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SASKATOON TEXAS INSTRUMENTS COMPUTER CLUB

NEWSLETTER   JANUARY, 1987

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FIRST CLASS MAIL

FROM: STICC
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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
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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)

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*   SCHEDULED MEETINGS : FEBRUARY  2,  1987  *
*                        MARCH    2          *
*                        APRIL    6          *
*                        MAY      4          *
*                                           *
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The following is a personal viewpoint of Harry A Caruk (Saskatoon T.I. Club). written connents care of STICC, are welcomed.

For some owners of the 99/4A, 1986 has been an interesting year. A variety of software became availible, especially to those individuals with expanded systems. For owners without expanded systems, software options were more limited, or to be more succinct, practically non-existant. And for others the 99/4A became an expendable item when these owners aquired other computers.

Although each individual will have a favorite software purchase, I reserve thet destinction for T.I. ARTIST. I purchased version 2.0 and although the documentation was not the best the program certainly was.

The package taught me some things about computers: 1) If I (and possibly 99% of the public) ever need to produce a complex picture- we'll use a camera- it's less time consuming. 2) Nothing is as easyy as it looks. 3) The facinating graphics demos shown in computer stores are not likely to be duplicated in complexity by the prospective buyer. But the graphics capabilities are impressive, and they do sell computers. I suppose the acquisition of computers with faster and more sophisticated graphics satisfies some catagory or other in Maslow's Needs. When the 9640 becomes availible I'll find out.

The 9640 has been the subject of much discussion in various news letters, magazines, and bulletin boards. The T.I. board on 'the source' recently included an opinion by the former author of "Randy's Ravings" (Computer Shopper). He is doubtful that the 9640 will ever appear. I dont know anything about the proposed manufacturer, but I imagine this company would invest in preliminary studies, as would any company about to embark in a new venture. That is to say feasibility and market research studies, break even points, etc. etc. It appears to me the company has expended enough time and effort to be sure of one thing- profit. At any rate the future of the 4/A may be relegated to that of a curiosity piece, fondly remembered, utilized by some, endeared to a few; unless the 9640 becomes a reality.

The 99/4A clubs will share the same fate.

A club is an association of persons, for some common object, usually jointly supported, and usually meeting at regular intervals. The key in this definition is "jointly supported". As the supply of freeware and other copy programs dwindles, current members will inevitability drift away. Most clubs are neither jointly supported nor have a membership that is large enough or knowledgeable enough to be so.

For those clubs that continue, 1987 should prove to be an interesting year.

[EDITOR'S NOTES]

For those desiring a full size keyboard for the 99/4A, the RAVE99 Co. (23 Florence Rd, Bloomfield, CT 06002) has two versions now in production. The model 99/101 has 101 keys. Some features: separate function keys *separate keys for most TI Writer and Multiplan functions *disable Quit *separate cursor(arrow) keys *numeric entry keypad *connects to console, replaces TI keyboard *US$ 164.95 plus US$ 4.95 for escutcheon(console cover) *For a review, see the December 1986 issue of MicroPendium.

The GENEVE Model 9640 Family Computer is now in production. I expect we will be getting reviews soon. Nova Computerware (52 Airport Road, Edmonton, Alberta T5G 0W7) are now taking orders for the Geneve. Their price is CAN$ 799.95 With a reported US price of US$ 409, there may be lower prices for Canadian orders (through Ottawa UG?) More details as they become known.

MG (formerly Millers Graphics) is phasing out manufacture of the GramKracker. I'm not sure when the cutoff date for orders will be.

The Edmonton TI BBS is using a program by Barry Traver called "ARCHIVER". This program allows you to pack any number of files into one file, with one directory listing, and then later "unpack" that file to restore the original files. This is useful to prevent accidentally losing one or more files from a group of files.

Also in the December issue of MicroPendium is a hardware article describing how to build a circuit to see programs run in slow motion. This should work with any program that has interrupts enabled, such as most Basic programs. A potentiometer provides variable delay. This is a simple circuit with less than a dozen parts.

A different hardware mod in the May/June issue of Ryte Data Newsletter shows how to speed up some programs by about 20%.

As a matter of interest, here are some current prices on some original new TI items from Tex Comp (P.O. Box 33084, Granada Hills, CA 91344):
    * Extended Basic   US$ 29.95
    * Editor/Assembler   US$ 19.95
    * Mini-Memory   US$ 38.95
    * Logo II   US$ 19.95
    * Multiplan   US$ 24.95
    * TI Writer   US$ 29.95'

For the information of any STICC members who may be interested in purchasing used TI software and/or hardware, Randy Kokesch has a TI99/4A system for sale. Items include a PE box, disk drive, 300 baud modem, MBX speech recognition system with several game cartridges, Minnesman Tally Spirit 80 printer, a number of game cartridges, old 99er magazines, etc. Phone 242-6368 evenings.

Our meeting room has been changed to room 221 (second floor) of the Community College for the meetings on Feb 2, March 2, and April 6, 1987.