

VAST NEWS

for the VAST Computer User Group

Volume 6 Number 12

December 8, 1990



Merry
Christmas
from the
VAST Computer
User Group

From The President, Mike Grogan

First, I want to thank Jim Ely for taking over the November meeting. As some of you know I was there but just could not concentrate very well. I didn't explain at the meeting so I will now. I had an injury at work on Aug. 25 and have been off work since. I had a ruptured disk in my neck. Well, I went into the hospital on Nov. 6th and was out on Nov. 8th. The doctor cut out the disk from the front of my neck. With the swelling in my neck and the drugs I was on, I felt pretty bad/good at the meeting.

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I want to thank the club for the plant that was sent. It really made me feel good in such a place. A hospital is no place to feel good. If you do then they help you feel worse. I mean it seems to me that while in a hospital you hurt. But when you go home you start feeling

much better much faster. THANK GOODNESS!!! I had a lot of phone calls and I thank you for that. Wallace Knight came up to see me and I want to thank him for the visit. Thanks for all your concerns.

Now that I'm better, I think we need to get busy and have some sort of membership drive. Those that came to the November

meeting had a chance to get some of the clubs cards and posters. Please put your name and phone number on them before you put them up. I will tell you why. At the December meeting I will introduce a motion that I feel will give you a reason for getting those cards out into the public. I want you to think about this and vote on it at the meeting. If you put your name on a card and someone calls you and comes to a meeting and becomes a member, you will receive a credit slip. This slip will be good for discounts on programs in our library or some of the Disks Of The Month. Or you could use it for new blank disks or a discount on your membership in 1992. It could even mean FREE MEMBERSHIP for you if you can get people to join. WHAT A DEAL!! There are lots of people out there that have a TI and don't know about us. You could help them learn more about their TI and all the things that they can do with it.

Also at the next meeting we will talk about our BBS and what it could mean to you. We will talk about the cost of this valuable part of your club and how we might cut the operating expense. PLEASE PLAN TO ATTEND. It's YOUR club so let's hear YOUR ideas...
Mike

TI World and Local News

(Compiled from various sources including MICROpendium Magazine by Jim Ely)

Myarc Update

The evidence is mounting to the fact that Myarc is NO LONGER in business. Accord-

See NEWS on page 10

SECRETARY'S SLATE

MINUTES

VAST COMPUTER USER GROUP

November 11, 1990

The monthly meeting of the VAST USER GROUP was held on Saturday, November 10, 1990 at the Pyle Adult Recreation Center in Tempe, AZ. The meeting was called to order by President Mike Grogan at 10:05 a.m. President Grogan then turned the meeting over to Vice President Jim Ely. Mike had had neck surgery during the past week and was afraid to "stick his neck out" long enough to run the meeting.

A correction was made to the minutes of the October meeting. It was noted that Dan Shell and not Wallace Knight had placed the name of Ed Morse in nomination for the office of Vice President. A motion to accept the minutes as published in the newsletter and corrected was made, seconded and accepted by the membership.

The treasurers report was read and approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Tom Pfeffer reporting for the **Publicity Committee** said the Pennysaver ad had gotten a little screwed up and that he was going to get back to them so it could be straightened out. Mike Marfisi pointed out that the FOG listing also needed to be renewed with Computer Monthly.

Dan Shell for the **Program Committee** suggested that we start taking a closer look at some of the data bases available for the TI

and "Genny". We will start next month with an in depth look at First Base. Mike Marfisi will see that he has a complete updated version.

Newsletter Committee had no report. Curt Mavity took a moment to comment on how professional our newsletter looked and members thanked Jim Ely for a job well done.

OLD BUSINESS

Bud Barnes, chairman of the Election Committee announced that all ballots had been counted and the present officers had been re-elected to another term. A total of only fourteen ballots was received in the election.

NEW BUSINESS

Bud Barnes brought out the fact that the BBS was currently set up so that all officers and BBS Committee members had full access to all areas of the board including the ability to read all private messages. He felt that a private message should be private and hidden from all. He agreed that the Sysop must be able to read everything because of legal responsibilities but no one else should. He made a motion to exclude all but the Sysop from the private area. Motion was seconded by Mike Grogan and passed. Jim Ely will make the change ASAP.

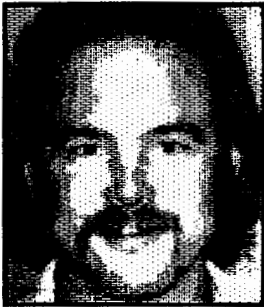
Mike Marfisi announced that we would be ordering blank disks and that anyone who wanted any could order through the club at 20 cents each in lots of 10 or more. Orders

See MINUTES, on page 4

Member Profile

Meet **Tom Pfeffer**.

My name is Tom Pfeffer and I have lived in Arizona off and on since 1962. I was an Air Force brat and so I spent a great deal of time traveling. I was born in England. I have also lived in 5 U.S. States and Germany. I



graduated from Chandler High School in 1971.

I bought my first TI at a yard sale almost 2 years ago. I must say that it was the best twenty-five bucks that I ever spent! I was

lucky enough to see an ad in the paper a few months later and lo and behold I joined VAST. What a stroke of luck! My TI system and my computer knowledge have been growing ever since.

When I'm not computing, I'm working as an inspector for OSC-Space Data, although lately it has been the other way around. I am also a sports junky, attending Firebird and Roadrunner games regularly. I watch football religiously and have been a Chicago Bear fan forever.

I am also an avid game player. I play softball, volleyball, darts, chess, cards, Risk and any other game that I can get my hands on. I also love to cook (and eat) and sale, yard that is.

Someday I would love to learn assembly language so that I could write some programs

of my own. I use TI-Writer and Extended-BASIC most of the time. I look forward to attending the next TI FEST WEST in California in February, too.

My biggest problem is that I have so much that I want to do, and so little time to do it. What an understatement!

See you on the BBS, at the next sporting event or the next VAST meeting, whichever comes first — if I am not working that is!

(Tom is currently the Publicity Committee Chairman in VAST. —Ed)

MINUTES, from page 3

and money will be collected this month and the order placed after the next meeting.

Hazel Knight asked if we were going to offer our help with FEST WEST this year. Mike Grogan said that the latest info he had was that they did not seem to need much help and that everything was under control. Mike Marfisi mentioned that anyone wanting to stay overnight should make reservations soon to get the special FEST WEST Discounts.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 10:55 a.m.

As the program this month, several members brought their favorite software to demonstrate to the other members present.

Respectfully,
Mike Marfisi,
Secretary, VAST



~~~~~  
 W-AGE/99 \* NEW-AGE/  
 99 \* NEW-AGE/99 \* N  
 EW-AGE/99 \* NEW-AGE  
 /99 \* NEW-AGE/99 \*  
 ~~~~~

by JACK SUGHRUE,
Box 459, East Douglas, MA 01516

#4

Many of my computer correspondents have a basic 4A system upgraded to include a tape recorder and that's where they want to (or have to) stay. Though I could hardly imagine life without multi-drives, RAMdisk, upgraded controllers, and all the rest, computer life in the slower lanes is not all that bad. After all, Harry Wilhelms (E-Z KEYS) and Eric LaFortune (ROCK RUNNER) produced two of the most powerful items in TI software using just the tape recorder. In the process they both discovered unknown (and thus untapped) potentials of our great machine. Most tape sources have dried up: IUG, Amnion Helpline, Tigercub. User groups, Triton, Asgard, Texcomp, and Kidware are about the only regular tape sources left. Some user groups (like Lima and MUNCH) still have extensive tape libraries for members. TI fairs everywhere still have piles of tapes available. At last year's New England Fayuh, for example, I purchased a dozen new (still in packages) tapes:

BEGINNER'S BASIC TUTOR (from TI), far better to use with a novice or kids than TI's TEACH YOURSELF BASIC (which is too mathematical for most casual users).

BEST COMPUTER COACH: TEXAS INSTRUMENTS (from Boston Electronic Sys-

tems Training) extremely clever. It comes with two cassettes - one with programs and data and the other an audio tape to listen to and easily follow along while computing.

LEMONADE (from Kidware), though less graphic than Apple's version, is many times better. I use both in my classroom. Kids prefer Kidware with more options and more intelligent control. All Kidware tapes have Side Two. LEMONADE contains a super code-breaker game. Kidware stuff is always good TI stuff.

THE WIZARD'S DOMINION (from American Software Design and Distribution Co.) fantasy adventure with a superb manual (unusual for adventures) making it a joy to play.

COSMIC CAVER (from CompuTech Distributing Inc.) timed space arcade game with twists, including a possibly-bottomless pit.

COSMOPOLY (from Not-Polyoptics) has got to be the most bizarre form of Monopoly ever devised. The setting is the Universe of the future and the options in this fast-paced, ingenious game are wonderful.

HANG-GLIDER PILOT (from Maple Leaf Micro Ware) up to four players test "gliding/landing" skills.

STARSHIP CONCORD (from Futura) another spaceship game with a good manual and so-so graphics.

MISSILE WARS (from Asgard) by John Behnke is one of the best of this genre on tape.

AZTEC CHALLENGE (from Cosmi) well-

See NEW-AGE on page 6

NEW-AGE, from page 5

done, multi-level ancient obstacle course game tha's fun and quick.

CAVERN QUEST (from Moonbeam) about as "acadey" as you'll get on tape and one of the best multi-level graphic obstacle games.

My final tape purchase that day, ROMEO (from Extended), was lost or stolen after I gave a demo of it a few years ago. I'm not very good about making backups of my originals, unfortunately. By the time ROMEO disappeared, it couldn't be purchased anymore. So my joy at seeing one for sale at the fair was great. Cute Romeo has to get past a series of sand dunes via balloons, is unceremoniously dropped into a shark-ridden sea, swims into a dangerous cave, and so on in his quest for the fair Juliet. It's one of those delightfully addictive, nonviolent games. Now a new generation (my 5th-graders) are discovering the joys of noble quests.

These twelve tapes are things I didn't own but now use and enjoy. Original prices on these items were from \$49.95 to \$9.95. I picked up most for under \$2 (not counting the ones from Kidware and Asgard still being distributed today).

When I came across these tapes in class the other day, I realized how often the kids continue to use most of them, along with some other tapes that I have in large bookcase-style tape racks. Tapes get used a great deal: Jim Peterson's always exceptional educational tapes; Intelstar's (CELLS), early TI's (HAMMURABI, WORD SAFARI), and many others. I teach ASL (American Sign

Language) in class, and the kids use the PD FINGERSPELL program to learn, review, write, and decode through the manual alphabet. This is in EVERY user-group library.

Last week we were studying the skeletal system. I put on Regena's "Name That Bone." I often use the tape recorder on the disk-system TI I have at school, also. Once a program is loaded into memory, I take the little tape recorder to the next machine and repeat the process. Sometimes I bring a third computer in from home, but I still just go from one to the other with the same tape recorder.

But that day I loaded up "Name That Bone" by tape into the two TIs, and all the kids during the day had a chance to successfully complete this great program.

There's no problem using tape. I load them into the computers before school, while I'm getting my other stuff ready for the day. I keep the volume on the TVs high so I can hear when one computer had loaded; then I repeat the process for the others. By the time the kids arrive, I've had my coffee, put up the computer schedule, and we're all rarin' to go. I still think the 4A is the best educational computer tool in existence.

I often think about users with the basic diskless systems. There are still tapes readily available for the Adventure, Tunnels of Doom, and LOGO modules (though the last requires 32K). Triton still has cassettes of all kinds for as low as \$1.99. I just bought a SAMS book for \$2.49 (TI-99/4A GAMES) that included a cassette of all the games. I usually pay more for blank cassettes alone.

See **NEW-AGE** on page 7

NEW-AGE, from page 6

Peruse the mail order palaces to see the number of extremely low-priced MODULES still available. Triton's start at \$2.49 and go up to \$29.95 (for Extended BASIC). There are recreation (MOONSWEEPER, FATHOM, MUNCHMAN), productivity (PERSONAL REAL ESTATE, HOME FINANCIAL DECISIONS); education (READING FLIGHT, NUMERATION I); and other cartridges. TEXCOMP's module prices start at \$4.95 and have many more cartridges not listed by Triton, including the last of the Atarisoft ones like Donkey Kong.

So a person with a very basic 4A system (console, TV, Extended BASIC cartridge, and tape recorder) still has an extremely powerful tool at his or her command with options for many other diskless peripherals. But most early owners have closeted or tossed their TIs. Recently, I went to a flea market in a nearby town and picked up a used (but very new looking) silver and black console with cables for \$3! That's what I'm writing this article on right now. So DON'T QUIT! Your 4A is alive & well & kicking up its heels all over the world. j.s.



From the Editor's Desk

Merry Christmas!

REMINDERS

First let's start with a reminder about this month being the month for renewals. Club dues are due by the end of December. Some of you renewed last month and that's GOOD! The rest need to renew NOW! (please. . .)

Another reminder. We mentioned last month the availability of a good value on blank diskettes. If you wish to get in on the deal, please bring your money to the meeting. The order for the disks will be made shortly after the meeting.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Here is the calendar for the next two months with our meeting dates indicated. . .

JANUARY 1991							FEBRUARY 1991						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THR	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THR	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4	5					1	2
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28		

IN THIS ISSUE

This is one of our biggest issues to date! On

See **EDITOR'S DESK** on page 11

KOOKY FORTUNES A Tiny Gram

by Ed Machonis
(from the *QB Monitor*, Newsletter of the
QB-99'ers, Bayside, NY)

One of the highlights of any visit to a Chinese Restaurant is opening the Fortune Cookie at the end of a meal and comparing fortunes with your fellow diners. A recent visit to New York City's Chinatown resulted in a family member toting home Fortune cookies by the pound.

After munching my way through a couple of dozen, (Hey, never stop when you're on a winning streak!), I was struck by the one-size-fits-all generic blandness of the fortunes. Any one would be pleased and flattered with the fortunes I was getting. Even if they didn't fit

Chinese Fortune Cookies

by Janet Ryan
NUTMEG TI-99ers
Ellington, CT 06029

Thanks to Ed Machonis for his program to print fortunes. This recipe for baking the cookies was one I had on file. When my daughter was a Brownie scout her troop made these. It was a simple recipe from a foreign country that they had a lot of pleasure doing together. The fortunes were fun.

Perhaps you and your family will find these fun to do too. Most especially ED MACHONIS. I just wish I had the program back then.

See FORTUNE COOKIES on page 9

a person at all, that person would like to think they did. Another thing that struck me was the lack of duplication. I recalled reading a newspaper article years ago about a printer of these fortune slips and how difficult it was to keep coming up with new "fortunes". (Nearly as tough as constantly coming up with new computer newsletter articles.)

Next thing I know, a little devil is whispering in my ear, "Why not print up some look-alikes bearing fortunes that are decidedly different in tone and concept and substitute them for the ones you are extracting from the Fortune Cookies?" No sooner whispered, than done! The look-alikes required compressed pitch and fore and aft smiley faces.

The accompanying TINY Gram will let you get into the act. I had a ball until the family got wise. If your culinary accomplishments include the ability to make Fortune Cookies, here is a great way to perk up those "China Nights." (And keep a starving author alive by sending him some!)

The program will let you input either one line or two line bons mots. For one liners, just press enter in response to the second prompt, Tex will know what to do. Print codes are for an Epson RX-80 printer.

Specialization? Tell me about it! Could any one have ever foreseen such an application for a Home Computer????? e.m.

1 ! **** KOOKY FORTUNES ****
* A TINY Gram *
* By Ed Machonis *
QB-99'ers, Bayside, NY

See KOOKY FORTUNES on page 9

KOOKY FORTUNES, from page 8

2 ! This program will print those words of wisdom, and other wise remarks, found in Fortune Cookies

```
3 OPEN #1:"PIO" :: PRINT #1:
CHR$(27)&"@"&CHR$(15):: K$=C
HR$(27)&"L"&CHR$(12)&CHR$(0)
```

```
4 B$=K$&CHR$(60)&CHR$(66)&CH
R$(66)&CHR$(137)&CHR$(165)&C
HR$(133)&CHR$(133)&CHR$(165)
&CHR$(137)&CHR$(66)&CHR$(66)
&CHR$(60)&" "
```

```
5 CALL CLEAR :: FOR J=1 TO 2
:: PRINT "INPUT TEXT FOR L
INE";J :: INPUT T$(J):: NEXT
J :: INPUT "HOW MANY? ":Q
```

```
6 FOR I=1 TO Q :: IF T$(2)="
" THEN 7 ELSE PRINT #1:B$&T$(
1):: PRINT #1:T$(2)&" "&B$
:: GOTO 8
```

```
7 PRINT #1:B$&T$(1)&" "&B$
```

```
8 PRINT #1 :: NEXT I :: GOTO
5
```

☺ IT IS HARD TO SOAR WITH THE EAGLES
WHEN YOU HAVE TO WORK WITH TURKEYS. ☺

☺ I hope you liked your
Fried Lice - you P!t

☺ A fool and his money
are soon parted! ☺

☺ Condensed can order last meal
Get Stir Fry. ☺

☺ Notice from the Board of Health:
You're lucky if you can still read this. ☺

☺ He who goes forth with a fifth on the fourth
May not go forth on the fifth! ☺

☺ If at first you don't succeed
Try another Fortune Cookie. ☺

FORTUNE COOKIES, from page 8**CHINESE FORTUNE COOKIES**

Makes about two dozen

1/3 cup all purpose flour

1/8 teaspoon salt

1 Tbsp cornstarch

6 Tbsp sugar

4 Tbsp vegetable oil

1 egg white

5 Tbsp water



1. Sift flour and measure into small bowl. Mix in salt, cornstarch and sugar.

2. Mix oil with egg white and water until blended. Stir into dry ingredients; beat until smooth (about like heavy cream).

3. Heat electric griddle or frypan to 300 degrees. Brush surface of griddle with oil. Spoon 1 tablespoon of cookie mixture onto heated griddle. Spread with back of spoon to make 3 inch circle. Repeat with remaining mixture.

4. Bake until golden - about 5 minutes; turn over and bake 1 minute longer. Remove cookies from griddle one at a time. While still hot and pliable, place FORTUNE in center of cookie. Fold cookie in half; then fold into Fortune Cookie shape by pulling points together and creasing center. (It helps to fold cookies against edge of table.) Place folded cookies in custard cups or muffin cups to hold shape while they cool. j.r.



NEWS, from page 2

ing to Tom Wills, in the December Southwest Ninety-Niners Newsletter, he has been trying in vain to contact Myarc for several months without success. On November 27th he finally got through on the Alabama telephone number only to get a recording that the number had been disconnected! Other interesting evidence includes no CONFIRMED deliveries of hardware in months, no software updates in almost a year (it was about a year ago at the TI Faire in Chicago that an announcement was made that a new version of MDOS was being readied for shipment "as we speak," no one has received the updated software), and no replies to inquiries on CompuServe of the Myarc representative. The evidence seems pretty clear that support for the 9640/Geneve by Myarc has dried up. Couple that to a recent price reduction on the HDFC (a closeout sale?) and it seems Myarc is GONE!

Tom requests that if anyone has any further information to please contact him on the Cactus Patch BBS in Tucson (602-290-6277) or on CompuServe (user ID 71550,3213).

PE/2 Still Not Quite Ready

The November customer update to RAVE 99 Co. customers of the new PE/2 Professional Expansion Box indicated that shipping of the units should commence the first week of December. Included with the update were several color pictures of the units in the manufacturing process and schematics and printed circuit board layouts for the customer's use only. The units were demoed recently at the computer show in Portland,

Oregon and at the Chicago TI Faire where both the Geneve and the TI were both running in the same box!

E.S.D. Corp., makers of a new Hard and Floppy disk controller for the TI, expressed extreme interest in the PE/2's expanded bus. "They liked the idea of being able to have 16 bit data transfers which effectively doubles the speed of the data being transferred." RAVE 99 Co. has sent E.S.D. Corp. the necessary specifications so that the new bus may be utilized in future controller cards.

Another NEW feature has been added to the PE/2 chassis. An extension cable allows the cartridge port to be moved outside of the chassis so that a Widget or GramKracker could be used. Also, the warranty has been extended from the original 90 days to 6 months. Every time I read about this unit, it sounds better and better! I can't wait to see it in operation. Again, THANKS, JOHN MCDEVITT, for keeping us informed.

Triton Out Of TI Market

As was announced some time ago, Triton Products has dropped TI support. A new company, formed by a former Triton official, Terry Miller, has purchased the TI marketing rights from Triton and has set up shop as TM Direct Product Marketing. Calls to Triton will be forwarded to the new company. The new phone number for TM Direct Product Marketing is (800) 336-9966 and their business hours are M-F 9-4 (Pacific Time). You Lose One, and You Gain One. One more for our side!

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NEWS from page 10

MIDI Master Interface by Asgard

Music Buffs Take Note! Now you can interface your electronic keyboard or other interfaceable device to the TI. Mike Maksimik of the Chicago TI User Group has developed MIDI Master for Asgard. It requires an RS232 port and supports up to 16 channels simultaneously. Musical scores can be written using a word processor, or the keyboard can generate the score. It is available for the TI as a cartridge and a disk version for the Geneve. Both versions require a disk system. The price is \$44.95 + S&H. It will also soon be available as a cassette version. Contact Asgard Software at P.O. Box 10306, Rockville, MD 20849. Also, a new Asgard Software Catalog is now available by just writing and requesting one.



EDITOR'S DESK from page 7

page 4 is a Member Profile of Tom Pfeffer. Page 5 has #4 in the NEW-AGE/99 series, this month discussing some programs that may still be available on cassettes. On page 8 is a TINY Gram that lets you write fortunes to be put in fortune cookies. Appropriately, also on page 8 is a recipe for fortune cookies! On page 12 is our annual INDEX of articles that have appeared in the pages of *VAST News* this past year. 4/A Foray this month tells why Ralph Rees likes to tinker with electronic equipment so much. That is on page 14. On page 16 is the last in our series on using the TI-Writer word processor. This month a simple form letter is shown and a method of using the Define Prompt (.DP) command is implemented. And on page 17 is, again, one of the winning poster in our poster contest. That's all I have for you this month.

PLEASE don't forget that this is the month for renewals and renew your membership to *VAST* for the coming year. And, by the way, if you need more information about the disk deal mentioned above, see last month's minutes on page 3.

I hope you all have a very enjoyable Merry Christmas, and, as this is the last issue before the new year, let me be the first to wish you all a very Happy New Year!

Jim Ely, Editor
VAST News

1990 INDEX

ARTICLES APPEARING IN VAST NEWS

ISSUE DESCRIPTION

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OUR BBS AND YOU

- 1 A report on the progress, or lack thereof, of the VAST BBS.
- 2 Committee formed to set guidelines.
- 3 BBS Back In Business
- 4 The Main Menu
- 5 Reading Messages

TI WRITER TUTORIALS

by Stan Katzman

- 1 Part 4 The LF (load file) command.
- 2 Part 5 Misc routines (word wrap, del char, new page, fixed mode, etc.)
- 3 Part 6 Special Keys (Del Char, Roll Up, Roll Dn, Nxt Wind, etc)
- 4 Part 7 A Moving Experience
- 5 Part 8 Formatting
- 7 Part 9 Formatting Commands
- 8 Part 10 Formatting Commands continued
- 9 Part 11 Headers, Footers, Begin Page, Include file
- 10 Part 12 Transliterate

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=====

- 11 Part 13 Include File. An example
- 12 Part 14 Define Prompt in Formatter (Last article in the series)

DISK OF THE MONTH

- 1 Music-Chopin's Polonaise Opus 53 Elementary Addition & Subtraction
- 2 TIPS ver 1.4
- 3 TI Writer Supplement
- 4 Funnelweb 4.1 Brain Teasers #3
- 5 Mug Boot
- 6 RAG Multiplan Update Asgard's Rock Runner Demo
- 7 Speech programs for kids Classical music selections
- 8 Household Helpers More Brain Teasers
- 10 Page Pro & TI Artist Graphics (compiled by Virginia Davis)

TYPE-IN PROGRAMS

- 3 Flexi Label (A Tiny Gram)
- 4 Style Label (A Tiny Gram)
- 12 Kooky Fortunes (A Tiny Gram)

VIEWS AND REVIEWS

- 6 *Spell It!* by Asgard
Reviewed by Mike Marfisi

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- 3 After The Fest. A report on Fest West 90 in Tucson
- 5 Message from the new president
- 6 VAST Poster Contest announcement
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- 12 Member Profile – Tom Pfeffer
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NEW-AGE 99

by Jack Sughruer

- 9 No. 1. Why New Age?
- 10 No. 2. New TI games from Arcade Action Program Innovators
- 11 No. 3. "Upgrading" to other computers

ISSUE DESCRIPTION

- 12 No. 4 Programs still available on CASSETTE

4/A FORAY

By Ralph Rees

- 10 Did You Know – TI trivia, misc. "stuff" from around the TI "circuit"
- 11 Did You Know – TI trivia, misc. "stuff" from around the TI "circuit"
- 12 How To Repair An Electronic Instrument

This INDEX, as past INDEXs, was compiled by Mike Marfisi. Thanks, Mike!



Come Help Us Celebrate The
TI-99/4A's 10th Year
Anniversary

UGOC in association with the
Pomona Valley UC is hosting

FEST WEST 91

THE HAPPIEST FEST ON EARTH

Across the street from Disneyland PLUS many more attractions in the area for the wife/husband and kids to enjoy while you meet internationally renowned TI entrepreneurs, enthusiasts, and innovators. Fest tickets are on sale now (\$6.00 for both days). Ticket requests with a post mark before January 1, 1991 are eligible for a drawing for one free night at the RAMADA.

Plan your THREE DAY weekend now!
Fest dates are Feb 16 & 17, 1991

The Fest will be held at the Ramada Main Gate, Anaheim Toll Free 1-800-447-4040 Special rate to Fest goes (\$56.00 per night plus taxes)
Only 50 rooms available at this rate and closing date for this rate is 15 Jan 91.

Travel Arrangements may be made by contacting Ruth Dickey, Travel Concepts. (714) 778-5455

For future announcements contact the UGOC BBS at (714) 751-4332 or write to:

Fest West 91 Committee
C/O Bill Nelson
11692 Puryear Lane
Garden Grove, CA 92640



FEST WEST 91



4/A Foray

by Ralph Rees

Hello out there again in TI land! Here's hoping that you've got all your Christmas shopping done and have enough left over to re-new your membership in VAST and maybe a little extra for a donation of some sort.

My column this month will explain why I have such an interest in electronic repairs. Because it's EASY!!! Read On.....

HOW TO REPAIR AN ELECTRONIC INSTRUMENT

STEP 1 - Approach the ailing instrument in a confident manner. This will give the instrument the mistaken idea that you **KNOW** something and that you are not afraid of it. It will also impress anyone else who happens to be looking, and if the instrument suddenly starts working again, you will be credited with the repair.

STEP 2 - Have the service manual nearby the instrument. This will make it assume that you are at least familiar with the source of all knowledge, and will start the instrument to thinking that there is even the slightest possibility that you can read.

STEP 3 - In a forceful and direct manner, recite Ohms law or something equally technical-sounding to the instrument. This will intimidate the instrument and prove that you

See 4/A FORAY on page 15

4/A FORAY, from page 14

indeed do know something. If this produces no immediate reaction, proceed to step 4.

STEP 4 - Jar the instrument (read "DROP-TEST"). This is a progressive procedure starting with bouncing the instrument lightly on the bench and culminating with dropping the instrument from a height of three to seven feet (higher if the instrument is particularly fragile). Caution must be exercised however; although the drop method is a long-standing recognized technique of instrument repair, one must be careful not to mar the floor or the custodial staff (or wife) will get really ticked off at you, in which case you are in BIG trouble.

STEP 5 - Brandish a LARGE screwdriver in a menacing manner. This will badly frighten the instrument and demonstrate your intimate knowledge of the deadly short circuit technique. Tap the instrument lightly with the point of the screwdriver for several seconds just to let it know what COULD happen if it fails to wise up and start working. If this still fails to elicit a response, proceed to step 6.

STEP 6 - Using the screwdriver, pry the back off the instrument (even if it was designed to open from the front) and expose the innards. Choose a random location inside and stick in a tube - even if the instrument is totally solid state. This will accomplish two things: It will prove to those standing about watching that you are indeed intimately familiar with the design, and it will also confuse the instrument greatly, thereby increasing your psychological advantage.

STEP 7 - Make loud disparaging remarks about the designer of the instrument, the poor quality of the components, and the slipshod manner with which it was assembled. Use lots of expletives. This may serve to make the instrument feel sufficiently guilty to start working again, or get it so angry at you that it starts to work just to spite you. Be sure to keep a finger on the instrument at all times so that if it does start to work, you will get the credit, rather than look silly.

STEP 8 - If all else fails, make various comments on how your time is much too valuable to waste on this stupid thing and walk away, hoping to sneak out of the building before anyone else spots you.

(Reprinted from the *Maderes 99er News*.)

NEXTMONTH — Don't allow a SMOKE leak. r.r.



T.I. Writer

by Stan Katzman
(From the WEST PENN 99'ers Newsletter)

Part 14

The last sections we will deal with has to do with form letters. There are two ways of making form letters in T.I. Writer. The first way is with the "values" being entered from the keyboard for each individual form letter. The second method is to use a value file on disk. We will discuss the first one in this issue.

In order to do this, one composes the letter in the Editor for use in the Formatter. Let us use a specific example.

.LM 10
.RM 70
.FI
.IN 40
.SP 8
.DP 1:DATE
1
.IN 0
.SP 5
.DP 2:CO NAME
.DP 3:CO ADDRESS
.DP 4:CO CITY STATE AND ZIP
2
3
4
.SP 2
.IN +5
.DP 5:ITEM NAME
.DP 6:MAGAZINE NAME

Would you please send me information about your *5* that I saw advertised in *6*.

.SP 6
.IN 40
Thank you
.SP 4
Joe Smith
11 Main St.
Anycity, State 00000

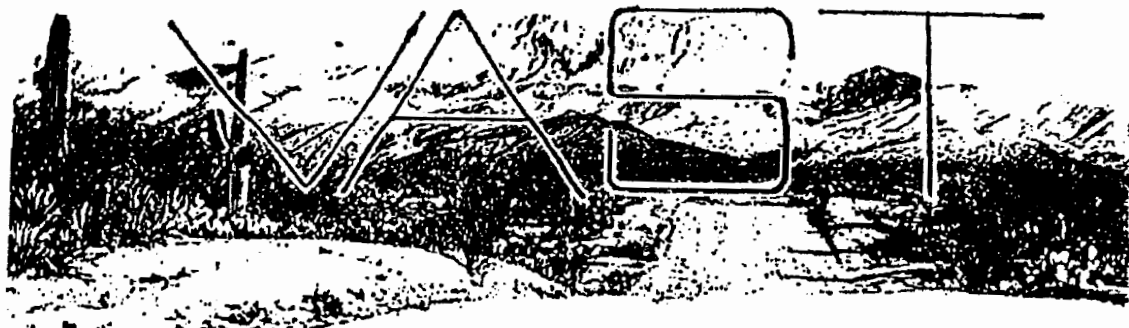
All of the above "dot" commands should be known to us by now except ".DP". .DP is called the Define Prompt. If you notice each .DP has a number then a colon followed by a phrase. This phrase is what will show on the Formatter screen. There is also an asterisk with a number followed by another asterisk (*6*). This second number corresponds to the first number and it puts the value from the .DP where you want it. When you go into the Formatter answer N to mailing list and enter the number of form letters you want when the number of copies is asked for. Then on the bottom of the screen you will see the 'DATE' and you enter the data which will be printed on the printer, continue this and you will have your finished form letter. It will then repeat depending upon the number of copies you asked for. Obviously this is not for a lot of form letters but if you want a few letters it is fine. s.k.

Editor's Note: This is the LAST of this series from STAN KATZMAN on TI-WRITER. If you have any questions, he'll be glad to assist you. Just call (412) 837-8275. There are also several people in the VAST User Group who are proficient in the use of TI-Writer. Just ask one of the Board Members.



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VAST User Group Information

The *VAST Computer User Group* is a support group for the TI-99/4A Home Computer and compatibles.

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