compatible with the 99/4A.

Test groups will be required for the new 99/128 and requests should be in writing as about 50 of them will be put out in the field and they will be leaning towards serious software developers. The P-card was built into the 99/8 but PASCAL is dying in the U.S. as they have suffered their first ever quarterly loss so it is a maybe for the 99/128 and as for the 80 column card again maybe later.

Good luck MYARC with your 99/128;it is something that all of us have been waiting for. Instead of a shrinking base now, with the future release of this new thoroughbred our numbers will rise again. Look for its presence at the next CES show in JUNE of 1985 and should easily fall under 500.00 US a copy. Pass the info around and let everyone know if it comes to pass they will need all the help that they can get. Thanks to BRUCE for doing the interview and to LOU PHILLIPS of MYARC...well done.

ED

MYARC MINI PERIPHERAL

EXPANSION SYSTEM

The directory link map is located on sector 1, which is the
second sector on every diskette. Just as the Disk Bit Map on
sector 0 was used to indicate which sectors were used and which
were free, the Directory Link Map is used to locate the sectors
where the Directory entries are stored. Each Directory entry is
a 1 sector block that contains information on the files and
programs that you have stored on your diskettes. A complete
description of the directory entries is the topic of next months
article.

The Directory Link Map is an indexed table of word values
(1 word=2 bytes) that point to the directory entry for each file
in Alphabetical sequence. In other words each time that you save
a file to disk a directory entry is made for that file and it is
stored in some location on the diskette. The location of that
directory entry is then inserted into the Directory Link Map.
Finally the Directory Link Map is then sorted in Alphabetical
order according to the filenames of the directory entries.

The Directory Link Map takes up one whole sector on the
diskette (256 bytes) so the maximum number of files that can be
stored on a diskette is 127. A little math tells us that 127 X 2
is only equal to 254, the 2 bytes that are missing are used to
indicate the end of the link map, those 2 bytes are set to zero
(0000).

Back in part 1 of this series I told you that sectors >02
through >21 (2-33) were reserved for directory entries, if you
examine the directory link map of most diskettes you will find
this to be true. However, a Directory entry can be located on
any sector of the diskette, except 0 & 1, so use the link map to
find your way around.

When you delete a file or program from a diskette the disk
controller ROM simply instructs the computer to remove the
pointer from the Directory Link Map, then it updates the Disk
Bit Map on sector 0. If you accidentally delete a file, you can
search through the diskette to find the location of the
directory entry, then place that location back in the link map
and voila! you can recover your file. You then should use the
Disk Manager to save your files to another diskette as the Bit
Map is incorrect and your file will get wiped out next time you
save to disk. An example of a Directory Link Map is shown on the
next page.

The Directory Link Map is simply a list of pointers. If you
find this article confusing next months article should clear
things up a bit as we will be making extensive references to the
Directory Link Map. If you have any questions on this series of
articles, jot them down on a piece of paper and give them to me
at the next general meeting.

```
ADDR =  0 1   2 3   4 5   6 7   8 9   A B   C D   E F   INTERPRETED
_____
0000 = 0007  0002  000A  0008  0009  0003  0004  0005   ****************
0010 = 0006  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000   ****************
0020 = 0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000   ****************
0030 = 0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000   ****************
0040 = 0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000   ****************
0050 = 0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000   ****************
0060 = 0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000   ****************
0070 = 0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000   ****************
0080 = 0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000   ****************
0090 = 0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000   ****************
00A0 = 0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000   ****************
00B0 = 0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000   ****************
00C0 = 0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000   ****************
00D0 = 0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000   ****************
00E0 = 0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000   ****************
00F0 = 0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000  0000   ****************
```

Directory Link Map (Sector 1)

Here's a Quick Reference Chart for some of the most common
printer codes, clip it out and keep it handy!

PRINTER CONTROL CODES

Character Pitch	Decimal	Character	Ctrl
Pica 10 cpi	27 80	ESC P	-
Elite 12 cpi	27 77	ESC M	-
Condensed 17 on	15	SI	O
Condensed 17 off	18	DC2	R
Expanded cpi/2 on	27 87 1	ESC W 1	-
Expanded cpi/2 off	27 87 0	ESC W 0	-
Expanded 1 line on	14	SO	N
Expanded 1 line off	20	DC4	T

Print Style

Italics on	27 52	ESC 4	-
Italics off	27 53	ESC 5	-
Superscript on	27 83 0	ESC S 0	-
Subscript on	27 83 1	ESC S 1	-
Both scripts off	27 84	ESC T	-

Print Quality

Double strike on	27 71	ESC G	-
Double strike off	27 72	ESC H	-
Emphasized on	27 69	ESC E	-
Emphasized off	27 70	ESC F	-
Unidirectional on	27 85 1	ESC U 1	-
Bidirectional on	27 85 0	ESC U 0	-
Underline on	27 45 1	ESC - 1	-
Underline off	27 45 0	ESC - 0	-

Paper Feed

Lines/inch 6	27 50	ESC 2	-
Lines/inch 8	27 48	ESC 0	-
Lines/inch 10	27 49	ESC 1	-
Lines/inch n/72	27 65 n	ESC A n	-
Lines/inch n/144	27 51 n	ESC 3 n	-

Paper Movement Controls

Form Feed	12	FF	L
Line Feed	10	LF	J
Carriage return	13	CR	ENTER
Backspace	8	BS	H
Horizontal tab	9	HT	I
Vertical tab	11	VT	K
Ignore paper out	27 56	ESC 8	-
Enable paper out	27 57	ESC 9	-
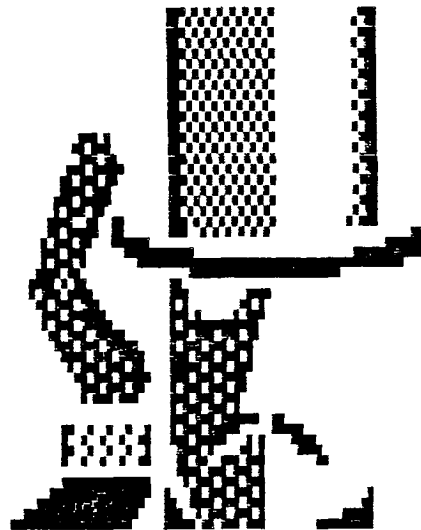
TI-ps
by Jane Laflamme

Here is a tip for for the novice programmer, changing String Variables
to Numeric and vice versa. The following sample programs show how you
can use these functions in Basic (to delete leading and trailing spaces
in numeric variables), Extended Basic (in the Call Say subprogram) and
finally, the reverse in Basic and Extended Basic. If you require
additional information, or help, or have requests for future articles,
please don't hesitate to call me at 830-5347.

FIRST PROGRAMME

```
100 REM ********************
110 REM *   VAL/STR$ DEMO   *
120 REM * BY JANE LAFLAMME *
130 REM *   FEBRUARY 1985   *
140 REM *   BASIC & EXT.B.  *
150 REM ********************
160 CALL CLEAR
170 FOR X=1 TO 10
180 PRINT X;
190 NEXT X
200 PRINT
210 PRINT "NOW, REMOVE LEADING AND
    {5 SPACES} TRAILING SPACES.."
220 FOR X=1 TO 10
230 PRINT STR$(X);
240 NEXT X
250 END
```

SECOND PROGRAMME

```
100 REM ********************
110 REM *   VAL/STR$ DEMO   *
120 REM * BY JANE LAFLAMME *
130 REM *   FEBRUARY 1985   *
140 REM * EXT.   BASIC ONLY *
150 REM ********************
160 CALL CLEAR :: FOR X=1 TO 10
    :: CALL SAY(STR$(X)) ::
    NEXT X :: END
```

THIRD PROGRAMME

```
100 REM ********************
110 REM *   STR$/VAL DEMO   *
120 REM * BY JANE LAFLAMME *
130 REM *   FEBRUARY 1985   *
140 REM *    BASIC OR XB     *
150 REM ********************
160 A$="5"
170 PRINT VAL(A$)
180 END
```

P.S.: LADIES! I'm still looking for more company at the monthly
meetings. Come on out and introduce yourself!! Or call...we could make
other arrangements.....

P.P.S.: If you list your programme to disk (LIST "DSK1.MYPROGRAM"), you
can load it into TI-Writer...(If you want to include it in an article
for the Newsletter!)

"PIRACY INC." by Anonymous

There are some people who don't pirate. These are the pillar of society, fine, sterling, noble chaps (only modesty keeps me from fully describing our virtues). However, we can appreciate how you lesser folk would find it hard to resist the temptation of piracy. You see a fantastic program but it costs $29.95 and then start to pray that someday you could get it (I know it is too much for you because software pirates have long been noted for their poverty). Suddenly, out of the blue comes a friend (in a snake's outfit -- or is that a snake in a friend's outfit) who offers you this fine thing for the paltry sum of "nothing but a little disk or tape space". Once you yield the first time you are hooked for life -- you're a "software junkie".

The software junkie is an unfortunate soul who has tasted the bitter sweet wine of pirated software. In his sane moments he is just like you or me -- kind, gentle, gives to charity, and only beats the wife and children once or twice a week -- however when the full moon strikes (or any other time that is suitable) this ... this ... thing turns into amoral animal that will copy anything and everything available. Does he need it - who cares, copy it anyway. When he is not copying he spends his time cracking protective devices in new software (borrowed, not purchased, of course) so that he can lure another unsuspecting victim into a life of piracy.

Who benefits when a user becomes a junkie? Well for one, the disk manufacturers surely do. They sell disks by the ton in order to satisfy this junkie's needs. Junkies tend to collect for the sake of collecting, not for the purpose of using. The junkie's library grows bigger and bigger with each passing day, becoming overloaded with software that is unnecessary and largely unused. Their disks are jampacked with programs they would never consider buying at any given price. This form of excess is clearly inefficient, wasteful and very costly to the user. Needless to say it is not my opinion that the junkie benefits.

A deeper look into the situation will show that eventually no one will benefit - first the authors, tired of being ripped off will quit producing; then the junkies will have no more new software to copy; and then the manufacturers will have less of a market for their blank disks.

There is, however, an aspect of piracy that is very valuable. Software "piracy" is a relatively efficient form of software distribution. The author/originator gets his product to the public at a very low cost -- no distribution expenses; no media costs; and no documentation costs. (Note: Unfortunately, since his customer gets the product at no cost this means that the author also has no revenue.)

Is there a way we could keep this part (i.e.-good distribution system) and eliminate the rest? There is a possible solution; read on.

Before reading any further please be advised that the following solution will not--I repeat, will not--eliminate piracy. That is an unrealistic dream as some people will do it for no other reason than that they want to. However this solution should reduce it.

The Solution:

Most of us, I would like to think, consider ourselves fair-minded folk, who, when faced with the prospect of paying (what we considered) bloated prices choice the minor crime of "informal copying". We took this action timidly with some twinges of guilt. We justified it with words like "everyone else is doing it"; "the price is too high"; "even authors are doing it to others" however any of us who enjoyed any sort of moral upbring still feel a twinge of guilt. Needless to say, in some the nag was more than in others.

If we paid for these programs we would be released from this guilt.

At the same time the ripped-off authors do deserve some reward for their works. For the long hours and the frustration put in by these people it hardly seems fair that they only get a pat on the back and the words "it was a good program." With nothing else they will someday stop making these "good programs" and leave it for someone else.

Now here comes my modest proposal.

I propose a scheme that I call "secondary distribution". In this arrangement authors would pass copies of their works to suitable individuals, who would act as distributors. Copying of these programs would be allowed in exchange for a fee (much smaller than the retail price) and a written pledge by the copier that he would not permit it to pass to others outside the scheme. The fee would pass in full to the author. Anyone who cheats would be cut off from the stream of low-cost software.

Anyone outside the scheme would be deprived of inexpensive access to the flow of new software. Authors outside the plan could live with the present environment.

The fee would be much lower than those prices prevailing in the normal retail distribution and would be set in negotation between the distributing group and the author.

This system could convert a large number of presently active "pirates" into legitimate volunter distributors of authors' software. The authors would get paid (very likely) much more than they are gettin now under the present conditions.

The additional benefits are that by paying a "few lousy dollars" the present junkie:
   - copies less indiscrimately and thus is not as wasteful; and
   - the twinges of guilt will tend to fade.

What do you think??? Both authors and users (let's not use the word pirate anymore)???

As the author considers himself above such undignified activities as software piracy he wishes to stay anonymous and duck this entire issue, therefore please send all replies to the Newletter Editor

* *

CORCOMP UPDATE

Well how things change over such a short period of time. We have 5 CORCOMP DISK CONTROLLER CARDS in the area and one mini-expansion box. Three of the cards have been returned to CORCOMP for repair and have since been returned. Supposedly they have been updated with 2.3 version of software and the ROM software has been updated also. New test equipment and procedures have been adopted. But two of the cards have failed again and are pending return or refund....and the mini system has failed...

Facts have come to light that show CORCOMP is trying to go too fast to get its product to the marketplace without proper testing. Poor design has prompted them to obtain a new controller chip and produce a new card. Some problem areas are the use of the WESTERN DIGITAL controller chip that is guaranteed for 16 sector DD format and use of any more than this is not guaranteed...so CORCOMP is using 18 sectors in their DD format and this is at the root of their highly intermittent operation of the disk controller card. They are using unbuffered data busses and are using an analog data separator vice a digital one which could lead to problems in the future when components start to change value the boards will require adjustment...

In a just completed call to Jackierae of CORCOMP she has promised to send me another card, so I will try again. There will be no changes made to the software and as far as hardware goes it will be mainly adapting the controller chip used in the mini system and putting it on the DSDD controller board.

Other related problems with the card as reported to me by BRUCE were; contamination of D/L files on the BBS,with the MINI MEM. it destroyed character pattern tables(upper case) and with the EDITOR ASSEMBLER the console locks up whenever you get an I/O error along with problems intializing in DD. There are thousands of these units being used and most people according to Jackierae are using DSDD and the problems are in a minority, maybe a bad batch?? As far as DD goes she feels that using the 18 sectors DD format is creating no problems.

CORCOMP did over a million dollars worth of busines last year and hopes to double that this year and I for one have given them the benefit of the doubt and will try their new version but the jury is still out.....

ED

PRIOR PATTERNS by Bob Boone

Developing Your System:

Through(I hope!!) the benefit of my hindsight I'd like to use this issue to offer advice on developing your TI-99/4A system from the ground up.

If you are sitting out there with a bare bones console and recorder your next step should be one of the following four.... Beg, borrow, steal OR BUY an Extended Basic Module!! There's no doubt in my mind that this is the single most important module you can get for your computer. Would you rather drive down the street on a tame; rather cumbersome and slow beast of burden or in a sleek; racey sportscar! It adds superior editing commands, smoother character movement(with sprites); more efficient use of console RAM and much much more!! A TI without an Extended Basic might as well stay in the closet! This module's now being made by a company licenced by Texas Instruments and is no longer hard to find. If you haven't already got it...get it! You should expect to pay about $69 US. FST and duty should bring it in at around $120-$130 CDN. Everyone, regardless of where your future interests lie, should have one!

At this point you must decide which way and how far you'de like to go with your computer. If you use your system a lot(or would LIKE TO use it more); for sheer convenience and reliability, run out and buy a disk system. It'll likely entail the largest single outlay of money but is also the most exciting step a serious computerist can take. Stand-alone controllers are available by Percom; Myarc, Do-Rite. TI made one in the past which is very hard to come by. For many reasons I don't recommend any of these options but do recommend you opt for any of the available Expansion systems. The TI expansion box is likely the most reliable and flexible of the three. Its biggest drawbacks are its price; size and its 'firehose' style connector. I've had mine for about 16 months and the only problem I've had with it is a sore back from taking it wherever I go. I've had Corcomp's 9900 Expansion system for two and a half weeks and love it but it has developed a problem in the RS232 card and has to go back for repair (more on Corcomp later). Myarc products have yet to make an appearance in the Ottawa area but a little bird tells me they may soon be here in flying colors.

TI's Expansion system includes the box, peripheral card, disk controller card and 1 SSDD drive(usually) and will cost about $500 CDN(if you can find one) Corcomp's 9900 system(with disk controller) includes the 32K card, RS232 card disk controller card(no drive) and will retail for about the same amount. No Canadian figures are currently available for any of Myarc's products.

The next step depends a lot on what you want your computer to do for you. If you want to use it for correspondence or communicating in any way with the outside world you should probably opt for an RS232 interface. This peripheral is useless on its own but is needed to let TI talk to or recieve information from a printer or modem. TI made a stand-alone RS232 interface but they're hard to find and are not expandible without 'daisy-chaining' your system. Corcomp, TI and Myarc RS232 cards are all readily available for the TI expansion box and all

retail for under $150 CDN. Corcomp offers an option with their 9900 system which allows you to buy the box with the RS232 card for about $120 US. This unit is expandible later with a plug-in card that contains their 32K card and disk controller for about $200 US.

After you've obtained your RS232 card your next obvious choice is for a modem or printer. In my mind the choice isn't easy. The modem is cheaper and much more fun but the printer is the real workhorse in my system.

In Ottawa or Hull the choice would be even more difficult because long distance phone calls to access major databases wouldn't be the factor it is here in Arnprior. Still, I think the printer would win out by a hair. Your options for a printer are wide open but two are widely touted and used by many local TIers; the Gemini Star 10X or the Manismann-Tally Spirit 80. The Spirit is generally a little higher priced than the Gemini and its ribbons are 4 times as expensive but its print quality is slightly better, due to its using square wires in its print head. Both are readily available locally and this month Exceltronics is offering the Gemini at $20 off its usual price of $379 CDN. I've had a Gemini since December 1983 and its to its credit that I can still say I'm happy I bought it!

Two modems stand out amongst the rest as well. The Volksmodem by Anchor and the Mini-modem by EMP are both direct-connect modems that plug directly into your phone line. I've had an EMP modem since November last year and it's served me too well(evidenced by my phone bills!)...but I think I'd prefer to own the Volksmodem for the simple reason that it runs off a 9V battery rather than hydro and therefore doesn't add to an ever-growing hydro bill. I'm now offering the Volksmodem and cable for $115 CDN. The EMP modem is on sale for $79 at Exceltronics this month. The cable for it is available through me for $26.95 or through Exceltronics for ???.

The 32K card is what I commonly call an invisible add-on. You won't know its there but it adds immeasurably to the power of the console. It's the cat's meow for those people who may eventually be interested in delving into the real mysteries of your 99/4A. Assembly language software; call peeks and pokes and the ability to run large and sophisticated extended basic programs are now available to you. You should note that Corcomp's disk controller card cannot be used without someone's version of a 32K card plugged into your system. The scope and power of software packages like Editor/Assembler; Multi-Plan, LogoII and TI-Writer require this add-on as well.

Note Percom and Do-Rite both make stand alone RS232, 32K and Disk systems. Its come to our attention that due to software oversights (in both company's cases) you can't simultaneously use their respective 32K RS232 boxes. IE: you must either use their 32K card or their RS232 but not both at the same time. It appears that both systems use the same address to store their peripherals' Operating System software so that only the last one powered up will work properly.

Double sided drives are another highly desireable item for your system. Before you take this step, however, consider going to a second SS or DS drive. Anybody interested in expanding disk storage capacity should take a serious look at Exceltronics hitherto unheard of low price for Shugart DSDD 1/2 height drives in this month's newsletter. These Shugart 455A's are fully configurable so that no additional modification to your TI box power supply is needed.

Other items to consider at any level are the Widgit, MBX expansion system, or Super Sketch. Still to come to the Ottawa area are such things as P-Code, 80 Column Card, 128K card and multi-pen plotters; all currently available to any of you adventurous souls out there(with the possible exception of P-Code).

SUMMARY: My recommendations are for software in order of importance; Extended basic...Editor/Assembler...TI Writer/Multiplan...TI-Logo II...GAMES For Hardware; Expansion Box...Drive(s)...RS232/32K card...Printer...Modem... Additional Drives

Hope this helps some of you out there who are wondering which way to go. Next month I'll attempt to bring you up to date on..... Corcomp's situation; Myarc's exciting offer, soon to come, and more contacts I've made abroad! TVM
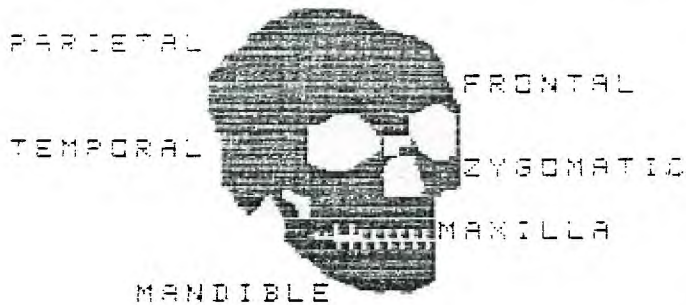
ADVENTURE CORNER

Here's something different for the newsletter. For those of you who have the Scott Adams Adventure module I'm sure there are times when you've wanted to beat your head against the wall in sheer frustration. The first adventure I did was the Pirate one, it took me 5 hours to complete and boy did I feel good after that. I went back to the store and asked the salesman for a more challeging adventure, he sold me Savage Island, 6 adventures later I still haven't been able to finish anyone of them. The following is a list of hints from the Scott Adams Adventure Hint Book for adventure # 1- ADVENTURELAND. Just match up the number with the word in the vocabulary at the end to form a sentence. Good luck.....

Stuck in a forest?
60 15 27

Haven't been able to find where to store your ‡Treasures‡?
60 23 27 45 1 65 38

Can't catch any fish?
58 28 8 5 45 37 69

Can't wake dragon safely?
58 28 8 5 45 37 69

Still can't store treasures?
31 32 38

Still can't store treasures?
68 47

Its dark?
48 26 70

Stuck in a pit?
63 7 21 4 15 34 61 74 14 18
67 75 24 11 64

Brick wall a problem?
46 59 25 50

Need to cross chasm?
49 50

Bear a problem?
20 73 9 21 16

Bees a problem?
58 3 45 72 40

Wasting honey?
76 35 45 1 33 29 34 13

Lava a problem?
35 56 51 43 66 6

Bear still a problem?
54 19 52 44

Dragon still snoring?
62 35 43 42

Bees die?
62 22 10 2

Still missing a treasure?
31 36 12 39 71 (Crown?)

Missing a necklace or bracelet?
30 17 57 41 41 41 41 53 1 55 38

See you all at the next meeting,
.... Bruce Caron

1-the	21-to	41-?	61-word
2-transportation	22-some	42-clue	62-use
3-"HELP"	23-cypress	43-for	63-you
4-say	24-won't	44-quiet	64-through
5-on	25-at	45-in	65-swamp
6-clues	26-bottomless	46-throw	66-many
7-need	27-tree	47-stump	67-"SAY
8-later	28-again	48-enter	68-examine
9-hungry	29-its	49-jump	69-Adventure
10-faster	30-ALADIN	50-it	70-hole
11-work	31-read	51-good	71-lair
12-of	32-web	52-so	72-bee
13-remember	33-stump	53-good	73-looks
14-CARRYING	34-magic	54-don't	74-while
15-a	35-mirror	55-lamp	75-ABRACADABRA
16-me	36-description	56-is	76-leave
17-was	37-your	57-here	
18-something	38-!	58-try	
19-be	39-bear's	59-ax	
20-he	40-hive	60-climb	

PARIETAL

FRONTAL

TEMPORAL

ZYGOMATIC

MAXILLA

MANDIBLE

To the left is a sample of one of
five instruction screens in....
NAME THAT BONE by Cheryl Whitlaw
of 'Regina' fame. This program and
12 others comprise MISC-CAI06. It
also has three versions of Morse
code trainers, a tutorial on our
Solar System, the Sun and Typing.
A speed reading and typing test;
word tests and Story Writing
utility complete this package.
The Solar system tutorial is a 1st
prize winning program from TI-SHUG
of Sydney Australia.

Games(5) contains another great program from Sydney Australia.... Draw Poker
has great graphics and pretty good card savvy too!!! Etch-a-Sketch is
written by one of our own, and won first prize in the basic category of
our contest in our user group's first year. Of the 13 games in this
package 4 are written for extended basic. Many of the rest, though
written in basic, will run in X-bas too. The others in this package
are...One Arm Bandit; Anti-aircraft Battery; Bombrun; Force1;
Mastermind; Maze Race; Number Scramble; Party Game; Space Attack; Swamp
Zombie and Wumpushunt.

Speech-01 contains a program called 'FARM' which actually sings to you!!
The old standby song 'OL MACDONALD HAD A FARM' can be added to your
repetoire. Most of the programs in this package require the TE II
module and Speech Synthesizer. There's 6 speech utility programs
including... Speech Generator, Phonics, Speak, Speech Builder, Teco and
Verbose. Some are instructional; Change, Division, Planets, Speller and
Word Twins. Some like Caboose and Farm are just for fun!!!

Math-Cai02 has a very sophisticated children's math primer called
Barnyard Math which will both entertain and teach your children for you.
SuperFly actually shows your child the mechanics of addition and
subtraction. CootieMath, SuperFly, Snurtle and BarnyardMath are all
aimed at the Primary schoolchild. Color Fractions, Color Math, Menu
Math all address grade 4-7 students. Derivatives, Formulae, Simplebeam
and Trigonometric Solutions are all aids for Secondary school students.

Utility-08 has quite a few interesting and powerful programs including
one called 'Freezer' which will allow the astute homemaker to keep track
of what is stored in your deep freeze at home. There are 2 elimentary
word processors, 4 financial programs, one that contains detailed info
on TI's joysticks, 2 disassemblers, one that converts gold and silver
prices on the stock market. Two others keep track of dates for you and
last but not least is a program that will print out a flight plan for
the pilots amongst us.

CASSETTERS: Utility-08 and Games(04) sold out last month so I'll try to
have a few more copies of each on hand for those that missed out. Also
on hand will be a surprise Disk/Cassette of the month; the contents of
which will be a surprise to me too! Courtesy of our library committee.

BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR MORE ADVERTISERS

SPECIALS IN THE UPCOMING MONTHS.

USED EQUIPMENT SALE

There are presently 3 systems available right now that are being sold by their owners. Our group wishes to purchase some of the equipment to complete our system but we need help in filling out the order so that we can buy one system at least intact. Larry Sabo has some pieces left like the PEB,disk drives(good looking ones too!). Bill Sponchia has knowledge of a complete system available for $1500.00 and myself a system for 1000.00. If we could have some response we could make most people happy so if you are interested in any equipment at what I consider an excellent price please leave your wish list with me at 741-6175. I will list the system that I am familiar with to give you some ideas.

PEB(EXPANSION BOX).......................$200.00

COMPUTER 99/4A...........................$ 50.00

RS232 CARD..............................$100.00

32K CARD................................$150.00

DISK CONTROLLER CARD...................$150.00

DISK DRIVE(SSDD).......................$125.00

SPEECH SYNTHESIZER.....................$ 60.00

EXTENDED BASIC.........................$ 75.00

EDITOR ASSEMBLER.......................$ 60.00

CASSETTE RECORDER......................$ 25.00

JOYSTICKS..............................$ 5.00

                              $1000.00

As you can see prices are very realistic and if we can sell all that is up for grabs everyone will benefit, so if your thinking about it go for it and call me for more details.

    ED

FLASH FLASH...
From our BBS a last minute TRADING POST entry from Debbie McCambley and she has for sale a TI 99/4a, TI recorder and b/w televsion....call 746-5771.

Please don't forget THURSDAY FEB. 28 for the BBS BLITZ....contact BOB or JANE some demos on TERMINAL EMULATORS etc.,good hints and how NOT to increase your phone bill...RIGHT BOB!!!!