SEPT. 18 DON'T MISS IT!

SEPTEMBER MEETING TI IS COMING!!!

On Sunday, September 18, 1983, at 6 p.m. representatives from Texas Instruments in Lubbock, Texas will put on a demonstration of the full capabilities of the TI 99/4A Home Computer.

LAST MEETING

P.U.G. President, Chuck Percherke, announced that representatives from TI in Lubbock, Texas may show some new software during their demonstration at the September meeting.

TI has substantial price reductions in effect on their Home Computer and Hardware. Check with a TI Distributor for the actual savings.

TI is releasing many new Command Modules developed by third party manufacturers.

P.U.G. Secretary, John Asmonga, mentioned that the By-Laws of the group will be reviewed by the P.U.G. Executive Board Members. Any P.U.G. member can submit comments or recommendations in writing on or before the next meeting, September 18, 1983.

Pat Dean, P.U.G. Librarian, mentioned that the Group Library is growing rapidly and we have ten (10) new disks available. The Library still needs many new programs reviewed before they can be included in the Program Library for general use by the members.

The Group is still looking for a room to rent to locate P.U.G. equipment.

Mike Fleming gave a report on the Group's finances and due to a decline in membership and renewals, any orders for educational books must have a deposit in advance.

The new TEAC Double-Sided Disk Drive was demonstrated at the meeting, and has proven to be a big help in enlarging our Program Library.

John Dow, P.U.G. V.P., commented on a test comparison he has been researching on different disk drive systems using Commodore 64, Apple, and TI 99/4A. At this point, his results are inconclusive, and he will be doing more research.

A demonstration of TI Logo II was given by Dick Bies. Everyone is looking forward to TI releasing this command module in the near future.

DOOR PRIZES: Rick Carey won a 12" Extension Cord for Joysticks. Harold Bowman received a book, "Creative Programming for Young Minds Volume III."

There was a demonstration of various Donkey Kong programs by Ross Sabolcik.

ON THE POSITIVE SIDE

A special thanks to the 11 people who helped Pat Dean work on the cataloging of new programs and down loading them to cassettes.Thanks to them at this Sept. meeting,at 5:00 the library will have a new selection of cassettes to lend out.Pat is asking whoever takes these new programs please make a copy of the cassette so at the next meeting we will have double the amount to pass out.(please provide your own blank tape to make the copy on)We will have a new listing of these programs in the next newsletter.Once again,thanks for giving up your time and helping Pat.

ANOTHER COLLECTORS ITEM?

While visiting a major catalog s showroom I noticed a DISCONTINUED tag on the peripheral expansion box, so I thought this must be a mistake, and I called for the manager.She said that they had sent all the P boxes back,and were told that the new HEX BUS system is replacing the P box system.If this is true the hex bus system must be designed with a new disk controller device for the old disk drive.Is this whats holding the hex system from being released? I don't think TI will tell us,so it's a wait and see game,but it is strange to see a major price reduction on the P system and hearing all of this at the same time.

FOR SALE

Old style disk controller$85.00
call Harold   221-6193

10 TI command modules most$10.00
see Chuck Percherke at the meeting

Buy any Moonbean software for $10. each.Brand new not used!Call Ron 366-6870

Flip'n'File holds 50 disk$19.50
see and buy at the club meeting

ON THE NEGATIVE SIDE

We have been notified that one of the last original board of directors no longer wants to be a member or receive the newsletter.Where have all these people who first put their time and effort into starting this club gone?Surely we can't be that big a disappointment to them,but even if we are where are the suggestions on what to do better.We would like some input also from the 100 or so past members who did not renew their membership this year.There will always be something that somebody does not like. Sorry for a dollar a month we can not provide a three ring circus to entertain each member.I was under the impression when I joined that there were people here to help other people with computer problems and share information.As long as I own a computer I will continue to have problems and have new information to share.I don't think I'll ever let a few people or club changes make me feel that I don't want to be a member or receive the newsletter. Chuck Percherke

PE BOX DUAL DRIVES REVISITED

Since the last issue of the newsletter went to press, I have conducted further study of the power-supply disk drive matter in the PE Box.

Increasing the steady load to the region of 1.5 Amp. causes the regulator to be pulled below its range of regulation, and the 12 V line drops until a disk error is reported (around 6 V).

Thus, it is possible to overload the power supply, though two drives do not necessarily do so. (And the regulator is not destroyed.) Purchasors should probably consider pairing only those dual-drives sold as a system for the PE Box.

We all occasionally do stupid things. Especially when dealing with an unfamiliar machine for the first time. I have had a printer and it's card burned out because one of our students inserted the plug upside down. I have seen hours and hours of data lost with an unthinking wrong SAVE command.

As Media Director at the School for the Deaf, I am responsible for 3 TI/99A computers, with which we plan to bring LOGO to our elementary students in the fall. We were to give a demonstration of that program recently, and discovered that the disk drive was not working. As it would not be repaired in time for the demonstration, I ran out and bought a tape recorder. I have watched over enough shoulders to know that loading from a tape recorder is an easy, if time consuming procedure.

The next day I gave the recorder to the teacher who would be giving the demonstration, and told her to get comfortable with it over the weekend. "It is almost foolproof! The plugs are color coded with their sockets in the recorder so you can't make a mistake. All you have to do is type in OLD CS1 and then follow the directions on the screen."

The following Monday was our demonstration. I was there bright and early and the demonstrating teacher was, too.

"I couldn't get it to load right" she told me as I entered the classroom.

"Here, let me try - we may have to fiddle with the volume control." I typed in OLD CS1 but when I looked at the screen it said, 2LD CS1. Oops! Sloppy fingers! And I typed it again, this time paying close attention to the keys as I typed. And again I got 2LD CS1 on the screen, and the ENTER key did not work.

"We have a keyboard problem here" I said, "But don't worry, we will just use one of the other computers." And quickly, I made the switch.

When I tried to load the tape into that computer, the same 2LD CS1 came up on the screen. Now I tried hitting all the keys and found that the Y U I O P were coming up 5 4 3 2 1. And yet, when I unplugged the tape recorder the keyboard was normal!

I tried the third TI with the same results.

We decided the trouble was in the tape recorder, and the demonstration proceded without our tape of samples.

The next step was to return the tape recorder for a new one. But when I plugged this new tape recorder into the computer the same problem reappeared! Furthermore, I discovered that when the two machines were cabled together, the recorder would not play - but when I removed the "remote" part of the cable, it would!

When I called the store where the tape recorder was purchased, and explained the problem, the salesman was as baffled as I, and gave me TI's "TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE" number.

A toll call, yes, but I was desperate by now. I related the entire story to TI's technician and he responded: "I never heard of such a problem! Sounds like you have 3 broken computers." He persisted with this diagnosis even after I pointed out that all 3 computers worked fine when not connected to the tape recorder, and wasn't it a little unusual to have such a plague hit 3 computers at once?

OK armchair detectives! Can any of you (who didn't hear Chuck give it away at the last meeting!) diagnose my dumb mistake?

```
100 REM ROB WILLIAMS T.I.U.P
110 REM
120 REM PROGRAM TO PLAY LOWEST CHROMATIC OCTAVE AND A NEW (!!) SUB OCTAVE
130 CALL CLEAR
140 X=110
150 K=2^(1/12)
160 PRINT "LOWEST (OLD) OCTAVE"
170 FOR N=12 TO 1 STEP -1
180 Y=X*K^N
190 CALL SOUND(500,Y,0)
200 NEXT N
210 CALL SOUND(500,110,0)
220 X=825
230 CALL CLEAR
240 PRINT "LOWEST (NEW) OCTAVE!"
250 FOR N=12 TO 1 STEP -1
260 Y=X*K^N
270 CALL SOUND(500,22000,30,22000,30,Y,30,-4,0)
280 NEXT N
290 CALL SOUND(500,22000,30,22000,30,825,30,-4,0)
```

```
100 REM THIS PROGRAM WILL PLAY AND PRINT THE FREQUENCIES FOR 2 ADDITIONAL OCTAVE
S OF BASS NOTES ON THE TI-99/4A.
105 REM USE THEM AS SHOWN IN LINE 160.
107 REM BY JIM PETERSON REPRINTED IN THE SYDNEY NEWS DIGEST FROM TEXNET.
110 DEF R(X)=INT(X+.5)
120 F=1652
130 FOR J=1 TO 25
140 READ N$
150 PRINT N$;" =";R(F)
160 CALL SOUND(500,22000,30,22000,30,F,30,-4,0)
170 F=F/1.059463094
180 IF J()12 THEN 200
190 RESTORE
200 NEXT J
210 DATA A,B flat,B,C,C#,D,E flat,E,F,F#,G,A flat,A
```

I finally did what I should have done when this problem first presented itself - I called a member of the Pittsburgh Users Group, and outlined the problem.

He didn't wait for me to finish, but said, "Tippi, where did you plug the tape recorder?"

"Into the computer, of course"

"No, I mean, in the side or in the back?"

"Into the side--"

"Tippi (he is laughing now), "you plugged the recorder into the joystick port, which is connected to the keyboard. No wonder it went haywire!"

To give my story a happy ending, I tried plugging the tape recorder into its proper port and all worked just fine. Thank goodness this time no permanent damage was done.

I can't help wondering what kind of technical support TI has to offer! Do our members know more about the machine than the so called professional experts?

This episode underscores the value of a user group. I'd like to make a suggestion. The club ought to list volunteers technical experts - with their phone numbers - in the newsletter so that when we novices get ourselves in trouble we will have somewhere to turn. I'd even like to further suggest that the technical experts identify themselves by neighborhood. An experienced TI owner in the neighborhood of the School for the Deaf, for instance, might have averted this problem right from the beginning!

Tippi Comden

JONATHAN'S CORNER

Welcome to Jonathan's Corner! This section is designed to answer any questions about the TI computer, and give hints, tips, and quirks that are undocumented, and virtually unknown.

To start this month's article, I will relay an interesting quirk of TI Extended BASIC. In some dialects of BASIC used by other home computers, there are quick abbreviations for much-used statements. The TRS-80, for example, lets a user place a question mark wherever the "Print" statement is used. The only documented abbreviation for the TI is an exclamtion point to mean "Rem", which is called a tail REMark. But control characters (Pressing the <CTRL> key and another key at the same time) can also be used to make an abbreviation in Extended BASIC. Simply type a line number and, say, a <CTRL> ; if you want to say "Print". The control character will show up as a blank on the screen. Press <ENTER> and then list or run the program. In the place of the control character will be its alternate statement.

These abbreviations cannot be used as direct commands, only as statements in a program. Also, they are not functional in console BASIC. They can only be part of a REM statement there.

Try experimenting with different control characters to yield different statements. The <FCTN> key can also be used in some instances. Thanks to Walt Dollard for passing on this useful tip.

Please let me know if you have any interesting tips or quirks to share with the Club Members, or if you have any questions regarding the TI, please write me at:

136 Thornberry Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15235

My phone number is 731-4895.

Have fun,

Jonathan Zittrain

Next month: Telecommunications with the TI

MINI EDITOR

An inexpensive office type data processor for home scale use with the Texas Instruments 99/4A Home Computer and the Mini Memory Command module. It features:

FULL SCREEN EDITING
AUTOMATIC WORD WRAP
AUTOMATIC LINE CENTERING
RIGHT JUSTIFICATION
CHARACTER HANDLING
TEXT FORMATING
MERGING OF TEXTS
TYPEWRITER MODE
12000 CHARACTER TEXT
FAST LOAD AND SAVE
MULTIPLE USES
COMPATIBLE WITH ANY PRINTER

The MINI EDITOR program is a data processor that, when used as a word processor, lets you edit documents by cursor control on a spreadsheet-type display and, optionally, print them under the format of your choice. The MINI EDITOR can also be used to store and update any kind of information. It works at a relatively high speed and is very easy to use. These features make it convenient for home applications. The program is written in assembly language to be loaded on the Mini Memory 4K RAM. You can use a cassette to save and load the text at the same speed that you save a BASIC program. The longest text of 12K will take around three minutes to be loaded or saved. The text itself is handled in a compact format in a 12K section of the VDP RAM, storing approximately three pages of 50 lines with 80 characters. The program also allows you to use the printer as a regular typewriter. The equipment required consists of a console, Mini Memory module, monitor or TV and a cassette player. The printer and corresponding interfacing elements are neccesary only when ready to print. If you have a TI thermal printer you will not need an interface. Longer texts can be divided into sections of 12,000 characters or less. The flexibility of the program allows other applications, besides typing, whenever you need to visually inspect and/or quickly change stored information.

We believe that the MINI EDITOR is the best choice for you if you do not want to expend hundreds of dollars in peripherals and yet want your computer to work as if you had them. For a comparison between the MINI EDITOR when used as a word processor and other programs in the market, based on an article which appeared in the May 1983 issue of the 99'er, look at the reverse side of this sheet. After you read it, we're sure you'll agree.

MINI EDITOR

	MINI EDITOR	TI-WRITER	DIRECT WRITER II	FUTURA	TEXTIGER
MINIMUM EQUIPMENT REQUIRED TO SUPPORT SOFTWARE					
TI99/4A	X	X	X	X	X
Monitor	X	X	X	X	X
Extended Basic			X	X	X
Mini Memory	X				
Disk Controller		X	X	X	
Disk Drive(s)		X	X	X	
32K Memory Expansion		X	X	X	
RS232 Interface		X	X	X	
Printer	X	X	X	X	X
FEATURES					
Full screen editing	X	X			
Automatic word wrap	X	X			
Right justification	X	X	X	X	X
Automatic line centering	X	X	X	X	X
Find string function		X	X	X	X
Text block handling		X	X		
Text line handling	X	X	X	X	X
Text character handling	X	X	X	X	X
Linking files to print		X	X	X	X
Text formating	X	X	X	X	X
Screen formated as on paper		X	X		
Mailing list interface		X		X	
PRICE ($)	25	100	66	150	60

To order, send check or money order for $25.00 to:

There is a small bug in the SWITCH-A-ROW game in the July 1983 issue of 99'er Home Computer Magazine. Because of this bug the last move is never counted and displayed on the screen. The subroutine which checks to see if the puzzle has been solved (lines 2530-2620) is called (by line 2420) before the number of moves is increased by 1 and displayed on the screen (lines 2430-2470 and the subroutine at 2490-2520). If the puzzle has been solved the program never returns to increase the number of moves and display the new total on the screen. The solution to this problem is to increase the number of moves and display the new total on the screen before checking to see if the puzzle has been solved. This is accomplished by deleting line 2420 (2420 GOSUB 2530) and adding a new line 2475 GOSUB 2530. A modified version of this program has been submitted to the group library. I have also informed 99'er Magazine about the bug and the correction.

I have solved this puzzle in 59 moves. Is this the smallest number of moves which can solve the puzzle or can it be solved in fewer moves? I will submit my 59 move solution for publication in the next issue of the newsletter unless someone submits a solution which requires fewer moves.

Norman Rokke

TI IS COMING,

The TI User Group Coordinator, Ed Wiest, has requested that we provide some special equipment to enable TI to provide a first class demonstration.

We will be having two (2) Projection Screen Televisions to enable everyone to view the demonstration.

The Auditorium at the South Campus of the Community College of Allegheny County will be able to hold everyone who wants to attend.

☞ All P.U.G. members are encouraged to attend this special meeting.

MANY THANKS

A 19" Philco Color Television was donated to the P.U.G. by John Asmonga and reconditioned by Roy Carlson of Twin Pines TV on the South Side. We can look forward to using it at future meetings.
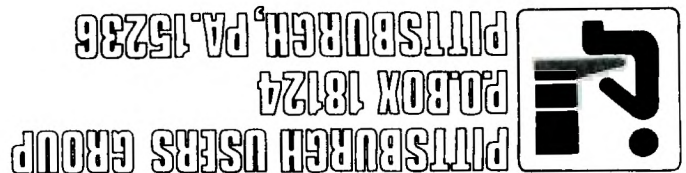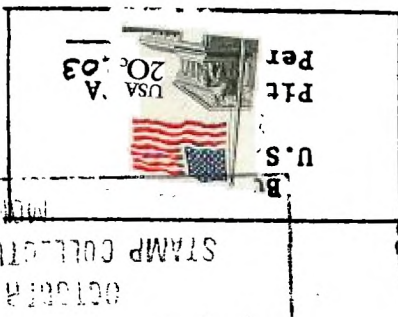
DON'T MISS IT!

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ARE YOU TIRED OF THAT BLANKETY BLINKING BLACK CURSOR? THIS WON'T WORK IN BASIC BUT IF YOU'RE IN XB TRY 1 CALL COLOR(0,11,1) .
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EDMONTON USER GROUP
P.O.BOX 11983
EDMONTON ALBERT.CANADA T5J3L1

TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL

PITTSBURGH USERS GROUP
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