

THE



SMUGLETTER

FROM THE SOUTHERN NEVADA USERS' GROUP

88

Vol. 6 - No. 10

October, 1988

NEXT MEETING

MONDAY, October 10, 1988 - 6:30 PM

NEVADA POWER BUILDING MEETING ROOM

6226 West Sahara, Las Vegas, Nevada

President's Message

Due to my working extended hours on the unlimited hydroplane races, and working in Beatty for most of last week, my computer time has been severely limited. I was also unable to attend the officer's meeting so my information regarding the club has been provided by Cindy. Apparently there were only three officers in attendance at the O-M because of mixed-up scheduling. From now on, we will have the O-M at Cindy's house, the 4th Monday of each month at 7:00 P.M.

It seems that our club treasury may nearly be depleted due to several major purchases needed to keep the BBS system operational. Hopefully, we will have a good turn-out at October's meeting so that the \$3.00 raffle of the old 1200 baud BBS modem can rebuild club funds. This would also be a good time to stock up on disks, etc.

This time next month I should have a 99/4A system up and running besides the 9640 system which I have been using for the last year. This will make it easier for me to evaluate and pass on information regarding 4A programs. Myarc has virtually completed the MDOS operating system for the GENEVE, and once the hard drive DSR's are inserted into the current version I will be able to use my CorComp controller in the spare Expansion Box.

Rumor has it that Jack Riley demonstrated a working version of ADVANCED BASIC and GENE (multi-tasking operating system) at the Seattle TI-fair a few weeks ago and that Myarc should be receiving PASCAL from Pecan Software very soon. My-Pro-Art, an advanced version of My-Art is in the developmental stage and Myarc is taking suggestions for features to be incorporated into the program. The Myarc "Protection Card" mentioned at the last Fest-West supposedly will have a math co-processor slot, advanced sound chip (Atari/Amiga type) for MIDI musical instrument interface, and a speech slot. (I wonder if the 'P' card will still be "free" with the purchase of Myarc software?) It is also rumored that Lou Phillips has decided that the next major software project for Myarc will be a BASIC Compiler designed to work on the 9640 AND the TI. (with Myarc 512K memory

expansion, of course...) Version 1.08 of MDOS was accidentally let out before beta testing was completed. (Shame on you Peter... Smile Thank) It incorporates two new undocumented features: MODE F# MODE B# will change the default screen and character colors in MDOS when #=valid color number 2 through 16. The MODE command can be used in AUTOEXEC, batch file, or from command mode as desired. The second feature is a directory command which will only show the designated file type. (IF, IV, DF, DV, or P) The format is: DIR '# where '#' is the single quote character (under the tildy) and # is a valid file type. The screen display of 1.08 is considerably faster than past versions, and 1.09 is said to be faster still. A few other tips have come my way: Myart can be loaded faster by running the MYART1 file (instead of MYART) thus bypassing the title screen. Also, the second byte of the first word in an MDOS program is usually >47. If this byte is changed to >46, there may be a noticeable increase in the speed of the program because more of the high-speed ram is used.

Two new programs for the 9640 deserve mention. The first is an RLE to GIF converter called RLE2 by Tom Wynne, (Fairware, \$15.00) which runs from MDOS. Once the graphic is in GIF format, it can be loaded from Myart and colored in. The second program is a super fast track copier called NOTHYCOPY (Fairware, \$10.00) by James Schroeder. This program (actually there are three for the different controllers) runs from GPL mode and copies a disk (any format) in drive one to drive two in about 20 seconds! My thanks (and checks) to both programmers.

If you would like to see articles on a particular subject, let me know at the monthly meeting. Until I receive ideas for articles, I will continue to write about subjects that interest me. Better still, write an article and submit it to Rudy. If you do not support the group, the group may not be around to support you. ATTEND THE MEETINGS!

BBS REPORT

During the last SNUG meeting, the group authorized me to purchase some new disk drives to replace the dead and dying ones that have been giving us so much trouble over the last few months. We decided to purchase them locally if we could get a good price and local warranty. Coincidentally, Bob Sherburne recieved a flyer from a local computer wholesaler advertising half height Fujitsu drives at a reasonable price. Bob was kind enough to purchase two of them through his business and pass them on to the club at his cost plus tax. The drives come with a one year walk in warranty so we won't have to worry about mailing them off for repairs should that become necessary. We now have 3 fully functional drives and a fourth that will probably work fine once I set it up with some files. Thank you Bob.

Another recent purchase was an Avatex 2400 baud modem. We have been officially on/line with 2400 baud capability since August 18th. There was some difficulty at first with the file transfers at 2400 baud, but an update to the BBS program has remedied that. Prior to going on-line with the Avatex modem, I had been experiencing periodic modem lockup. I don't know what caused it, but from time to time, the modem would refuse to issue an answer tone. It would answer the phone and then not connect with the caller. I am happy to say that this problem has not occurred since connecting the new modem. For those who don't have 2400 baud modems, don't worry. We still support 300 and 1200 baud as well as the 2400 baud.

While on the subject of recent purchases for the BBS, I should mention the new Extended Basic module that we purchased at the last meeting. The old module had suddenly started locking up every chance it got and was causing numerous problems with the program and disk accesses. Since going to the new module, I haven't had a single lockup.

I know it looks like we have had a lot of equipment fail in the last few months, but in reality, it has been steadily going downhill for the last year or more. I have been nursing it along and making do with less and less, using my own equipment or borrowing stuff from other members, and even using things out of the monthly raffle pot to try to keep the board going without having to dip into the treasury to buy new equipment. Last month things got so bad that I finally had to give up and ask for some new equipment. I checked some old disks today just to see if I could tell how long we have been running the BBS with the old stuff. The first message was left on the original BBS (a program called TI-COMM written by John Clulow) on April 27, 1985. We have been on-line 24 hours a day continuously since then. During that time, (until recently) the only failure we had was a TMS9901 chip in the Micro Expansion Box. That's a remarkable record considering the total number of hours everything has run.

Because some of the problems we had with the BBS were disk drive related, there is a possibility that some of the files that were in the Download section may be bad. Bob Bieber has found at least 2 Archived files that either wouldn't de-archive, or wouldn't run once de-archived. I have removed or replaced those files. If you have any difficulty with a file, please tell me so I can check it out.

With the new BBS program (99 BBS, version 7.6), we got a couple of new features. The most obvious one is the word-wrap feature. When leaving a message in any of the message bases or the Sysop section, there are no longer line numbers. You just type your message in such the same manner that you would with TI-WRITER. When you reach the end of a line, the program finds the beginning of the word you were typing, deletes it from the end of that line and moves it to the beginning of the next line. It happens fast enough that unless you type at about 30 words per minute or so, you probably won't have any trouble with lost characters while the program wraps to the next line. There is also a separate file transfer section for Geneve only files. TI users won't have to download a program only to find that it won't even run without a Geneve.

A couple of other new features include a timeout warning message and beep that warn you to press a key to avoid a timeout (the bbs will log you off if you go too long without pressing a key), and a beep that sounds when you reach the end of a data entry field (as in message subjects).

We also got a new on-line game called HANGMAN. This is a very good version of the game we all played as kids. The scoring can be quite frustrating. You get points based on the number of characters in the word, and the number of guesses it took you to get the word. If you get all the letters without a wrong guess, there is a substantial bonus. The frustrating part is when you miss a word. The program takes away HALF of your accumulated points! There is a high score routine that tracks the 3 top scores and who got them. There has been quite a bit of action on this game so far and the top 3 scores have changed regularly. If you are a hangman or wheel of fortune fan, give this game a try. I think you will like it.

All in all, we essentially have a new bbs. everything is running so smoothly now that it's getting to be fun again to run the thing. I have already made a few changes to the program and have a couple more in mind for the future. If you have any suggestions that would make the bbs better, please let me know.

-John-

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LIBRARIANS REPORT October 1988

by Dee Wellman

With summer vacations coming to an end the amount of programs available from Genie and Comuserve are picking up. Summertime means vacation and that creates a shortage of new programs.

This month's Disk of the Month features DISK LABELER 99 program created by Paul Scheidewantle. It is a very well written and functional program that lets the user create many different types of disk labels. It is very friendly and offers a variety of functions and styles of labels. the program is compatible with Star and Epson type printers. It is Fair-Ware and is programmed in X-Basic. It is compressed and archived, with documentation. Very nice.

Along with the Disk Label program I have included a packet of programs from the United Kingdom that has it's own menu and is also programmed in X-Basic. The programs have great graphics and are very entertaining. Billy-Ball is the name of the game. There are 4 different games with instructions. They are also compressed and archived. Created by Roland Trueman and Stephen Shaw of Stockport, Cheshire, England.

Last but not least is the Micropendium game Wipe-Out featured in the August 1988 Micropendium. The program was run through X-Basher and Pre-Scan-It and what was a 47 sector file is now 24 sectors and loads rapidly. This program is by David Mennenoh, hopefully he doesn't mind me squashing his program a wee bit! This program is ready to run.

Remember the Disk of the Month is free to the Unlimited Library member with disk exchange, and there is a fee of \$1 without the exchange disk. For members that do not have the Unlimited Library the fee is \$2 with disk exchange and \$3 without exchange disk.

Well, I hope that you will take advantage of these fine examples of Extended Basic programming. Until next month.....

=Dee=

p.s. Caution: both Disk Labeler and Billy-Ball have a LOAD file, please de-archive to separate disks!

BATCH FILES FOR THE GENEVE

This month I have again decided to write about batch files. (For lack of other ideas.) The batch file shown below is named "SHOW" because that is what it does. It shows a DV/80 file in "/M or more.." format. The file SHOW must be on the current drive, but the file being displayed can be on any drive. To use it, just type "SHOW C FILENAME" and the DV/80 file named FILENAME on drive C will be displayed. If the file you wish to see is on the current drive just type SHOW FILENAME. SHOW does not have to be on the current drive to be used. C:SHOW B FILENAME will run show from drive C fetch and display FILENAME from drive B.

Batch files have a quirk which should be mentioned. They will not perform a function on themselves. (In computer jargon, "They are not recursive." Ed.) For instance, SHOW will not show itself from the current drive, but if a copy of show is on a different drive it can then be displayed without difficulty. I have written bats that protect, copy, etc. and have found that while a batch file is in use it is OPEN, (being read) and immune to the effects of itself. Hope that makes sense.

```
ECHO OFF
CLS
IF NOT *%1*==* GOTO WORK
ECHO FORMAT IS: SHOW [drive] [filename]
ECHO
```

```
ECHO [drive] IS OPTIONAL IF [filename]
IS ON DEFAULT DRIVE
ECHO
GOTO END
:WORK
IF *%2*==* GOTO CURRENT
ECHO SHOWING [ %1:%2 ]
ECHO
TYPE %1:%2/M
ECHO
GOTO END
:CURRENT
ECHO SHOWING [ %1 ]
TYPE %1/M
ECHO
:END
```

The first two lines tell MDOS not to display commands in the file and to clear the screen. Line 3 checks for a filename. If the variable %1 is not equal to "" then there is a filename so goto the label ":WORK". If there is no filename, ECHO (display) the next 4 lines of instructions then goto the end of the program. Line 10 checks to see if there are two user variables. If there aren't, then only the filename was entered and it must be located on the current drive, so GOTO :CURRENT. If there are two variables then line 11 displays the filename, line 12 displays a blank line, and line 13 types out the file to the screen, adding the ":" for you. When it is done, a blank line is displayed and the batch goes to the label END. If only one variable (the filename) was passed from the command line, then the file must be located on the current drive. (Label :CURRENT) Line 17 displays the filename, line 18 types out the file, line 19 displays a blank line, and line 20 ends the program.

The instructions can be omitted and the program shortened if you so desire or if you wish to redirect output to the printer, change the type commands to:

```
TYPE %1:%2 >PRN and TYPE %1 >PRN (I called this batch file PRINT... smile)
```

Typing SHOW A FILENAME or PRINT A FILENAME is much easier than typing: TYPE A:FILENAME/M or TYPE A:FILENAME >PRN. Try it!

#BOB SHERBURNE#

SECRETARY'S REPORT

MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 12, 1988



The September meeting of SNU5 was called to order at 8:45 PM by Bob Sherburne, President. Thirteen (13) members were present.

The clubs bulletin board was in dire need of two disk drive. A motion was passed for Bob Sherburne to purchase the drives.

Bob brought up the Fall 4-A-SHARE Fair in Placentia Calif to see who might be interested in attending. Contact Bob Sherburne if you are interested, it is a family affair and sounds like fun.

George Tilly gave an interesting demo of the TI Base on his Geneve. The speed in which it runs on the Geneve is impressive. Five orders were taken to purchase it.

John Martin showed Roger Merrit's Jiffy Flyer-it utilizes CSGD graphics and hex-code data for border graphics. For a Halloween poster I used JET (John Taylor's Sprite Builder, once again I am mentioning a program available in the library) to design and obtain the hex-code data for a pumpkin border and a TI Artist instance converted to a CSGD graphic. The fonts may also be changed with data statements. I just wasn't in the mood to start a project working with the fonts. But you could easily build a disk with personalized data.

SEPTEMBER RAFFLE WINNERS:

Mike Lunsford chose a pkg. of disks.
Ken Shorter chose a disk box.

Due to the small turn-out the modem, a Smart Dak 1200, will be in the October Raffle. The tickets will be \$3 apiece, buy several and win a modem!

Steve Buchanan donated three P Box fans. Thanks Steve.

Welcome back to Bob Bieber from an extended and needed vacation. Bob and Carman toured the USA, from Niagara Falls, Canada, and over to Vancouver then got in some fantastic fishing at Gold Beach Oregon.

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 PM.

At the October meeting George Tilly will demonstrate Roger Merrit's Picture It along with his MX 1000 printer. Picture It is an instance converter which runs in Ex.Basic or through TI writer, Funnelweb to most of us.

I will show Print Wizard. A user friendly graphics program that prints out greeting cards, signs, banners and letterheads. It has 2 printer disks so there should not be any problem in configuration to your printer. It also converts TI Artist instances, fonts and borders.

Dee Wellman will introduce us to Multi-Com, a locally owned Bulletin Board. Check last months newsletter, page 4. It sounds like great fun, I know Dee and his family are hooked on one of the games.

Once again, if you are interested in any programs or tutorials, please contact me or one of the other officers. Or just speak up at the meeting.



SECRETARY
SNUG USERS GROUP

SNUG TREASURER'S REPORT - 30 SEPTEMBER 1988

(in lieu of 30 September 1988 bank statement)

Karen Rodgers--Treasurer

FIXED ANNUAL EXPENDITURES:

SNUGLETter (Estimated cost per 100)	
Publication Costs (\$43/mo x 12)	\$ 516.00
Postage (\$25/mo x 12)	300.00
P. O. Box Rental Fee (\$22 annually)	22.00
Bank Account Service Charge (\$8/mo x 12)	96.00
SNUG B/Board Phone Line (\$11/mo x 12)	132.00
Long Distance Phone Calls (Estimated)	44.00
Miscellaneous Expenditures (Estimated)	90.00

TOTAL ANNUAL OPERATING COSTS (Estimated)	\$1,200.00
Annual Dues Collection (Avg 30 mbrs x \$18)	540.00

ANNUAL DEFICIT (Estimated)	
To be recovered through fund raisers, disc copying fees, special sales, etc.	\$ 660.00

FUNDS BALANCE (as of 31 August 1988)	\$ 744.44
(includes \$6.28 August 1988 service charge)	

COLLECTIONS (during September 1988)	
Membership Dues (Regular \$18 x 4)	72.00
Unlimited Library Access (\$25 x 2)	50.00
Bulk Diskette/Disc Box Sales	56.50
Disc of the Month Sales	16.00
Miscellaneous TI Equipment Raffle	18.00
Miscellaneous TI Equipment Sales	2.00
(Sub-Total)	204.50

EXPENDITURES (during September 1988)	
Extended BASIC cartridge for B/Board	10.00
Modem for B/Board	171.00
(Sub-Total)	181.00

FUNDS AVAILABLE (as of 30 September 1988)	
Checking Account (General Operating Funds)	\$ 627.94
Funnelweb Donations Trust Fund	85.00
J. J. Menu Donations Trust Fund	55.00
(Bank Balance)	\$ 767.94