WELCOME!!

Since we have no new members this month, Welcome to all the renewing members of the Tri Cities 99er Computer club. As you know, any club exists only because of it's ability to fill a need for the membership. If that need is not fulfilled, the membership will drop and soon there will be no club. Our membership has dropped by 10 members since January. Lets all spread the word that we do have something to offer those interested in using the TI99/4A.

TRI CITY 99er OFFICERS

President.......Mike Sandvig   627-4185
Vice-President..Don Farquhar   967-9798
Secretary.......Mel Faught   783-6220
Treasure........Paul Randleman   735-3131

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Librarian.......Sue Carver   943-5478
Publicity.......Gary Cleveland   735-7211
Programs........Don Farquhar   967-9798
Refreshments....Eugene Walter   946-8004
Meeting Room....Duane Dustin   375-6272
Newsletter......Mel Faught   783-6220

MEETING LOCATION & TIME

Apollo Hall
40 Apollo Lane
Richland, Wa.

Third Wednesday each month at 7:00 PM

NEWSLETTER EXCHANGE

The Tri Cities 99er Computer Group is participating in a Newsletter exchange program with other TI Users Groups. This exchange is made with the understanding that, with proper credits, other user groups may reprint articles from this Newsletter and we may reprint articles from other user group newsletters.

MULITPLAN DEFAULT CHANGES

Since our President is out of town, your Editor has stolen his space to cover default changes to the TI Multiplan program using the new addition to our Library- Advanced Diagnostics (MG Diag) from Millers Graphics. Those that missed our last meeting also missed a good demonstration of this program by Terry Terrass.

Recently I did some playing around with MG Diag, the Multiplan program disk (a backup of course) and some tips from Earl Hill of Chicago (via the April issue of MICROpendium).

The following instructions will change the serial printer default to "PIO" and, if you have two disk drives, change the data disk default from drive 1 to drive 2. First however, you need to check out the MG Diag program from the Library and get familiar with it's commands and functions.

(1) Initialize a disk and make a backup of you Multiplam program disk. Make sure you call it TIMP.

(2) To change the printer default- Run the MG Diag program and remove the MG Diag disk and insert your backup copy of Multiplan. Use the FF (find file) MPINTR (the file name you want to change) command to locate the starting sector. The sector to change is one sector beyond the start. In my case it was sector 107, it all depends on how your files are placed on your disk. Use ES command to edit (in the ASCII mode) this sector. Down about line 15, you will see RS232 plus other stuff. Change to the Hex mode and starting at byte 195 (line 14), type in "03 50 49 4F". Fill up the rest of line 15 with Hex spaces (>20). Go back to ASCII mode and byte 196 thru 198 should look like this "PIO" with the rest of the line blank.

If you have two disk drives GOTO instruction 3 otherwise GOTO 4.

(3) To change the data disk default- Stay in ASCII mode and back up to byte 92 and you will see DSK1. Change byte 95 to 2.

(4) Now to write the changes to your MPINTR file- Go to the command mode and WS (write sector). This will write the changes to you disk.

To check the new printer default load Multiplan and start a new data file by just typing in something in Cell R1C1 (like TEST) and send it to the printer. If it prints out on your parallel printer you got it right.

To check the data drive default load one of your Multiplan data disks, select the LOAD command and run a disk directory (Function S). If you get a directory of disk 2, your ok. If not, call me.

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

There have been some good things that have resulted from the TI pull-out of support for the 99/4A. For one thing, it has provided an opportunity for many hard working third-party software developers to do their thing. As more of the secrets of the inner workings of the 99/4A are discovered, you will see a big expansion of quality programs that will spark interest and keep this computer much alive. Another thing that the pull-out did was to make us users develop what we have. When someone is always doing everything for you, you tend to become lazy, dull and uncreative to say the least.

Just as an example, the following program idea is not revolutionary and it sure won't make the innovator rich. However, it demonstrates how a common programing feature, provided by TI Basic, can be used in an imaginative way to create a useful product. This idea comes from Robert Wenger of the Lehigh 99'er of Allentown, PA. It uses two Basic features (1) The REM statement that lets you print REMarks that are ignored during program execution , and (2) the fact that Basic will automatically sort program line numbers in numerical order.

So what!, we all knew that (didn't we?). Where the ingenuity comes in is that Robert (His money must have ended before the month ran out) probably needed an appointment calendar and being broke, decided to develop one from the tools he had available. Anyway, regardless of the conditions, he listed all appointments and important dates using the REM statements, and numbered them by the calendar dates in the MMDD format. If you have a hard time remembering your birthday, say Dec 15, you can write your self a note like; 1215 REM Hey! it's my Birthday (Dummy). If you have alot of dates to remember, you can list them in any order and, with the LIST command, they will be sorted in numerical (calendar) order. If you only want the dates for the month of Dec, use LIST 1200-1231, or if you want to see only the next important date inter 527 (thats todays date) LIST, and the next date entry will be printed.

I tried this program idea out by printing Jeremys' (my grandson) Little league baseball schedule for the remaining games. Needless to say every kid on the team wanted one.

```
1 REM     ********************
2 REM     *  RUBES SCHEDULE  *
3 REM     *    SECOND HALF    *
4 REM     *     FOR 1985      *
5 REM     ********************
6 REM
7 REM
513 REM RUBES PLAY McDONOLDS
520 REM RUBES PLAY RAINIER BANK
528 REM RUBES PLAY PETES
601 REM RUBES PLAY BASIN DEPT.
606 REM RUBES PLAY KAYMAX
608 REM RUBES PLAY WONDRACK
610 REM RUBES PLAY OVERTURF
615 REM RUBES PLAY PETES
618 REM RUBES PLAY BASIN DEPT.
622 REM RUBES PLAY OVERTURF
```

This small entry doesn't do justice to the program, but if you had 50 or 100 entries, its sorting capabilities will shine and keep you on top of your important dates. Thanks Robert.

MORE ON KEYBOARDS POWER SUPPLIES

Four months ago your Editor reported that keyboards and power supplies were available from Radio Shack . Unfortunately only a limited number were sent to each store and they soon ran out. Currently a number of other electronic stores are advertising availability of these items. I took a flyer and ordered one of each ($3.50 each plus $3.50 handling and postage). I just received the order, and these appear to be quality boards, not at all like the imported keyboard that I got on my second grey computer (On which the keyboard soon went bad). The power supply has the black heat sink. There is some issue about whether the black painted one or the shiny silver heat sink runs cooler. However, the power supply board I received was well constructed and had the TI logo on it.

If you order 10 keyboards you can get them for $1.90 each, what a buy! Lets check on how many are interested at the next meeting. Those that can't wait can order from:

LOIR LECTRONICS CORP.
13933N. CENTRAL EXPRESSWAY
SUITE 212
DALLAS, TX 75243

TERMINAL EMULATOR PROGRAMS   by Terry Terrass

If you are interested in using your TI-99/4A computer for inter-computer communications, you are probably interested in finding a Terminal Emulator program which meets your needs. The growing number of TI TE programs available attests to the fact that many TI users are still looking for an emulator which they find acceptable for their use. If you are one of these people you may be interested in the capabilities and limitations of several of the emulators which are available. The accompanying Terminal Emulator Comparisons table, compiled from program documentation, reviews, and actual use, covers many of the the factors to be considered in selecting an emulator which best meets ones needs.

Except for the TE-1200 I have used each of these emulators with my system which includes a TI Peripheral Expansion Box with 32KB memory, dual double side disk drives, and a RS-232 card; an Anchor Automation 300 baud Volksmodem, and a Gemini- 10X printer. My telecommunications usage, although quite limited, has included the TI Bulletin Board in Reading, Pa., a PRIME computer, and another TI-99/4A, all via phone line. The following observations on each emulator supplement the data in the Comparisons table. Note that my observations may omit advantages and/or limitations which could affect your use since my experience has been limited, both in time and in types of host computers.

FILE TRANSFERS - Up and down loading files, including programs, depends upon a number of factors beyond those needed for satisfactory communication. These include, among others, the type of file (ASCII or binary), file format, and the file transfer protocols used by both the computers. TI Bulletin Boards, CompuServe, and The Source follow a Texas Instruments protocol compatible with the TI TE-II cartridge. Of the other three emulators discussed here, only the TE-1200 uses this same file transfer protocol.

TI TE-II - This emulator is not very easy to use if you want to capture the received data on disk and/or printer for subsequent viewing and/or use after going off/line. Although up to about 6 pages of 40-character lines can be captured in RAM and then reviewed on the CRT by use of the arrow keys, the output of data is limited to what actualy appears on the CRT screen at the time of the output. To avoid losing data you have to be careful and pay close attention to what you are doing. If you are interested in transferring disk files between two TI-99s, however, the TE-II is a good way to go.

COMM-99 - If you are interested in capturing what is received during an interactive communication session I think that this emulator is the best and easiest to use of those compared. Its controls are straight forward and its operating and buffer status are immediately apparent. Being in the public domain, the price is right . And if you are an Assembly Language buff with a desire to make your own modifications and improvements to the COMM-99 emulator, its source code is available. So far as I know, this is not true of any of the other emulators covered.

PTERM-99 - This emulator is supplied on a copy protected disk and is available from C. Richard BRYANT of Altamonte Springs, Florida. It has a number of useful features including menu driven screens which make it easy to control. Its limitations include its inability to receive files using the TI protocol and its lack of any indicator as to buffer status except for the CRT screen turning red when the buffer is within 1KB of being full. Unless you pay close attention, it is easy to forget to start receiving to the buffer and, if you do forget, there is nothing to remind you.

TE-1200 - Although I have not used this emulator I believe it worth mentioning for several reasons. One is that it can use the TI file transfer protocol. Another is the fact that it offers baud rates above 1200 although this isn't useful unless you have the necessary high-speed modem or can directly connect to another computer with the same rate. Its limitations include its price, the need to modify pin conections between the TI RS-232 card and the modem, and rather skimpy documentation.

TERMINAL EMULATOR COMPARISONS

CHARACTERISTIC	TI TE-II	COMM-99	PTERM-99	TE-1200
Author	Texas Inst	Dave Ramsey	CR Bryant	Soft Mail Inc
Cost	$14.95	Public Domain	$14.00	$49.95
Media	Cartridge	Disk	Disk	Disk
Baud Rate	110,300	300,1200,2400	300,1200	110,300,1200
Parity	E,O, None	E,O, None	E,O, None	E,O, None
Stop Bits	?	?	1,2	(1,2)?
Select # Data Bits	7,8	7,8	7,8	7,8
Duplex Mode	Full, Half	Full, (Half)?	Local Echo	Full, Half
Comm Ports	RS-232-1,2	RS-232-1,2	RS-232-1,2	RS-232-1,2
Print Port-Parallel	PIO	PIO	PIO	(PIO)?
-Serial	RS-232-1,2	RS-232-1,2	RS-232-1,2	(RS-232-1,2)?
Capture Buf Size	About 5.5KB	16KB	28KB	12.5KB
Up/Download files fm TI Bulletin Bd, CompuServe,Source	Yes	No	No	Yes
Special Features	Access Speech Synthesizer Auto Log On	Uses X-On and X-Off Protocol	Uses X-On and X-Off Protocol	Uses X-On and X-Off Protocol

‼ Hardware Requirements ‼

1. Additional Mem	Not Used	32KB	32KB	32KB
2. Disk Drive	1 (Optional)	1	1	1
3. Cartridge Mod	TE-II	E/A	1 of XB,E/A,	E/A or Mini
4. Printer	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Tri City Computer
Group will be held June 19, 1985. This
meeting will feature Don Farquhar and all
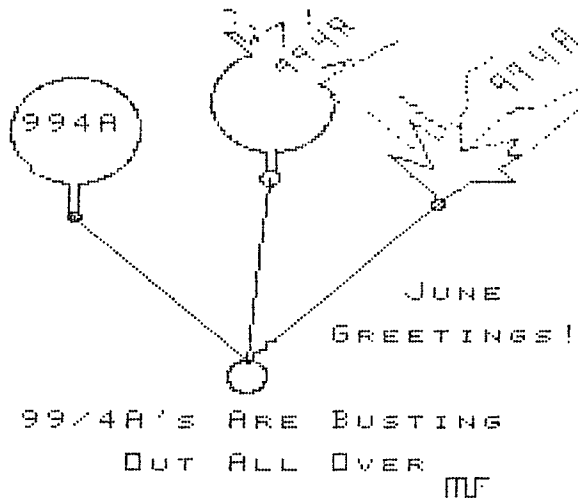his computers, and he has more than one.

LIBRARY NOTES

We have three new additions to our
Library. These are Freeware programs
made available to User Groups and require
an expanded system with a disk drive.
(1) Computer Craps from Ramsoft
Enterprises- This is a full casino style
craps game that fromally sold for $14.95.

(2) Tax Template for Multiplan from Mike
Conway of South Bend, IN.- A template for
your Multiplan for 1984, but I think it
can be modified for future years. It
includes Form 1040, Schedules A,B,D,W,
Tax rate and sales tax tables.

(3) Sprite Builder from John Taylor of
Florence AL- This program can be used to
design your own double-sized sprites. It
also contains 115 pre-defined sprite
patterns that can be modified or merged
with your program. This would be a good
program for a future meeting
demonstration. Any volunteers?

6/1/85

JUNE
GREETINGS!

99/4A'S ARE BUSTING
OUT ALL OVER MF

Address all correspondence to:

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