

VAST NEWS

Newsletter of the VAST Computer Users Group

Volume 6 Number 5

May 12, 1990

TI WORLD AND LOCAL NEWS

(Compiled from various sources, including MICROpendium Magazine, by Jim Ely and Mike Marfisi.)

NEW PE BOX FROM RAVE 99

The T.I.C.O.F.F. was held last month in New Jersey and the biggest news came from our friends at RAVE 99 in the form of a conformation of a rumor that had surfaced a while back. John McDevitt showed a prototype of a new expansion box for the TI and Geveve. As you may know there are no brand new TI PE boxes to be had on the open market. You had to search for used ones if you needed a new one. Also there had been many shortcomings in the original design. Well it seems that RAVE has accepted the challenge and is

bringing to us a brand new smaller/bigger expansion box. The unit will serve both the 99/4A and the Geneve since it will include a place inside for the mother board from the TI, and the TI option will include the RAVE keyboard interface! The box includes the following:

- Room for 8 cards (same as TI PEB)
- Room for FIVE disk drives
- Front panel power switch

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VAST BBS
(602) 433-2767

VAST USER GROUP MEETING

May 12, 1990

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

President's Message

Well...here we are. First I want to thank the people who voted in the last election. This shows that most of the members of VAST care about their U.G. enough to vote. And thank you for your vote of confidence as your president. I will continue to help make our U.G. a place to meet friendly people and gain more knowledge about the computer we have all grown to LOVE. Some have gone on to other computers and some will never switch. I think we have almost everything the other computers have. The only thing I would like to see is more speed. Some have rewritten programs that have given us

that speed and that shows that the TI is not dead. When people still write new or improved programs it tells all of us that this is still a great machine.

Now what are we going to do as a group this year? First, we all need to tell others about us. If you see a place that might be a good spot for a poster about our group, then make up a poster and place it there. Most of you know of RALPH REESE. He is making a poster for a computer store that he goes to quite often. The store is

See "MESSAGE,"
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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, 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 May 12th. 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

Jim Ely Unpublished

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 in operation 24 hours a day. The phone number is (602) 433-2767. The board is 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 COMPUTER USER GROUP APRIL 14, 1990

The monthly meeting of the VAST Computer User Group was held as usual at the Pyle Adult Recreation Center in Tempe. The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m. by President Mike Grogan. All officers were present.

The minutes of the March meeting were accepted as published in the April VAST NEWS.

The treasurers report was accepted as read. We have a balance in the account as of this date of \$551.16.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

BBS - Leo Baker

Leo Baker, Sysop of the BBS asked us to clarify our policy as to non-members' use of the board. As things stand now, we are allowing non members 15 minutes to look around. These non-members can't download. It was pointed out that this time limit might be too restrictive. The matter was referred to the BBS committee for study and recommendations.

PROGRAM - Dan Shell

Program for this month will be presented by Dan and will feature some Extended Basic Extensions.

Next month Mike Marfisi will present a comparison between Funnelweb and MUG Boot.

Dan pointed out that he needs help in forming ideas and making presentations to this group. He has asked anyone who has any input of future programs to please come forward. Bud Barnes said he would present a program on Multiplan.

LIBRARY - Wallace & Hazel Knight

No formal report.

NEWSLETTER - Jim Ely

Jim reported that the newsletter is getting out each month. Of course it goes without saying that he could use some extra help.

He will resume publication of the member profiles as soon as an acceptable method can be found to reproduce the photos.

Mike Marfisi mentioned that we are exchanging newsletters with about 60 other TI groups at a very substantial cost to the club. Over the next few months, he and Jim will take a look at the various newsletters with a view toward cutting down the number of mailings we make each month. We will try to eliminate those that simply duplicate items found in other newsletters or that don't provide enough good material to justify the cost of the exchange.

We will also write to some of those folks who produce on-going columns for TI publications to check on the possibility of obtaining their material on disk, all at one time so that we may include some of these fine series in our newsletter. This would save much typing time and insure a complete and uninterrupted flow.

PUBLICITY - Tom Pfeffer

Letters have been sent to several of the area newspapers telling them about VAST and when we meet etc.

Mike Marfisi is updating the club publicity card and will have it ready for the next meeting

Mike Grogan introduced our newest members Ed Morse and Karen Rogers. Karen comes to us from Southern Nevada UG and Ed is a new TI'er. Welcome to you both.

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

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

NEW BUSINESS

Mike and Bud are going to be acting as a committee to review our constitution. We are looking at splitting the provisions into a constitution and bylaws. The constitution would be made up of those provisions that form the basic foundation of the group. The bylaws would include the day to day operating policy. Bylaws could be changed by a simple vote of the members at any regular meeting. Constitutional provisions need be changed by a long process that can be cumbersome when it comes to day to day club operations.

Ballots were counted in the general election for club officers. Your **NEW** officers for 1990/1991 are:

- President Mike Grogan
- Vice-President Jim Ely
- Secretary/Treas. Mike Marfisi

There being no further business, the meeting was closed.

Dan Shell then presented the program of the month which was a demo of the various **new** extensions that are now **available** for use with **Extended BASIC**.

Respectfully,

Mike Marfisi
Secretary

"NEWS,"
Continued from page 1. . .

- Front panel key lock
- Hard drive activity light
- Front Panel Reset Switch
- 200 watt power supply
- Cartridge port access from the right side
- Elimination of the "firehose."

Estimated costs are:
For TI \$300
For Geneve \$250

Remember these are only estimated prices and may change.

As you can imagine, the prototype caused quite a stir at the show. I know I am saving my pennies!

WHAT'S NEW FROM
TEXAMENTS

In a continuing effort to support the *TI Artist* system, **Texaments** has released a package called **GUIDELINES**. The software comes to you on two SSSD disks and contains some really neat stuff. It includes a bunch of new instances and a whole slew of new fonts (15 in all).

Also included are a series of borders that are designed to be used as the basis for banners printed out through the *ARTIST PLUS* banner printer.

The borders are entered as instances. Your message is placed with-in the border in the font of your choice. Then you enter the **PRINT MODULE** and specify the **BANNER MODE**. PRESTO

a perfect banner for any occasion.

The disks also include templates for designing labels and envelopes.

Also released is a 3 disk collection of cartoon artwork designed for use with *TI ARTIST* or *ARTIST PLUS*. **Artoons!**, as the set is called, features over 60 famous cartoon characters stored in "instance" format for *TI ARTIST*.

For more information on any of the above, contact Texaments at 53 Center Street, Patchogue, NY 11772 or (516) 475-3480 (voice) or (516) 475-6463.

COR-COMP SOLD

Cor-Comp has been sold to a company called International Diversified Technologies. They will continue to manufacture and repair Cor-Comp items. For in and out of warranty repairs call (714)635-1815. You will be talking to an answering machine so have all your info ready. They will then send you a return authorization (RMA) with the necessary instructions on what to do with the malfunctioning unit. International Diversified Technologies, 2211 E Winston Rd. Suite G, Anaheim, Ca. 92806, Phone (714)635-1815.

FREE FONTS FROM
ASGARD

Users of *PAGEPRO 99* will find a new file on the VAST BBS en-

See "NEWS,"
Continued on Page 6. . .

T.I. Writer (Part 8)

by Stan Katzman

From the WEST PENN Newsletter

FORMATTING - this is option 2 on the main menu and this is where the computer does work to give shape and size to a document (format). The process is done using certain codes that are "imbedded" in the text and "dot commands." Let's discuss the "imbedded" codes first.

The imbedded commands are the ampersand (&), the caret (^) and the "at" symbol (@).

If one wants to underline a word or words in a document just type the document up normally and for each word you want underlined type a "&" symbol in front of it. For example &help will underline help if this document was run through the Formatter. (Which it wasn't.)

If you want a word in bold face (darker print) just type "@" in front of the word. For example @help would be printed out darker when printed through the Formatter. Lastly, if one types the caret "^" between words the formatter treats those two words as one. This is called the "required space" symbol. For example if we type &help ^ me ^ out the entire phrase "help me out" will be underlined. The same procedure would work for bold face.

Now, how is the formatter used? Very simple. Compose your document as normal, set margins, indents, tabs, etc. Now enter your ampersands and ats where ever you want a word underlined or bold faced.

Now, save this document to disk as a file. (Remember this from the past.) Leave the Editor and go to the Formatter. (If you have one disk drive you will have to do some disk switching.)

In the Formatter the first thing you will see will be the statement "ENTER INPUT FILENAME:." At this point, have your file diskette in drive 1 and type DSK1.filename. Then it will say "ENTER PRINT DEVICE NAME:." For my system, I enter PIO.LF. (You will enter either PIO.LF or PIO.CR. Try one and see how the printer overstrikes and underlines, if it doesn't work one way, try the other. Start with PIO.LF. (I am assuming a parallel printer, not a serial printer.) Then the screen says "USE MAILING LIST? N." Press <enter>. Then it says "WHAT PAGE(S)? A". (More about this later.) Press <enter>. Then "NUMBER OF COPIES: 1." Press <enter>. Then "PAUSE AT END OF PAGE? N." If you are using tractor feed paper, press <enter> or else press Y and then <enter>. At this point one sees "WORKING... PRESS CLEAR TO STOP." Your document will now be printed out on paper with the margins you set and everything boldfaced and underlined. When the formatter is finished you will be returned to the main menu screen.

If you remember at the very first part I said that the printer should be Epson compatible. This is so because if your printer is not Epson compatible it might not recognize the code sent by T.I. Writer for underlining and boldfacing. To wrap-up... 1) enter your document in the Editor; 2) make a disk copy; and 3) use the formatter.

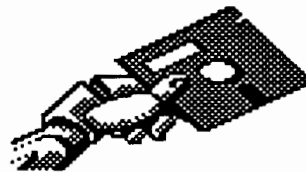
More next time.

s.k.

PROGRAM/DISK OF THE MONTH FOR MAY

Last month's Disk of the Month included the new *Funnelweb* system. Many TI'ers have been using this loader system for years and swear by it. This month the DISK OF THE MONTH will include *MUG BOOT* (Formerly called J. J. BOOT). This is another loader

program and it comes from Johnnie Johnson of the Miami User Group. Those of you that



have the RAVE 99 Expanded Memory card/RAM disk will recognize this loader as being almost the same, if not identical. We will run both of these programs this month and take a look at how they operate and how they differ. m.m.

"NEWS,"

Continued from page 4

titled *PPFONTS*. This is a freebie from the folks at **AS-GARD**. It includes 5 new large fonts, and 15 new small fonts, plus scads of new pictures. Check them out on the BBS. They will also soon be in the club library.

MULTIPLAN UPDATE

R.A.Green of *RAG SOFTWARE* has released an update to the **MultiPlan** program consisting of one SSSD disk which contains "re-do's" of several of the original Multiplan files. The changes are said to speed up the operation of the program by as much as 50%. The program comes to you on a "floppy" disk. Side 1 is for regular systems (those using floppy or ram or hard drives) and the other side is for those that use GRAM devices (like GRAMCRACKER). You simply copy the new files to your MultiPlan disk and you are in business. Check out the VAST BBS or the library. **Please NOTE: + + + + FREEWARE + + + + DON'T FORGET TO PAY THE AUTHOR IF YOU USE THE PROGRAM!**

**MUSIC FROM HARRISON
A "NO GO" FOR GENEVE**

Harrison Software will no longer be trying to convert its popular music programs from TI to Geneve. A special GPL/DSR link used in the menuing system that works perfectly on the TI causes the Geneve to crash.

Two music pieces previously offered for the Geneve with an old-style menu will still be available. They are *The Nutcracker Suite* and *Remembrance*.

Harrison has also introduced **version 2.0** of its **Word Processor**. Features include more flexibility in naming documents, document name carryover between functions, choice of disk drive numbers being 1-9 or A-Z, improved cursor movement operation and multiple copy printing.

If you wish more information on the above, contact **Harrison Software** at 5705 40th Place, Hyattsville, MD 20781 or (301) 277-3467.

CONSTITUTION UPDATE

We are working at updating and cleaning up our constitution in order to bring it more in line with the way the club operates at the present time. We are looking at dividing it into a constitution and bylaws. The constitution would be the basic foundation of the club while the bylaws would be the building blocks.

We are in the first stages of looking at what should be in these sections and what updates and additions or deletions should be included. We would like your input. If you have any suggestions or would like to take part in the process, call Mike (491-1552) or Bud (437-2303).

**FROM THE EDITOR'S
DESK**

Here we are in May already! Happy Cinco De Mayo. . .

THIS MONTH'S ISSUE. . .

This month we have part 8 of the TI-Writer series which covers how to use some special commands in your text and the Formatter to get underlining, bold and non-breaking spaces. That article is on page 5. Page 7 has a short article on using the various read commands on our BBS. The Disk of the Month (DOM) is described somewhat on page 5. Because of a very tight work schedule in April, that is all I have for this month.

UPCOMING MEETINGS. . .

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

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

JULY 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				

OTHER THINGS. . .

I wish to thank all of those who voted for me in last month's elec-

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

Our BBS and You

by Jim Ely

As we had said last month, this month we will discuss some of the various ways to read messages on the VAST BBS. This is information that is in the on-line HELP command for message R)ead)ing on the BBS. If you were at last month's meeting, the SysOp of our BBS, Leo Baker, had copied this file and had given it to anyone who wanted a copy. So for some of you this discussion will be "old hat."

The basic command structure to R)ead or scan messages consists of six main commands:

[R] for R)ead;

[S] for S)ince last message # read (old "*" command);

[Y] for mail addressed to Y)ou;

[F] for mail F)rom you;

[N] for N)ext message in sequence;

[P] for P)revious message in sequence.

Here are some examples: (You would enter these "stacked commands" at the menu prompt.)

R S [R)ead all new mail [S)ince you last logged on (just like R;* which also still works).

R Y [R)ead [Y)our mail, that is, all mail addressed to you.

R S Y Read all new mail addressed to you.
R Y S Same thing -- the order doesn't matter.

R Y 250 Read all mail addressed to you higher than number 250. R 250 Y Same thing.

R F [R)ead all mail [F)rom you to others (you can check to see if a message has been received and/or kill it if it has become outdated).

R F 250 Read mail from you to others higher than number 250. R 250 F Same thing.

R F Y Read all mail from or to you.

R F Y 250 Read mail from or to you higher than number 250.

Other combinations of [R] and its subcommands will work as well. PCBoard will intelligently parse any combination, and return an appropriate "error" message if it finds nothing to read in response to your request.

You can stack the commands, as shown above, or give them in response to the system's prompts. You can even use the "old" method of separating the commands with semi-colons, e.g. R;S;Y, but it is easier to enter spaces and PCBoard allows it.

All the same commands work with [Q]uick Msg Scan as well.

To read the messages on the board, enter an [R]. The program will then display the first and last active message number's available for reading. You can then select an individual number to read by entering just that number. If you want to read ALL the messages beyond that number, add a plus sign (+) after the lower number. For example, to read all the messages starting at message number 100, you would enter 100+ at the prompt.

You can stack this command at the "Command" prompt by entering R 100+ if you desire (or R;100+ -- whichever you prefer).

You can read messages backwards if desired by adding a minus sign to the command, e.g. R 100-.

THREADING: Once you have started reading the messages, you can "thread" your way through them by subject matter. If you are reading a message that is part of a long string of messages on the same subject, (i.e. many responses have been made by other users to one "base" message), you can read only those messages in the system by entering a [T] at the "More:" prompt. This will set a flag to take you forward through the message base looking only for those messages which have the same subject matter. You can also scan backwards in the file by

See "OUR BBS,"

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"MESSAGE,"

Continued from page 1...

MICRO-NERD and they are located at 15610 N. 35th Ave. (1 block N. of Greenway). It is run by BONNIE ANDERSON. She has things for almost any computer and this is only one store in PHOENIX that sells stuff for the TI. Come over and say hi to BONNIE and be sure to tell her you belong to VAST.

Another way to help our group grow is to invite your friends to the meetings. They might be able to get a TI from WALT BROWN and enjoy the world of computing.

Now let us know what you want in our group. Give us your ideas and help anyway you can. The group needs your help to keep new things happening. Feel free to call me at home between noon and 5pm.. MIKE GROGAN.. (most days, as I go to work at midnight). You can talk to me about anything at all. Just call and let me know what you think.

Again, THANKS to all who really help to keep this a group that has fun while learning. . . .

MIKE GROGAN

"EDITOR'S DESK,"

Continued from page 4...

tion. I hope I can live up to your expectations as Vice-President of our group. Probably the easiest way to contact me outside of a meeting is to leave me a private message on the BBS with your phone number and I will call you. Due to unfortunate reasons, I have had to get an unlisted telephone number. Several of you know what that number is, so don't hesitate to call if I can be of service. Others can have it by asking me in person at a meeting. My only request is that it goes no farther than the persons I give it to. 'NUF SAID!

As you can see from the news on page 1 of this issue, RAVE 99 has released a major NEW piece of hardware for the TI, a newly designed PE Box. It was known by several members of our group several months ago that an announcement would soon be made, but we were asked not to release the information until a proper announcement was made by the appropriate people. If you attended last month's meeting, Mike Marfisi almost "let the cat out of the bag," but Mike Grogan stopped him. Now the problem of trying to find a PE box to expand your system should be deminished. As usual, you will probably get to see one locally very soon as Mike Marfisi is, I'm sure, saving to get one! Should be interesting.

That's it for this month. See you all at the meeting, May 12th.

Jim Ely, Editor

"OUR BBS,"

Continues from page 7...

entering a [T-].

Additionally, you can request a direct read of other message numbers in the file by entering their number directly on the "More:" prompt line. You can also include the "+" and "-" sign characters at the more prompt by themselves - in which case the program will immediately begin reading forwards or backwards.

As you can see from this discussion, there are many options available to help you read only those messages you want to read or all the messages that might be on the board. Try some of the various approaches. You'll be amazed!

Till next time. . .

j.e.



Call the

V A S T BBS

for

**Interesting reading
Up-to-date informa-
tion on your computer
the latest NEW files**

(602) 433-2767