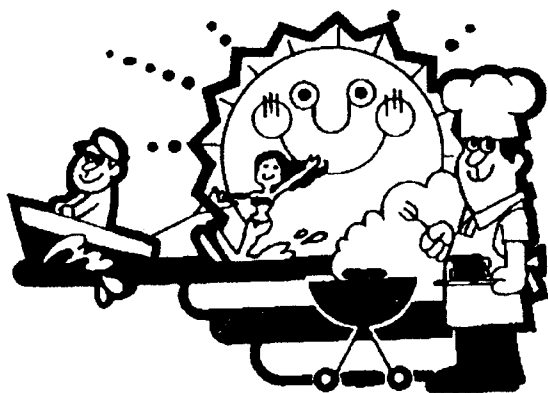


VAST NEWS

for the VAST Computer User Group

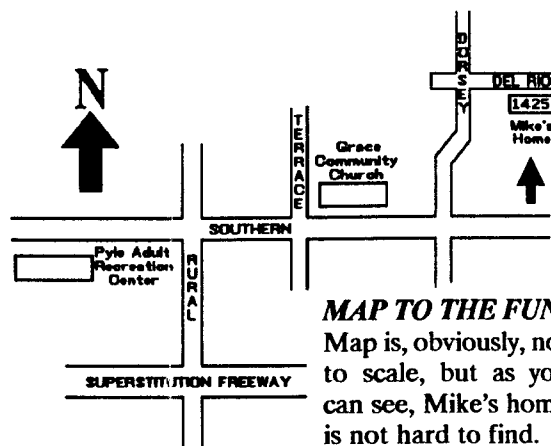
Volume 6 Number 9

September 15, 1990



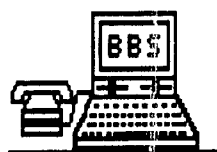
ANNUAL VAST PICNIC!

This month we will hold our 3rd (?) annual VAST PICNIC. It will be September 15th and will take the place of the regular monthly meeting. **THERE WILL BE NO MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 8th**, our regular meeting date. The picnic this year will be held at the home of Mike Marfisi. A map to his home is included on this page. CactusCliffs Computers (Dan and Leslie Shell) is supplying chicken for barbequeing, and for those that don't like chicken, Mike will have hamburgers and hot dogs. YOU will need to bring a place setting for all in your family attending (this is a FAMILY event!) and your own beverages. In addition, please bring a food dish to share with others. Home-made



MAP TO THE FUN!
Map is, obviously, not to scale, but as you can see, Mike's home is not hard to find.

Ice Cream will finish the affair! Hours will be 11 a.m to 4 p.m. Mike has a POOL so remember to bring your swimming suits and towels. Come on out and have a good time! We'll see YOU there!



**VAST
User Group
BBS**

*24 hours a day
7 days a week*

(602) 433-2767

INSIDE INFORMATION

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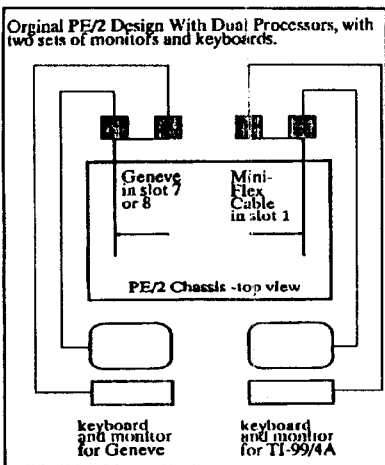
TI World and Local News

Compiled from various sources including
MICROpendium Magazine, CompuServe &
Delphi by Jim Ely

RAVE PE/2 Delayed

In a letter to persons already having prepaid for RAVE's new Professional Expansion Box, John McDevitt has said that the units will now be shipped in mid to late September. The hold up is another design change that was felt necessary, especially for those folks who intended to use the Geneve and the -99/4A at the same time.

In RAVE's July update to customers they had said the design had been frozen so that final PC board designs could be delivered to manufacturers and assembly and testing could proceed for shipping by the end of August. When they finally came down to testing the units, they discovered that it was impractical to be constantly switching the monitor and keyboard leads from the Geneve to the TI and back and forth, etc. An external A-B type switch arrangement was considered, but it was decided that that was



somehow of a make-shift solution to the problem.

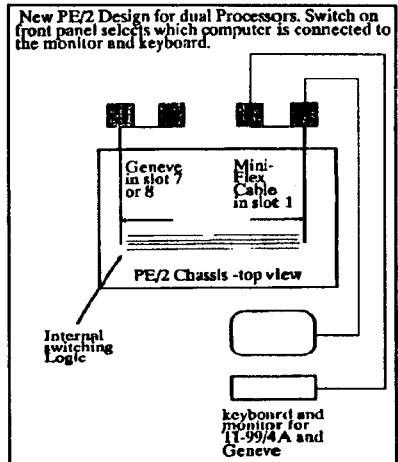
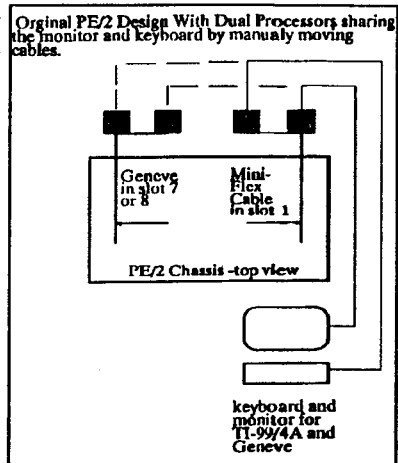
In the latest design, front panel switching is incorporated into the PE/2 to switch the monitor and keyboards to the appropriate computer (see accompanying drawings).

This will make the whole system a lot more convenient.

The schedule is now to have the PC boards made by the end of August, have the boards assembled and soldered by September 10 and final chassis assembly by September 15. They would then ship the following week!

Customers who have prepaid for the PE/2 will not be charged for the additional changes. However, new customers will be charged

See "NEWS," on page 9



SECRETARY'S SLATE

MINUTES

VAST COMPUTER USER GROUP
AUGUST 11, 1990

The August meeting of the VAST COMPUTER USER GROUP was held at the Pyle Adult Recreation Center in Tempe on Saturday, Aug. 11, 1990. It was called to order by President Mike Grogan at 10 a.m. All officers were present.

The prescribed agenda was suspended in order that Leslie Shell could give the picnic committee report. Leslie had to leave the meeting early.

Picnic Committee

The annual VAST picnic will be held on Saturday, September 15, 1990 at the Marfisi home at 1425 E. Del Rio Dr. in Tempe. The hours will be 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. This will be a family picnic. Each attendee will supply a dish to pass, their own beverages and chairs. Cactus Cliff Computers (Leslie & Dan Shell) will supply chicken for a barbecue. The Marfisi's will supply hamburgers for those who would prefer them.

A notice with an RSVP form will be included with the September issue of VAST News.

It was agreed that the picnic would replace the September meeting. Also anyone wishing to sell or trade computer related items may do so.

The minutes of the July meeting were accepted as published in VAST News. Mike Marfisi read the Treasurers report and it was

accepted.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Library

Hazel reported that we have acquired 4 new disks and that they had found the video tape of the Funnelweb demo. It is available for loan to anyone interested.

Program

The program for the August meeting will be presented by Dan Shell and Jim Ely. They will show us some optical scanners and demonstrate how they work. Although the TI can not use them directly, items scanned by other computers can be converted to be used by the TI.

The program for September will be the picnic.

Program for October has not as yet been set.

BBS

Jim Ely stated that although he is not a member of the committee, he has been remotely running the board. He pointed out that Leo Baker has been working a lot of overtime and has been unable to do too much with the board. It is running trouble free at this point.

Jim also reported that he had investigated updating our BBS program to the latest version available. He found that it is no longer "freeware" and would cost in the neighbor-

See "MINUTES," on page 9

Member Profile

This month's Member Profile is of *Ralph Rees* who lives in North Phoenix. He hasn't made it to very many meetings lately but hopefully that will change.



He is married to a nice lady, Jackie and has a ten year old son, Kevin. He is a born and raised Phoenix native and he can't imagine living anyplace else.

His interest in computers started when K-mart was selling them for \$50. He typed in a mess of programs and saved them to cassette. It went that way for a long time until he at long last acquired an expansion box. He really does like the TI system. He thinks it is very user friendly and has some outstanding software available for a system that has been orphaned. He seems to constantly be looking for some hardware project he can attempt to build or a new software program to try out.

He really loves anything electronic and is a Gadget freak from way back. He would like to THANK all of the nice people of the User Group who have helped him out with his many questions concerning the TI. He REALLY appreciates it!

NEWSLETTER EXCHANGE EDITORS,
please note the **CHANGES** item below. . .

From The Editor's Desk

CHANGES

As you can see, I have changed the format of the newsletter somewhat, hopefully for the better. My objective is to try to cut the cost of printing and to aim the newsletter specifically to our group. With this issue is another big change with regards to the newsletter exchange that we undertake. Since this newsletter in recent months has not included any ORIGINAL information (articles by people in our own group), it has been decided that circulation will be limited to ONLY members of the group unless we publish some original article that may be of interest to other groups. In that case, that particular issue will be sent to our current exchange list. In this way I hope to cut our expenses for postage.

I hope that other user groups understand this move. *Without YOUR newsletters, we probably wouldn't have a newsletter.* It is not that we don't want to continue receiving your newsletters, it is just that ours is just what the majority of the other groups have already printed in their newsletters and I am sure that you don't really need another newsletter that has the same thing in it that you have already seen in 30 other newsletters or used in your own newsletter. Rest assured that, should we publish an article that is of general interest, a review of a product from one of our own member's perspective, a program

See "EDITOR'S DESK," on page 8


~~~~~  
N-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

#1

Why NEW-AGE/99? Well, it's been almost a year since my long-running IMPACT/99 columns were rudely interrupted by a car accident which kept me from my beloved ♥ little computing machine.

So why NEW-AGE/99? After my brush with death last spring I initially felt I had been given another shot at Life (definitely with a capital "L") and wanted to reflect this New Age even with my computer. Secondly, "impact" sounded too much like a crash. Thirdly, I think my view from the TI sidelines for so long gave me the distinct perspective of seeing a New Age arrive for us. And, finally, the sharing and caring that was shown to me during my repair time by 99ers worldwide made me realize that my commitment wasn't to the little computer (that kept me occupied in thousands of wee hours) but to the people.

Even now, so long after The Event (always capitalized in my family), I continue to get cards and letters and disks and TI-related thingies from all over the world. This past week I got cards from England, Belgium, and Australia. And a few more from this country and Canada. To all those well-wishers everywhere who were so supportive during my long recovery, I can only say, "Thank you." You were all very instrumental in my

rapid comeback. Even the doctors were amazed.

Regarding my operations, the most oft-asked question was, "Will all those metal plates in your head set off alarms in airports?" I have no idea. I haven't flown since. I had the stainless steel one and one of the titanium ones removed in a recent operation, but I still have seven left. Permanently.

And I am back to work on a slightly limited basis. And I DO drive. A new car. My other two-month-old new car was totally demolished when I hit the tree. And - YES! - I was VERY scared the first time I got back behind the wheel once I could see okay again. It had been so long. I'm still cautious, but I'm no longer frightened.

I had also been drifting toward large blimp-hood, but I lost lots of weight after the accident and have been able to keep it off. Crash diet. So there's another positive.

I really have a thousand TI people to thank, but I must particularly single out Charlie Good, John Willforth, Chris Bobbitt, Timothy Dermody, Tony McGovern, Jim Peterson, Jim Cox, Sister Pat Taylor, and so many patient newsletter editors for support above and beyond the call of duty. Having inadequately given such little thanks when so much more was due, I'll now move right into N-A #1.

Each month I plan to explore in these two pages some TI fairware and some commercialware and a bit of the goings-on.

The first going-on is Bill Gaskell's. I am sorry

See "NEW-AGE," on page 7

"NEW-AGE," from page 6

to learn of his FOUR-A/TALK swan song. For the year he wrote it, it was the most interesting column around. The variety and the history and the enthusiasm and the good writing made FOUR-A/TALK the boost we all needed. It was a very sustaining column that each month also introduced us to all the new goodies available to us (and there are many). The TI World Community will sorely miss your writings, Bill. Hurry up with the skiing and golfing and get back to your computer.

In Bill's last article he talked about John Johnson's most recent BOOT program as of October 1989, good for Hard Drives, etc. For those with the "normal" system of a drive or two but not the techie wizardry, you can still benefit from the BOOT. It may not be the ONLY way to go, but it sure is one of the very best. Someone sent it to me during the time I wasn't able to compute, but when I got back to the keyboard recently I popped it in and had my flabber gasted. First it says, "MUG BOOT LOADING." That's the Miami Users Group (6755 Tamiami Canal Road, Miami, FL 33126).

Then comes the menu: 1 SHOW DIRECTORY; 2 DISPLAY A FILE; 3 RUN A PROGRAM; 4-9 Options 1-6; C TI XB.

#1 shows a directory of any disk (including RAMs) and permits marking of files for viewing, running, deleting. Marking auto-sets files when you return to Main Menu. A text file appears when #2 (DISPLAY) is pressed. An XB or E/A file runs automatically if #3 (RUN) is pressed.

When you press the spacebar another menu (with Options 7-15 and TI XB) is displayed. Press again and a third menu (with 16-24 and TI XB) is shown. This means you can type in anything on the options to VIEW or RUN including LOAD itself, which is handy if you have a bunch of LOAD programs (such as FUNNELWEB) that you want to operate off ANY drive. If you have a DSDD and two drives, for example, you could load onto this MUG BOOT disk all your favorite programs AND another whole disk of favorites on Drive 2. (And a zillion more.) Then you can put your top 24 on this menu and your other top 20 onto your FUNNELWEB menus and on and on.

With this program you could build the perfect environment for yourself, but that's only scratching the surface of this February '89 version I have.

Here are just a few of the single keypress things this will do for your minimum XB disk system: turn screen off; load disk directory; print directory; view text file; print text file; run XB or EA program; EASILY configure up to 24 (actually, unending number) files for autoloading; run gram/grom modules; delete files; cycle through and mark groms; toggle XB color interrupt routines off and on; do a CALL routine; change print device; get and display ROM header at >6000 (whatever that means); configure BOOT tracking; display version # and author; toggle instantly between all options; save all configurations; use additional active keypresses in sub menus; and so on.

See "NEW-AGE," on page 8

"NEW-AGE," from page 7

Could you have dreamed that something so wonderful and so simple to operate could ever exist for our TI? Get the latest version from your user-group library or write to Miami. Don't forget a decent fairware donation.

In his final column Bill Gaskell was surprised by the ingenious FUNNELWEB built-in to change upper to lower case by holding CONTROL/period and running the cursor over the characters (words, sentences, etc.) to be speedily converted. I don't think he realized that Tony McGovern also did a reverse - lower to upper - by holding CONTROL/semi-colon. Tony told me he added this because he was not a good touch typist and found retyping from one case to the other too time consuming. The day after I got this version (4.0 and up), I was typing along without looking at the screen. When I looked up I had 20 lines or so of upper case. Zip. With the cursor and Tony's ingenious keypress changer I was back to typing in seconds. Try it the next time you use FWB (speaking of which, have you tried the new 4.2? It's got some great LARGE changes.) NEW-AGE/99 will detail it all soon. j.s.

"EDITOR'S DESK," from page 4

that may be of interest, some series of articles on the use of a specific program, etc., you WILL get a copy of that newsletter. I will continue to send our newsletter to the complimentary list we have which includes several magazines and companies supporting the TI.

YOUR comments about this change would be very much appreciated. Please address them to: Jim Ely, Editor, VAST NEWS, c/o P.O. Box 27616, Tempe, AZ 85285-7616.

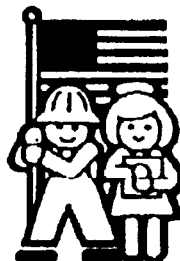
IN THIS ISSUE

Our member profile this month is of Ralph Rees, and that is on page 4. Page 5 has part 11 of the TI-Writer Help series we have been publishing. Page 6 begins a new series of articles by Jack Sughrue called New-Age/99. These articles trace some important activities and events in the TI world. And on page 12 is a reproduction of the winning poster in the recent VAST Poster Contest. This one was submitted by Mike Marfisi. The second place poster submitted by Ed Morse will be highlighted in next month's issue. I will alternate the posters from then on. That's it for this issue!

UPCOMING MEETINGS

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

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



That's it for this month. Hope you had a safe 3 day Labor Day Weekend!

Jim Ely, Editor

"MINUTES," from page 3

hood of \$150. With the funds available and the low use the board has been getting, he felt that we would be better served to just stay with the program we have.

Publicity

Tom reported that an item had appeared in Micropendium listing our BBS phone number. Also he said he would try to re-establish the listing of the group in the Pennysaver. He is also going to try to get us listed with the FOGG group.

Constitution

Mike Marfisi reported that 22 ballots had been cast. All members who voted were in favor of the change in the constitution. So the club constitution and bylaws as published in the August issue of the VAST newsletter are officially accepted and in force.

OLD BUSINESS

Bud Barnes announced the winners of the poster contest. We had five entries, which he passed around. The winners were Mike Marfisi and Ed Morris. Mike gets a \$25 cash prize and Ed gets another years membership in the group. Bud thanked everyone who participated.

There being no further business to conduct, a motion to adjourn was made and seconded.

See everyone at the picnic on Saturday September 15th.

Respectfully
Mike Marfisi, Secretary

"NEWS," from page 2

an additional amount to cover the changes.

I think RAVE 99 is to be commended for keeping its customers up-to-date on the status of their orders. It shows a real willingness to do business and have satisfied customers. Other companies should take note!

Barry Traver Announces ARCHIE

In an announcement on CompuServe, and I suspect the other major boards, Barry Traver is releasing a shareware program called ARCHIE. Written by Jim Reiss, author of Spell It! and Pix Pro, this program enables the user to run EA option 5 programs from archives without de-archiving first. It works on the original Traver type archives (no compression), not the later version archives by Barry Boone (compressed type). As a bonus feature, a true lower case character set is also automatically loaded and usable by the programs. The program will be released on the next Genial TRAVeIER diskazine, Volume 3, Number 1. The shareware donation asked is \$2 to \$3, very reasonable. Since it is shareware, be watching for the program on your favorite local board.

Texaments Releases Third Starfleet Technical Drawings Set

For all those Star Trek fans out there, Texaments Software has released Starfleet Technical Drawings III, another collection of detailed pictures from the original Star Trek, Star Trek: The Next Generation, and the

See "NEWS," on page 10

"NEWS," from page 9

Star Trek movies. Included among the drawings are the latest two versions of the Starship Enterprise (1701-B and 1701-C) and a chart comparing all five USS Enterprises. The four disk package is available for \$12.95 + \$2.50 shipping and handling. Drawings I and II are three disk sets available for \$9.95 each plus shipping and handling. For a limited time, Texaments is offering all three sets for the special price of \$27.95 + \$2.50 S & H. Contact Texaments at 53 Center St., Patchogue, NY 11772, (516) 475-3480 (voice) or (516) 475-6463 (BBS).

Delphi Changes Rate Structure

Effective October 1st, Delphi will offer two membership options, the 20/20 Advantage Plan and the Basic Plan, plus the TI NET special interest group is offering bonus free time equal to the time it takes to upload new programs or text files. What that means is that if the upload takes 4 minutes, after the upload, 4 minutes is added to you time for free! Most other services offer only the time you are uploading free.

The Basic Plan is designed for members who use the service infrequently. You are charged \$5.95 per month for the first hour and \$6.00 for each additional hour.

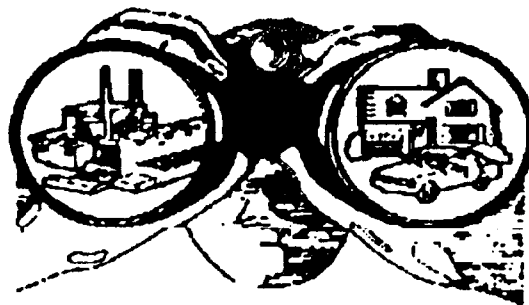
The 20/20 Advantage Plan members receive their first 20 hours of evening access per month for \$10, with additional time available for \$1.20 per hour. This equates to a reduction of about 80 percent off the previous Advantage Plan rate.

There is no longer a charge when accessing help files, billing records and other service related information.

I also understand that the other pay services are also considering, or have initiated new rate schedules.

TIPS Modified For Use With Hard Drive Systems

Mike Marfisi, who uses several of the artist type programs, had asked me if there was a way that he could install all of the graphic images for TIPS (TI Print Shop) on his hard drive and then access them from there. I told him I would take a look at the program and see what could be done. After several trials, I came up with a way it can be done. This modification was relatively simple after figuring out what the hard drive controller does to the files when they are copied to the hard drive. The program has been modified with my changes and is now available for downloading from CompuServe and the VAST BBS. For those of you using TIPS and having a hard drive system, here is a modification worth having!



Saluting America's Labor Force!

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 normally on the second Saturday of every month. This month, however, will be having our 3rd annual group PICNIC on September 15, the third Saturday, in lieu of our regular meeting. See details elsewhere in this newsletter.

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, hold offices or chair committees, or use the club library.

CURRENT OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

Mike Grogan 272-4315

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

Memberships expire on December 31. Persons joining in any given month will have their memberships pro-rated to the end of the year. Address renewals to VAST Computer User Group, c/o 1425 E. Del Rio Drive, Tempe, AZ 85282.

The VAST Computer 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.

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 Computer 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

PLEASE NOTE CHANGE IN POLICY

There is *NO CHARGE* to MEMBERS for advertising. Non-members will be charged \$1.50 per ad.

ALL RATES ARE FOR *ONE* ISSUE ONLY!

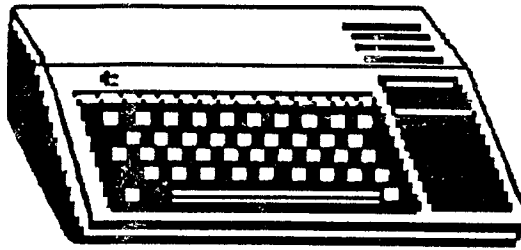
Software programs are available from the User Group library at the following rates:

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 Computer 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.



REMEMBER THIS?

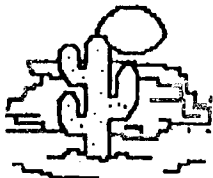
TI-99/4A

**GET IT OUT OF THE CLOSET! LEARN TO USE IT!
LEARN TO LOVE IT!**

LOOK

**...WORD PROCESSING...SPREAD SHEET MANAGEMENT...GAMES
...DESKTOP PUBLISHING...DATA BASE MANAGEMENT...MUSIC
...MUCH...MUCH MORE!**

CONTACT US! WE ARE HERE TO HELP! WE ARE THE...



VAST USER GROUP

**MEETING AT
THE PYLE RECREATION CENTER
SOUTHERN & RURAL RD.
TEMPE, AZ.
FOR INFO CALL**

481-1552

272-4315