```
..**************************************************************************
```

SASKATOON   TEXAS   INSTRUMENTS   COMPUTER   CLUB

NEWSLETTER   SEPTEMBER,   1986


```
**************************************************************************
```

FIRST CLASS MAIL

FROM: STICC
P.O.Box 7925
Saskatoon
Sask.,Canada
S7K 4R6

TO:

Edmonton 99'er Computer Users' Society
P.O.Box 11983
Edmonton
Alberta
T5J 3L1

SASKATOON TEXAS INSTRUMENTS COMPUTER CLUB

We discuss and review new products for the TI99/4A while providing technical support for any problems that a member may have. We also support a software library and have regular contacts with other groups in Canada and the United States. Our membership fees are very reasonable: $ 10.00/single or $12.00/family. If you would like to become a member, or require more information, contact any member of the executive.

1986 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

PRESIDENT:	Harry Caruk	384-6321
VICE PRESIDENT:	Ian Hawes	374-0019
SECRETARY:	Randy Mortensen	242-1622
TREASURER AND LIBRARIAN:	Ron Schnor	343-1256
EDITOR:	John Thomson	244-1394

MAILING ADDRESS

P.O.BOX 7925, Saskatoon, Sask., Canada S7K 4R6

STICC DISCLAIMER

We are a small, nonprofit club here in Saskatoon. We never have, or ever will, consider our newsletter a professional medium in its field. Therefore, with this consideration, the views presented in the articles, by various authors, may not be the views of the newsletter committee, the STICC executive, or its members. On this basis, this club cannot be held responsible for errors, omissions, views, or copy infringements, as presented in the articles.

MEETINGS

General meetings are normally held at 7 PM on the first monday of each month at the Saskatoon Region Community College 145-1st Avenue North. If the first Monday of the month is a holiday (civic or statutory), the meeting will be held on the following Monday. The meeting room number will be posted on a sign at the main entrance. (Usually room 144)

```
***********************************
*                                 *
* NEXT MEETING:   October 6, 1986 *
*                                 *
***********************************
```

Also circle these dates on your calendar:

November 3, 1986

December 1, 1986

<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

Minutes of STICC Meeting - Sept 8,1986

Harry Caruk opened the meeting and gave a summary of the history of the club. The club as been in operation as a non-profit organization for several years. Meeting dates are the first Monday of every month unless that Monday is a holiday in which case the meeting is held one week later. Currently a tape and disk library is maintained which contain hundreds of programs available for coping by members. A nominal fee is charged to borrow tapes and disks.

Sept. is the beginning of a new year for the club and all memberships are due. The rates are $12 per year family, and $10 per year individual.

Ron Schnor gave the treasurers report: we have $55 in the bank and have this room booked, but not paid, till Dec. 1986.

Moved by John Thomsom, and seconded by Francis Gaston, that Harry Caruk place an ad in the paper announcing the next meeting and featuring it as a 'swap' meeting. At the next meeting people should bring any equipment that they may wish to trade or sell. Harry will phone people from old membership lists to encourage then to attend.

Moved by Francis Gaston, and seconded by John Thomson, that Francis obtain some catalogs (Edmonton, Bob Boone, states) for TI equipment.

The new computer by Myarc, called the Geneve, was discussed. It is MS-DOS compatable and runs both TI and IBM software.

Business portion of the meeting was closed.

Submitted by Randy Mortensen / STICC Secretary

Its not looking good folks. As of this date I've had and underwhelming one entry in our NUAC logo contest announced in my March NUAC column and winding up at our mid-September OUG executive meeting here in Ottawa. It was a joint venture so what it amounts to is that all of TWO PEOPLE in all of Canada cared enough to submit a design! I KNOW its not for lack of talent so can only attribute it to one of two other factors(or both...). Either of these factors is deadly; one is slightly easier to overcome than the other so I'll deal with it first.

Many of you reading this have joined NUAC as a club; but our newsletter is still mailed to only one individual member of the club. Evidence abounds that those issues are rarely, if ever, seen by the rank and file of your individual organizations. Many people I've pressed on Timeline were not aware there was a TINUAC Logo contest or that their National Users Association was soliciting advice and input from them! It doesn't appear to have mattered much anyway.
Since I announced the contest again on Timeline, almost two months ago, there's been no additional response on any front.

Information dissemination is the name of the game; without it we're lost! If you people that receive our newsletter, on behalf of your club, do not pass on information from it to your members; then there's nobody but you to blame if our efforts go down the tubes.

Its time now(or never) to pull together. Appoint an official NUAC rep if you have joined as a club and give him/her at least a SMALL piece of each of your general meetings! Hopefully, that person will, on their own initiative or through group sponsorship, join TIMELINE, so that information of a timely nature can be exchanged easily. Information flow MUST be bi-directional! We ned to know what we're doing right and what we're doing wrong for you.... The OUG Executive is rightfully pressing us for more information on direction, goals, plans, a direction to take.... Some of our local people are somewhat less than enthusiastic about the project. There is no OFFICIAL pidgeonhole into which it can be stuck. Whether or not its obvious to you, or not, each individual membership in NUAC is costing the OUG money and the club memberships (at $30 per) are only slightly in the black. The Ottawa group has underwritten the effort all the way. My personal opinion is that its some of the best money we've ever spent and that virtually no effort should be spared in trying to carry on, but thats only my opinion and I've never heard yours. Should we let it slide and pack it in on January 1st next year or should we attempt once more to draw up a battleplan? I won't take that responsibility alone.

Personal thanks go to Terry Atkinson and Wayne Joyce of TINS, who, so far are lonely entrants in the TI-NUAC logo contest and Tony Robinson, Terry(again), Paul Meadows, Jane Laflamme, Tony Hopkins, Tom Hall and a group of local people that sat around my dining room table on a Sunday in June discussing our dilema. Special thanks to Michel Johnson, who remains tireless in his efforts on our behalf. He wrote a rather lengthy and heart-felt discourse on this very topic on TIMELINE that helped spur several others to contribute ideas last month. Your many ideas, Michel, were wonderful, with practical ways to implement them our battle would be won!

We're not out of the battle yet though(I hope). Till next month,

PS: Two of my letters to TIers in other countries bore fruit. This months issue contains articles from Paolo Bagnaresi of Italy and Steven Shaw of England. Hope you enjoy reading them as much as I did.

PPS: The other factor(Para 1 above) I feel is nearly impossible to overcome in our current crisis is APATHY. Are you guilty of it?

Take care; Keep on TIing. Bob Boone

TID BITS
(OR WAS IT "BITS AND BYTES"?)
by Francis X. Gaston

Newsflash

The new computer "Geneve" has finally arrived from Myarc. The accompanying write-up was downloaded from Timeline via Terry Atkinson of the TINS. This will follow shortly.
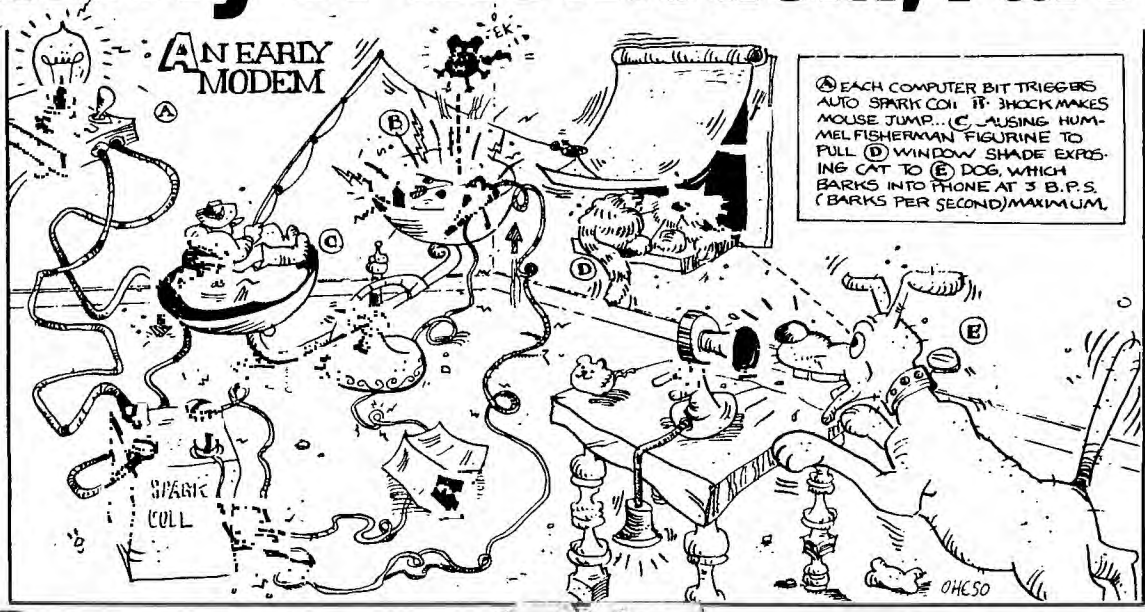
Zork I hints

- bats dont like garlic.
- to stop the echo, say it.
- pray at the altar.
- map out the coal mine.
- only sticky fingers open a lock of an egg w/o breaking it.
- if you have found the shovel, dig a while, but not too much.

Planetfall hints.

- dont attempt to get the light from the radiation chamber, there is no way to do so w/o dying.
- helicopter is a fake, as well as the underground control chamber. You can't get the light, therefore it is impossible to get down w/o being killed. As for the helicopter, likewise, since you dont have the light, you cant get the supplies from the transportation office.
- Floyd does come back to life if you manage to fix the computer and get out alive.

Now for some cartoons that I manage to have dug up! And of course the much awaited Geneve write up!!!!!!

History of the Modem, Part 1

It is true! It is here! It works! I saw it! Just as he promised to do, Lou Phillips of Myarc showed up at the Chicago Consumer Electronics Show on Sunday with several working Peripheral Expansion Boxes running his "computer- on-a-card." These were fully functioning printed circuit boards running 80-column and hi-res graphics demos.

I spoke to Mr. Phillips for over an hour at the show, and yet I almost missed him entirely. His small booth was unmarked, and I only spotted it by recognizing him, having seen him at our Chicago TI Faire last November. He was even wearing a badge with someone else's name on it, but denied that he was here incognito. The booth was not shared, it was entirely Myarc's. With Phillips behind the table was John Keown, author of Module Emulator, who is now doing extensive work with Myarc.

The new computer is named GENEVE, but will also be known as the "Model 9640 Family Computer". Phillips stated that Texas Instruments asked him not to use "9900" in the name, but he retained the "9" and added the "640" because that is the amount of RAM which comes with the machine. The following is directly from the one-page information sheet which was handed out:

o 99/4(A) compatible, runs over 100 existing TI cartridge programs
o 99/4(A) compatible, runs over 95% of all Assembly language programs & utilities
o BASIC 3.0
o TI-WRITER, now a full 80-columns.
o Multiplan, also 80 columns.
o FASTER At least 2-3 times
o LARGER Standard 640K RAM 2 MEGABYTES Addressable RAM MYARC Memory Card Compatible With Myarc 512K Card, Supplies 1.1 MEGABYTES RAM
o IBM TYPE KEYBOARD included
o PHONE TYPE CABLE Replaces Old Hex Bus Cable
o MOUSE SUPPORT
o On the back of the page was a list of more features, including:
o Composite Video Output
o RGB Output (Note: I was informed this is Analog RGB, with "thousands" of colors available)
o 40/80 column display
o Mouse Output Port
o Joystick port
o 128K VDP RAM memory

Phillips stated that you will no longer need the flex cable or even the TI console. The card plugs into the PE Box, and a cable goes from there to the IBM type keyboard. Your other cards will work as usual. When asked about using cartridge software with a machine which has no such port, Keown stated that a copy of his program, Module Emulator, will be included with each machine, and you will be expected to dump whichever cartridges you want. They will then run from disk on the new machine. The only cartridges they have been unable to use are those which call console BASIC routines, such as Personal Record Keeping, Statistics, Tax/Investment Record Keeping, and a few others. They are not sure whether they will attempt to correct this. Everything else, including the present Extended BASIC, will dump and run on the new machine.

You probably won't need XB anyway, since the machine will come with Myarc's BASIC 3.0, as well as 80 column versions of TI-Writer and Multiplan. Myarc plans at this time to include the keyboard, and the suggested retail for all of the above is $495.00. When asked if they would sell the machine without a keyboard for less, Phillips quickly added that it was likely they would do so.

Availability of the machine is planned for "about mid-July". Phillips stated he has been told to expect completed components from his suppliers "around the end of June". (Sounds like too tight a schedule to me). The initial production run is for "about 1,000 units".

Phillips stated that he considers the hardware, the card itself, "done". Several beta testers already have the card. He is presently working on the native, or boot-up, DOS. Among other things, he is trying to decide whether to use a TI-like directory system, perhaps with a boot-up menu which can call TI emulaton, or presumably something similar to MS-DOS, where TI emulation must be called in by the user from disk. Either way, once in "TI mode" the machine will function as your TI does now, except with all the new "goodies" added.

At this point I asked Mr. Phillips directly if, in essence, there will ever be another mode to use, namely, an IBM compatible system. He very quickly stated that this is one of their goals and that he expects "in about six months to be at the same stage we are now with this card". It was pointed out to him that this will roughly coincide with the 4th Chicago TI Faire, to which he was immediately invited. He has tentatively accepted our offer to present at that show.

There are still plans to produce a stand-alone new computer, but this seemed, at least to me, somewhat vague. Phillips also hinted that Myarc will probably be producing the equivalent of a Peripheral Expansion box of their own, which would also seem to me to remove the need for a self-contained machine.

Back to IBM compatibility, Phillips did state that with a double-density disk controller (such as Myarc´s) there is no reason why the new machine could not read IBM (MS-DOS) formatted disks. The problem is that the TI 9995 processor knows not what to do with 8088 instructions, so IBM programs are out until the compatibility card comes along. But I asked if, for example, word processing files and possibly even saved Multiplan files could be used by either system, and, after thinking about it for a second, Phillips stated he couldn´t see too many problems with this. This should give us some immediate "productivity compatibility" at least.

In wrapping up, Phillips noted that the quad density chip upgrade which has been talked about at other shows is now ready, and to contact dealers for info. He also stated that the fine hi-res demos which were running at the CES were written by Chris Faherty of Inscebot, and that copies of the demos would be included with Myarc´s release of BASIC 2.1 free of charge.

I would like to conclude by noting that there have been those who have publicly doubted the intentions of Myarc with regards to this machine. After waiting over 2.5 years for a replacement/upgrade machine, perhaps such skepticism is understandable among TI owners. I will say that Lou Phillips comes across as a sincere, straight forward guy. For those who, also quite understandably doubt appearances, I will tell you both that the machine DOES exist, and whatever else he is doing, Lou Phillips just spent one HECK of a lot of money for a table at this CES to show it.

I apologize for any editorializing I may have done in this article, and for anything I may have omitted. I believe I have outlined everything of importance I spoke about with Phillips, but if you have questions I haven´t anticipated, by all means contact Myarc!

Incidentally, I inquired about the origin of the name. Keown jumped in and stated that it was his idea. It seems that a few days before the CES, while they were working together, Keown told Phillips that he felt there should be a name for the new machine instead of just a number, "the 9640". As they were heading down the staircase from Phillips´ office there was a framed print on the wall. The name at the bottom was "Geneve", and when Keown suggested this, Phillips agreed to it. Considering the near religious fervor of TI users, this vaguely biblical sounding name seems appropriate.