

VAST NEWS

Newsletter of the VAST Computer Users Group

Volume 6 Number 4

April 14, 1990

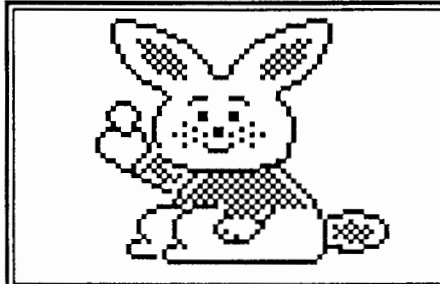
TI WORLD AND LOCAL NEWS

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

LOCALLY...

Bud Barnes Hospitalized

Those of you who attend meetings regularly know who Bud is. He was recently appointed Parliamentarian of our meetings. On March 25 Bud was hospitalized with a "mild/severe" heart attack. I didn't find out about this until Tuesday the 27th when Mike Marfisi returned from a "long weekend" in Tucson. In going through messages on his answering machine, Bud's wife had left Mike a message. Mike left a general message on the BBS as to Bud's condition. On Wednesday,



Happy Easter

the 28th, I went and visited Bud in the hospital to see how he was doing. He was out of pain and doing much better. He was even making plans to have me over to reconfigure his TELCO program so he could call the BBS. Seems that some of the configuration was incomplete and needed updating. He also informed me that, if all went well, he would be released from the hospital by the weekend of the 31st.

The User Group sent him flowers in the hospital in all our names. I hope he has a speedy recovery.

WORLDLY(?)...

New Software Company Offers Catalog

KB Computer Concepts is a new TI-99/4A software supplier headed by Keith Bergman. The company is located at 653 1/2 Fair Avenue NW, New Philadelphia, OH 44663 and is offering a free

catalog of its products. Items in the catalog include Spinner, a Wheel of Fortune type game for 1 to 3 players and "phrase disks" for Spinner offering different phrases for the game. The game sells for \$12 and each phrase disk is \$5. Contact the supplier direct to get the catalog or to order.

Price Increases At Harrison

Harrison Software, makers of some of the most outstanding music programs for the TI, has announced some price increases. Disks that originally sold for \$4.50 are now \$5 and those sold originally for \$7.50 are now \$8, including shipping and handling.

See "NEWS,"

Continued on page 4

VAST USER GROUP MEETING

April 14, 1990

Pyle Adult Rec. Center
655 E. Southern Avenue
Tempe, AZ

INSIDE INFORMATION

ITEM	PAGE
VAST Information	2
Secretary's Slate	3
Editor's Desk	4
TI Writer Help	5
Disk Of The Month	5
Style Label Tinygram	6
Our BBS and You	7

VAST BBS
(602) 433-2767

VAST User Group Information

The *VAST Computer User Group* is a support group for the TI-99/4A Home Computer and compatibles, but all computer users are welcome. We meet at the Pyle Adult Recreation Center in Tempe on the **second** Saturday of every month. This month's meeting is on April 14th. The business meeting starts at 10 a.m. with socializing starting at 9 a.m.

The yearly group membership fee is \$15 which includes this newsletter mailed to your door!

Our meetings are open to all. Only dues paying members may vote in elections, hold offices or chair committees, or use the club library.

CURRENT OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

Mike Grogan 272-3415

VICE PRESIDENT

SECRETARY/TREASURER

Mike Marfisi 491-1552

LIBRARIANS

Hazel & Wallace Knight . 938-5446

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Jim Ely Unpublished

BBS SYSOP

Leo Baker 931-9010

The date that appears in the upper right hand corner of your mailing label is your newsletter and/or membership expiration date. Address renewals to VAST User Group, c/o 1425 E. Del Rio Drive, Tempe, AZ 85282.

The VAST User Group BBS is now back in operation. The **NEW** phone number is (602) 433-2767. The new board is being setup per the guidelines established by the BBS committee. The software should be familiar to those of you who used the board before the last sysop changed it. It is PCBoard.

Don't be shy. Give it a try!

Deadline for submission of materials for this newsletter is the first Saturday of the month. Materials may be submitted in any form, but the preferred method is by modem uploaded to the VAST Users Group BBS. Please leave a message to the current newsletter editor so he knows the file is for him.

ADVERTISING RATES

COMMERCIAL

FULL PAGE \$12.00

HALF PAGE \$ 7.00

QTR. PAGE \$ 4.00

PERSONAL

Four Lines \$ 1.00

(30 characters per line)

Each line over 4 \$.20

ALL RATES ARE FOR **ONE** ISSUE ONLY!

Software programs are available from the User Group library at the following rates:

SS/SD disk \$ 2.00

DS/SD disk \$ 4.00

If a copy of documentation is required, a charge of \$.10 per copy page will be made. If the group supplies the disk, add \$1.00 to the above charges. We do have an exchange program for new software added to the library. Contact the librarian for further details.

DISCLAIMER: The VAST User Group can assume NO responsibility for the accuracy of the information in this newsletter or for programs or construction projects tried by its members or others. **YOU** try them at your **OWN RISK!** Any material herein may be republished by other user groups so long as credit is given to the **ORIGINAL** sources.

SECRETARY'S SLATE

MINUTES

VAST User Group
March, 1990

The March meeting of the VAST User Group was held on Saturday, March 10th, at the Pyle Adult Recreation Center in Tempe. The meeting was called to order by President Mike Grogan at 10 a.m. The minutes of the February meeting were approved as published in the March issue of VAST NEWS.

The treasurer reported an account balance of \$501.11.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

BBS

Dan Shell reported that the board is now up and running. There are still a few problems to be worked out. One of the hard drives (the original 10 meg) is in bad shape as is the floppy drive. Mike Grogan informed the group that he would donate a 10 meg hard drive to replace our failing one. Also Dan pointed out that Walt Brown had donated a floppy drive for use with the board.

Dan said that the committee would be taking a look at a new BBS program called "Fidonet". If it looks good they may try it out on the board to see how we all like it.

Jim said that he would publish tutorials on the operation and use of the BBS, as directed by the BBS committee, in the newsletter on a regular basis.

Mike Grogan announced that the club had purchased some 300 baud modems that will be made available to members on a monthly basis so they can try out the board.

It was agreed that we would delete all non TI files from the BBS with the exception of the .GIF files which are now able to be viewed on the TI thanks to a new program that was made available by Barry Boone at the TI FEST WEST.

PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Dan tells us that next month's program will be on extended BASIC extensions including a demo of a new program from Texaments called The Missing Link. This month we will review our impressions of the FEST WEST.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

NOMINATION OF OFFICERS FOR 1990/91

The elections for officers of VAST will be held at the next meeting. The following members were nominated:

President...Mike Grogan
Mike Marfisi

Vice Pres...Jim Ely
Dan Shell

Secretary...Mike Marfisi
Bud Barnes (declined)
Walt Brown (declined)

Treasurer...Mike Marfisi
Bud Barnes (declined)
Walt Brown (declined)

A general discussion was held on the feasibility of our group sponsoring a future FEST WEST. The conclusion was that we are not in a position financially or manpower wise to think about a project of such magnitude at this point in time.

The subject of getting publicity for the club was raised again. It was pointed out that in the past, anytime the subject came up a lot of ideas were put forth but never

See "SECRETARY'S SLATE",
Continued on page 4 > > >

"SECRETARY'S SLATE",
Continued from page 3. . .

acted upon. Tom Pfeffer, Dan Shell and John Keck agreed to serve as a publicity committee and to come up with and implement some ideas to get the word out about VAST.

I hope there was no further business because at this point the tape ran out!

Respectfully
Mike Marfisi

"NEWS,"
Continued from page 1. . .

Bruce Harrison of the company also informs that disks of **J.C. Bach Opus V** shipped before November, 1989 had gaps in the document included on the disk. If you are bothered by this, contact Harrison Software at 5705 40th Place, Hyattsville, MD 20781, and a corrected disk will be shipped.

Upgraded MultiPlan by RAG

R.A. Green, who recently did an upgrade for TI-Writer, has done an update for the everpopular Microsoft MultiPlan. The changes are based on the TI upgrade that came out just after TI dropped us. The main of this version is an almost 50% increase in SPEED of calculations. It also now runs easier from RAMdisks and the like. There are 2 versions available; one for the cartridge and the other for GRAM devices such as the P-GRAM card or the GRAM Cracker. Both versions can be had for \$10 (total!) by contacting

RAG Software, 1032 Chantenay Dr., Gloucester, Ont. K1C 2K9 Canada.

Textaments All Together

Textaments has put its company together all under one roof. It has been operating from 2 different locations, one in Yaphank, NY and the other in Patchogue, NY. The consolidation will enable them to operate more efficiently. Their address is 53 Center St., Patchogue, NY 11772. Their telephone number is (516) 475-3480 and their BBS number is (516) 475-6463.

Upcoming TI Faires

April 28, **The Canadian TI-FEST** in Nepean, Ontario, Canada. For information contact Ruth O'Neill, 34 McLeod St., Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K2P 0Z5 or (613) 234-8050 or CompuServe 72117,3541 or Delphi REON.

May 5, **Boston Computer Society Home Computer Fair** in Waltham, MA. For information contact Justin Dowling, The Boston Computer Society, TI-99 User Group, One Center Plaza, Boston, MA 02108.

May 12, **Alberta TI Orphan Reunion** in Innisfail, Alberta, Canada. For information contact Fred Kessler, Box 20, Sundre, Alberta, Canada T0M 1X0 or (403) 638-3916.

May 26, **TI Multi User Group Conference** in Lima, OH. For information contact the Lima Ohio User Group, P.O. Box 647, Venedocia, OH 45894 or Dave Szipp evenings at (419) 228-7109.

That's All Folks. . . j.e.

From The Editor's Desk

ELECTIONS THIS MONTH. . .

This is the month for election of officers for the group. That is why the newsletter is about a week earlier than usual. Enclosed with this newsletter you should find a ballot for the election with the folks that are running for the various offices. I believe there is also a place for write-in candidates in each category. Write-in candidates are not suggested as at the last meeting several nominations were made for the various offices and some of the nominees declined their nominations. It just would not be right to elect someone to an office that they were not interested in holding.

Please vote on the enclosed ballot and return it either by mail, to be received **BEFORE** the next meeting, which is April 14, or bring it with you to the next meeting. All members as of April 1 will receive an official ballot and **NO** additional ballots will be issued, so be careful with the one you receive as you can't get another one.

IN THIS ISSUE. . .

I haven't done this column in several months as I always seem to come down to the end of the month and just don't seem to have the time to get it done. Anyway, in this issue is part 7 of the TI-Writer tutorials. This month we discuss moving lines

See **"EDITOR'S DESK,"**
Continued on page 8. . .

T.I. Writer (Part 7)

From the WEST PENN Newsletter

By Stan Katzman

Well now let's discuss "A Moving Experience" (T.I. Writer Manual, page 36). Move (M) is a command that allows one to move blocks of text from one place in the document to another.

This command uses the line numbers also so it might be more convenient if there is a printed copy of the document with the line numbers printed also. (This was discussed earlier; L PIO).

This is kind of a complicated process so let's start. First isolate the block of text you want to move. You do this by placing the cursor at the start of the text you to move and then enter "Ins Char" (Fctn 2) and split the line, then do the same for the end of the text. Now place the cursor where you want the text to be moved and enter "Ins Char" again. Now go to Command Mode and enter L. At this point you will see "Move, Copy, Delete or Show lines:", now enter M.

At this point you will see "MOVE start line, stop line, after line:". Now enter the line number of the start of the block of material you want to move, a space, a line number at the end of the text you want to move, a space, and the line number where you want the text blocked moved to. (If you remember these were defined by the "Ins Char" markers.) Now reformat the text accordingly and you have moved the text to where you wanted to. There is a minor catch to this and that is you cannot have a real full text buffer because this movement of text uses some memory while things are being moved.

This does not complete all the possible things that you can do in the Editor but I think that they are the most important. If we can master these (when we need them) then I feel that the rest can be picked up just by reading the T.I. Writer manual. This I feel is a good word processing program and to the best of my knowledge the only thing I would change in the Edit mode is to add a permanent display at the top or bottom of the screen showing the margin scale and their setting.

This is a fairly short session. The next time we will be talking about the Text Formatter. S.K.

April Disk of the Month

Hi there. It's your friendly Disk Of The Month editor, Mike Marfisi. I am back from an expedition searching the high-ways and byways of the computer world for some really good stuff for this month's DOM. I think the hunt has been a success. My hunt took me to the Land Down Under where I bagged the latest version of the FUNNELWEB System. This is version 4.21. This version has many improvements to the text and program editors. Just a few examples are a much faster response to the copy, delete and move commands. The program editor has a new feature called ASMode for assembly source code editing. It allows you to leave the alpha lock up so that you can enter everything in lower case including comments. Then when you hit <enter> the source code will be capitalized, but not the comment field. The source code is then checked for some errors, and if there are any, you are notified with a beep. This

feature of course is for those of you that are into assembly programming.

Back out at the main menu, on the EA side, there is a new entry called DISK-REVIEW. This is a really neat disk cataloger/viewer, that can also rename, delete, copy, protect or unprotect, etc. Oh yes, I almost forgot. It will work in 40 or 80 character display.

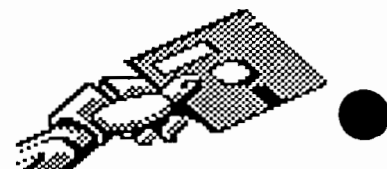
When you get the disks home, first thing to do is to "de arc" the files. There are 4 FW programs on the disks.

FW are the basic programs. These are the "bare bones" files for SSSD users. FWPROG are additional programs that add a whole world to your FUNNELWEB system. Pick and choose as you like. FWDOCs and FWCNFIG are DV80 files. Be sure to print them. They are the complete documentation for the entire

system. Anyone who has ever used this fine system knows how great it is. Those who have never used it are in for a pleasant surprize.

Because of the size of this system (almost 685 archived sectors) it will be issued on 3 SSSD disks at \$3 -- or 1 SSDD disk at \$1.50. We will take orders for the system you prefer and the disks will be mailed to you within a week.

Our second DOM for April will be Vol. 3 in our "BRAIN TEASER" series. Some real good stuff on this one. m.m.



STYLE LABEL

A Tiny Gram

From the *QB-MONITOR*
Newsletter of the Queensborough
User Group, Bayside, NJ

by Ed Machonis

This is really a continuation of last month's Label article which described FLEXI LABEL. You were warned that there was more to come and this is it. The two programs were written at the same time to serve the same need.

FLEXI LABEL will provide labels with up to 10 lines of text all in Expanded Compressed type style. (I know the type style sounds like a contradiction in terms but it looks a lot better than it sounds.) STYLE LABEL, on the other hand, provides a choice of three type styles but you are limited to 5 lines of text.

The type styles available are:

1. Expanded Pica allowing 16 characters per line.
2. Expanded Elite with 20 characters per line.
3. Expanded Compressed which allows 28 characters per line.

The larger type styles are a boom for those of us who need glasses to consult a telephone directory. When you first RUN the program, you can choose your type style from a menu. If you want to change the type style at any time during text entry, just enter FUNCTION C(hange) and you

will be returned to the menu for a new selection.

All fonts are printed double strike; a little slower perhaps but a lot more readable, especially with weak ribbons. Expanded Pica is printed Emphasized as well.

Don't worry about keeping count of the number of characters on a line. The program automatically limits you to the number of characters permitted by the selected type style.

When entering text for a new label, the lines entered for the previous label will appear as defaults and can be used "as is" by just pressing <ENTER> or edited as required. All editing keys are functional when entering text. Entering a blank line will result in a blank line on the label.

The type styles and printer codes are those available on the Epson RX-80 and should work with most Epson Compatibles. The print codes are contained in P\$(1), P\$(2) and P\$(3) in line 2 and can be readily changed as required. G\$ contains the print codes for Master reset, double strike and expanded printing. The code for Expanded (E\$"W1") may need to be changed for some Epson "compatibles".

Due to sales of public domain software by certain distributors, a copyright notice has been placed on this program. It may be freely distributed provided no fee of any kind is charged. This article and/or the program listing may be published in newsletters of non profit User Groups. e.m.

Editor's Note: For those of you who typed in last month's FLEXI LABEL and will type in this month's STYLE LABEL programs, there are several places in the programs that the key entered is not clear. In this month's, in line 4 between the double quotes after the word ENTER, the character is entered as <FCIN C> which is a backward looking apostrophe (grave). Also in line 4, the last line between the quote marks is the same thing. If you have questions, please ask! j.e.

```
1 ! ***** STYLE LABEL *****
  *   A Tiny Gram   *
  *  Copyright 1988 *
  *   By Ed Machonis *
  **QB-99ers, Bayside NY**
```

```
2 E$=CHR$(27):: G$=E$&"Q"&E$
&"G"&E$&"W1" :: P$(1)=G$&E$&
"E" :: P$(2)=G$&E$&"M" :: P$
(3)=G$&CHR$(15):: C(1)=16 ::
C(2)=20 :: OPEN #1:"PIO.LF"
```

```
3 DISPLAY AT(3,1)ERASE ALL:"
# OF CHARACTERS PER LINE:";;
:"1=EXP PICA-16"::;"2=EXP EL
ITE-20"::;"3=EXP COMP-28"::;
"CHOICE? 3" :: ACCEPT AT(11,
9)VALIDATE("123")SIZE(-1):W
```

```
4 C(3)=28 :: DISPLAY AT(1,1)
ERASE ALL:"ENTER "" TO CH
ANGE FONT" :: FOR J=1 TO 5 :
: DISPLAY AT(J*3,3):"ENTER L
INE";J:L$(J):: ACCEPT AT(J*3
+1,1)SIZE(-C(W)):L$(J):: IF
POS(L$(J),"",1)THEN 3
```

```
5 NEXT J :: DISPLAY AT(20,1)
:"HOW MANY LABELS?" :: ACCEP
T AT(20,18):Q :: FOR K=1 TO
Q :: FOR L=1 TO 6 :: PRINT #
1:P$(W);" ";L$(L);CHR$(10)::
NEXT L :: NEXT K :: GOTO 4
```

OUR BBS AND YOU

This month let's go over what you see when you get to the Main Menu on the VAST BBS. Below is what the Main Menu looks like on our copy of PCBoard:

```

=== [ VAST User Group BBS ] =====
A)bandon conference  M)ode (graphics)
B)ulletin listings  N)ew files(date)
C)omment to SYSOP   O)perator page
D)ownload a file    P)age length
E)nter a message    Q)uick msg scan
F)ile directories   R)ead messages
G)oodbye (hang up)  T)rans. protocol
H)elp functions     U)pload a file
I)ntial welcome     V)iew settings
J)oin a conference  e(X)pert on/off
K)ill a message     Y)our per. mail
L)ocate files(name) Z)ippy DIR scan
                    S)ystem questionnaire
=====

```

(60 min. left) Main Board Command?

"What are all those things and how do they affect me?", you ask. As you look at the listing you see that it is in alphabetical order with the first (or in one case, the second) letter of each item set off from the rest of the description with parenthesis. Those individual letters are the letters you enter to perform that specific function.

We will look at some of the ones that are the most common and that you will probably use every time you call the board.

We'll start with one that is the most important to first time callers. It is the H)elp functions command. It will give you an explanation of every command that is available in the Main Menu, and when you get to some of the board's sub menus, it is also an available command.

"How does it work?", you ask. Well, first you enter "H" at the Command Prompt. The board will respond with:

```

"Enter the menu selection (A-Z) you need
help with [C/R]=none?"

```

First, before we go any further, that [C/R]=none means that if you don't want to enter a letter to get help with, you just hit the *Carrage Return* key. For TI users, that means just hit <ENTER>. For help, however, you enter the letter of the command from the Menu that you want help with and a text file will display on your screen with an explanation of that board function. Simple, HUH?

Here is an actual example. . .

At the Command Prompt you enter "H".

The board responds with:

```

Enter the menu selection (A-Z) you need
help with [C/R]=none?

```

You enter "G". The board gives you the following explanation. . .

```

== Function Help - [G]oodbye (Hang Up)==

```

This selection will log you off the board in a normal fashion. You should always logoff using this selection. If you just hang-up your phone without selecting [G] first, it writes a note in the caller's log indicating that you did not logoff normally. If a caller continues the practice of logging off in this manner - they may be denied future access to the board.

It is important to logoff in a normal manner so that the board re-cycles properly for the next caller. Please respect the callers who are trying to log on by always using the [G] selection to hang-up.

(58 min. left) Main Board Command?

This works for EVERY item that is in the Main Menu.

I'll briefly explain a couple of other Menu functions. The reason I will only explain them briefly is because if you need a more full explanation, you can get it on

See "OUR BBS,"
Continued on page 8. . .

"OUR BBS,"

Continued from page 7. . .

the board by invoking the H)elp command. These functions all relate to Conferences. Conferences are different areas of the board for specific purposes. The "J)oin a conference" command is used to get into the TI or Geneve conferences. By pressing "J" at the command prompt, a menu of available conferences is displayed. Then you enter the number of the conference that you wish to join (1 for the TI conference or 2 for the Geneve conference). Once you are in a conference, you can Join another conference or you can get back to the Main area by entering A)bandon conference. You do not have to Abandon the conference you are in to Join another conference. You just enter "J" again at the Menu Prompt and you are there. Using Abandon in any conference always takes you back to the Main Board Prompt.

Each area (conference) has its own set of B)ulletins, F)ile directories and message bases. Messages are accessed by pressing R)ead messages. I will explain most of the additional key presses that are acceptable in the R)ead messages section in next month's BBS column.

There are some speedy ways to get around using the "J" command. If you already know the number of the conference you want to join, you can enter, as an example, "J 1" at the prompt and bypass the conference menu. By entering "J 1" you automatically J)oin the TI conference without getting the conference menu. Now you want

to enter the Geneve conference? At the command prompt you enter "J 2" and without the conference menu you are transported to the Geneve conference. It can save you some time in getting around the board by using this method of entry.

While we are at it, when you log on the board you can "stack" your log-on entries on one line just like you did with the "J" command above. When the board asks "What is your First Name?", you can respond by entering your whole name and password all on the one line! As an example. . .

The board asks "What is your First Name?"

You respond "Allen Funt Sneaky" (First Name, Last Name, Password). If you have entered the line correctly, (you DO know your first name, last name and password, don't you?) the board takes you right to the next prompt, what ever that might be, without asking individually for your last name and then your password. Again, it is just a faster way of getting around on the board.

In conclusion, let me tell you that there is nothing you can do from your terminal at home that will hurt the BBS. The only way you will ever learn how to use a BBS is to use it and experiment with all the functions it has available. This is true with local boards as well as the pay boards like GENie or CompuServe. It is better, however, to learn on local boards like ours and then try the pay boards than to jump right up to the pay boards and waste a lot of time

learning and costing yourself lots of money for it.

Next time. . . j.e.

"EDITOR'S DESK,"

Continued from page 4. . .

(blocks) of texts from one place in your document to another. That is on page 5. On page 6 is the second of 2 articles on label printing. This one uses a TInygram called STYLE LABEL. Since the BBS is now up and running again and, as an encouragement to those who have yet to try out BBSing, we have a tutorial on how to get help on-line on our BBS. That article is on page 7. The Disk Of The Month is described on page 5 and is the latest version of the fabulous FunnelWeb. Also available this month will be a third edition of BRAIN TEASER type programs. That about sums up this month's issue.

NEXT MEETINGS. . .

Here is a calendar for the next 2 months with the meeting dates indicated. . .

MAY							1990	
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THR	FRI	SAT		
		1	2	3	4	5		
6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
13	14	15	16	17	18	19		
20	21	22	23	24	25	26		
27	28	29	30	31				
JUNE							1990	
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THR	FRI	SAT		
						1	2	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9		
10	11	12	13	14	15	16		
17	18	19	20	21	22	23		
24	25	26	27	28	29	30		

That's about it for this month. I'll see you all at the meeting on April 14. **DON'T FORGET TO VOTE.**

HAPPY EASTER!