

VAST NEWS

Monthly Newsletter of the VAST Computer U. G.

Volume 5 Number 8

August 12, 1989

NEWS... BITS OF TID... THIS AND THAT...

(Stuff blatantly plagiarized from other newsletters. Compiled by Mike Marfisi)

NEW VERSION OF FIRST BASE

Word has it that Warren Agee is almost ready to release the next version of *FIRST BASE* and is looking for ideas from users on just what they would like to see in it. *FIRST BASE* is a Super database program for TI that is a LOT easier to use than *TI BASE*. It kind of got lost in the shuffle when it was introduced because of all the noise made by the *TI BASE* folks. I think it is every bit as good as the other DB and a lot more user friendly.

HELP OFFERED WITH 1990 FEST WEST

We sent a letter to the folks at SW 99ers in Tucson offering our help with Fest West to be held in February of '90. We offered to do anything we could to help. We got a nice response from BJ Mathis, their group President. They asked us to pass the word in the Phoenix area about the fair. They will be sending us some flyers to distribute to local computer stores etc. Also they state that some vendors will likely find it easier to fly to Phoenix rather than Tucson and will need transportation to or from Tucson on Friday and Sun-

day or Monday. They may also need lodging here on one or more nights to make plane connections. Any volunteers? Let me know and I will pass the word to BJ. Also think about the possibility of buying a booth at the fair. We will talk of this at the next meeting.

VIDEO TAPE AVAILABLE

Our library has now acquired a copy of a video tape of the 1989 **LIMA TI FAIR**. The tape includes the complete talks and seminars that were presented at the fair. It includes presentations by Barry Traver telling all about his *GENIAL TRAVELER* Magazine on disk, Chris Bobbit reviews recent and future releases from *ASGARD*.

And From MICROpendium...

NEW 800 TELEPHONE NUMBER FOR D O S

Disk Only Software now has an 800 number for orders by credit card, 24 hours a day. They accept American Express, VISA and MasterCard orders only by dialing this number, 1-800-736-4951.

The company deals in its own line of software and hardware and software by Genial Computerware, Asgard, Horizon RAM disks and Myarc computer products.

Another number for ordering and checking the availability of products is (301) 340-7179 and is

manned from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. EDT.

Live out of the country or overseas? Get Disk Only Software at (703) 550-9877.

GENEVE 9640 SOFTWARE RELEASED

Appointment Scheduler, a program designed to create a day to day schedule for every month of the year, has been released by DDI Software (2004B Leann, Austin, TX 78758). It requires MDOS 95H and Advanced BASIC 6/29 or later versions.

It uses several of the new commands available in Advanced BASIC such as TCOLOR and CALL MARGINS.

Another program called Artist Utility has also been released. This one includes Slidemaker, a program that makes slides and instances for TI-Artist and

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V A S T User Group BBS
(602) 242-9868

VAST USER GROUP INFORMATION

The *VAST USERS GROUP* is a support group for Home Computer users. We primarily support the TI-99/4A Home Computer and compatibles, but all computer users are welcome. We will be meeting at the Pyle Adult Recreation Center in Tempe on the 2nd Saturday of the month (August 12). In the coming year, the meetings will ALL be on the SECOND Saturday of the month. A two month calendar showing the meeting dates for September and October is included on the Editor's page so you will know when the next meetings will be. The meetings will start at 10:00 a.m. and continue until 11:00 a.m. with socializing starting at 9:00 AM. Please see the address page for additional meeting information. The yearly membership fee is \$15.00 and now includes the newsletter mailed to your door!

All meetings are open and anyone may attend. Only dues paying members may vote in elections and obtain programs from the Users' Group Software Library.

CURRENT OFFICERS

President

Mike Grogan.....272-4315

Vice-President

Bill Wedmore.....998-1821

Secretary

Mike Marfisi.....491-1552

Treasurer

Mike Marfisi.....491-1552

User Group Librarian

Stephanie Bannon..433-9624

Newsletter Editor

Jim Ely.....921-3375

BBS SysOp

Sue Miller.....375-8456

The date that appears in the upper right hand corner of your mailing label is your newsletter subscription expiration date. Address renewals to the return address on page 10. Newsletter *ONLY* membership is available for \$12.00/year, First Class Mail.

The User Group's BBS is in operation 24 hours a day. Contact it at (602) 242-9868. There are 4 message bases, a TI specific download section, and a lot of interesting conversation and information available here so why not give it a try.

Deadline for submission of articles or advertising for the Newsletter is the first Saturday of every month. Articles may be submitted in any form, however, the preferred method is by phone transfer directly to the Editor or to the VAST User Group BBS NEWSLETTER Section.

Advertising rates are as follows:

COMMERCIAL:

Full Page

\$12.00

Half Page

\$7.00

Quarter Page

\$4.00

PERSONAL:

Four lines,

30 Characters/line

\$1.00

\$.20 per line over four.

All rates are for *ONE* issue only!

Programs are available from the *USERS' GROUP LIBRARY* at the following rates:

SS/SD Disk \$2.00

DS/SD Disk \$4.00

If copying of documentation is required, it will be at the rate of \$.10 per page. If the User Group supplies the disk, please add \$1.00 to the above charges. An exchange program for free programs is also in effect. Please contact the librarian for further information. A complete list of what is in the library is available on 2 disks free of charge if you supply the disks or for \$1.00 per disk if the User Group supplies the disks.

DISCLAIMER: Information in this newsletter is gathered from other user group newsletters from around the world and original articles by members of our user group. The information is believed to be correct and accurate as published. Where possible, original sources and authors are stated. Errors should be brought to the attention of the editor of this newsletter. This user group is not responsible for programs and construction projects tried by its members or others. YOU try them at your **own risk**. Permission is hereby granted to other user groups to republish articles appearing in the *VAST News*.

The Secretary's Slate

MINUTES VAST USER GROUP JULY 8, 1989

The July meeting of the VAST User Group was called to order by President Mike Grogan at 10 a.m. on Saturday July 8th. The meeting was held at the Pyle Adult Recreation Center in Tempe.

The minutes of the June meeting and the treasurers report were read and accepted.

Committee Reports:

LIBRARY: Stephanie Bannon reported that the library is available for use by the members.

NEWSLETTER: Jim Ely needs more input for the newsletter, especially from the generic and other computer SIG's. Items can include program reviews or anything of interest to anyone in the group. Jim reported that we have received our first paid ad, a two month run from ASGARD on PAGE PRO 99. He also reported many favorable comments on the new format of the newsletter including a phone call from the West Penn UG. It was suggested that we include a circulation statement in the newsletter to let advertisers know how many folks are seeing our little tabloid.

BBS: Sue Miller reported that the new WBBS program is running well. In spite of some negative reaction to the change at first, most people have found that WBBS is easy to use and has some really fine features. As she continues to refine and customize it, it will be even better.

Sue answered many questions from users about the new program and suggested that if anyone has problems with the board to give her a call.

PICNIC: Stephanie reported that nothing had been done yet but that we are shooting for the 2nd Saturday of October (one of our regular meeting dates) at Encanto park.

INFORMATION: Rather than appoint a formal committee as such, everyone will serve as a source of input to the group. Anything of interest to the group can be summarized and submitted to the newsletter editor via a special section on the BBS or just by sending copy to him. Sue and Jim will work out the details of how to best set up a Newsletter upload section.

TI: The committee was re-established with Mike Marfisi, Walt Brown and Ralph Rees to serve as members. It shall be the function of this group to provide programs and activities including teaching seminars and demos of and for the TI.

OTHER: The committee established with Bill Wedmore to serve as chairperson. This committee will serve the same function as the TI committee but will gear itself to generic topics and subjects specific to other computers owned by members.

PROGRAM: Dan Shell will continue to serve as chairperson. It will be his task to provide the programs to be presented at the meetings. He will work with the other committees and act as co-ordinator.

New Business

Sue Miller brought up the fact that one way to see growth in the club was by letting more prospective members know we are here and tell them what type of services we offer. Suggestions included posting notices on other BBS's, in computer stores and on the cable TV community billboard channels. It was also suggested that we try to have notices of our meetings posted in the daily papers the week before the meeting. Sue volunteered to act as chairperson of a Publicity Committee in an attempt to carry out these goals.

Mike Marfisi then took the floor to discuss the subject of his editorial in the July issue of the newsletter, the subject being the future of VAST as a generic group. All those involved in the discussion agreed that the club was going nowhere fast. The difference of opinion seemed to center around why. It was felt that this meeting was the best we have had in a long time and that if we could keep open the lines of communication, things may improve. Walt Brown moved to let things stand as they are now with the provision that the topic be brought up again in three months. At that time we would look back to see if anything had changed for the better. If it had not, then a serious discussion about desolving this organization, as it is now formed, would be entertained.

The business meeting was adjourned at about 11:30 a.m., and, after a short break, Bill Wedmore thrilled us all with a presentation on the history of memory.

The program set for the August meeting will be on the TI file structure or "How do I load and run this dumb program?"

Respectfully submitted,
Mike Marfisi, Secretary

NEWS

Continued from page 1....

Textgrafix, a program that makes small graphics for My-Word and TI-Writer without using TLs. It runs out of extended BASIC.

The cost of the Scheduler is \$15 and for Artist Utility is \$12. You can order directly from the manufacturer at the above address.

NEW PRODUCTS FROM TEXAMENTS

Four new Artist's Companion disks and TI-Sort have been released by Texaments Software (53 Center St., Patchogue, NY 11772, (516) 475-3480).

TI Sort is based on the "Quick Sort" method and occupies a minimum amount of system memory. It is described as the only universal sort utility for the TI.

As an example of its speed, it can sort a standard TI-Base file with 843 records, sorted on 2 fields in 8 minutes, 59 seconds, compared to the same sort using the sort utility for TI-Base which would take 47 minutes, 27 seconds. The cost is \$14.98.

The Artist Companion disks 10-13 have added predefined scenes to the series to be used as backdrops or accents to existing pictures. Also added are borders in several different styles and additional fonts and instances.

The Companion disks sell for \$9.95 each, any two for \$17.90, any three for \$26 or all four for \$34.

TI FAIRES OF INTEREST

The TI International Expo 89 is being held in Alexandria, VA on Sept. 16. Contact the Mid Atlantic Ninety-Niners (M A N N E R S) at P.O. Box 4005, Rockville, MD 20850, (301)340-7179.

The Fourth Annual TI-99/4A Seattle Convention is being held Sept. 23-24 in Kenmore, WA. Contact Barb Wiederhold, (206) 361-0799 (voice) or (206) 361-0895.

From the Editor's Desk...

Let's start with who's still here and who isn't from the Treasurer...

COMINGS AND GOINGS

Well here we are in the full heat of summer. Now I know what they mean when they say "if you've been" to Phoenix, you've been to HELL! I never thought I would miss the snows of Buffalo in January....NAW!...

Anyway, this month we welcome back Wallace & Hazel Knight and Sue Miller! Thanks for your continued support and faith in our little group.

We look for the following folks to renew this month:

- Bud Barnes \$4.25
- Virginia Davis \$4.25
- Steve Gendler \$3.50
- Jan Klabunde \$5.00
- Robert Lubenthal \$5.00
- Bob Nixon \$4.25

We will have to say a final farewell to the following expired members if we don't hear from them this month:

- Erik Anderson \$5.25
- Gerry Kennedy \$7.50
- Bobby Mc Cray \$5.25

Remember the amounts due are for renewal of club membership and newsletter subscription through December 31 of 1989. All members will be due to renew in January, thus saving your secretary/treasurer from having to go through this every month.

In This Issue

Due to a very busy last couple of weeks, this newsletter is one of the smallest I have done. This month we have the final part of the Computer Tutor Series we have been doing on BASIC programming. It is on CALL SCREEN and tells you how to go about changing the screen colors in your programs. The other article is by Mike Marfisi and is a review of a shareware program called TIPPS. Sorry for the short issue.

Up Coming Meetings

Here is the calendar with the meetings for the next 2 months.

SEPTEMBER 1989						
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

OCTOBER 1989						
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					

BBS/Newsletter Files

Our BBS SysOp, Sue Miller, has made it real easy for you to submit articles for the newsletter now. All you have to do is call the BBS and upload your articles in Jim's Newsroom section. Everyone has access to the section and files of a generic or specific computer are welcome. Wouldn't it be nice to see your name on the by-line? Come on, folks! This is your newsletter so let's put articles in it that YOU are interested in.

In the next few months, I would like a file from each of you that

See "Editor's"

Continued on page 6...

ELEMENTS OF BASIC

Part 24

by Dave Howell

(Courtesy Erie 99er User Group Newsletter)

CALL SCREEN

The TI-99/4A can display 16 different colors. Each color has a code number. The codes are listed below.

Color	Code No.	Color	Code No.
Transparent	1	Medium Red	9
Black	2	Light Red	10
Medium Green	3	Dark Yellow	11
Light Green	4	Light Yellow	12
Dark Blue	5	Dark Green	13
Light Blue	6	Magenta	14
Dark Red	7	Gray	15
Cyan	8	White	16

Two of these colors are evident while a program is entered. The print is black and the screen is Cyan. The screen becomes light green when the program is run. The screen can be changed by using CALL SCREEN and the color code numbers. This is how to change the color to dark red:

```
CALL SCREEN(7)
```

Changing the screen is easy but momentary. In order to keep the color on the screen, a timer loop is needed.

```
10 CALL CLEAR
20 CALL SCREEN(7)
30 FOR T=1 TO 1000
40 NEXT T
```

Use FCTN-4 to stop the color.

Adding another loop will cause all 16 colors to show, as below.

```
10 CALL CLEAR
20 FOR A=1 TO 16
30 CALL SCREEN(A)
40 FOR T=1 TO 1000
50 NEXT T
60 NEXT A
```

The following program allows specific color codes to be run.

```
10 CALL CLEAR
20 INPUT "CODE NUMBER?":C
30 CALL SCREEN(C)
40 FOR T=1 TO 1000
50 NEXT T
60 GOTO 10
```

With the use of a random statement, the colors can be screened at random.

```
10 CALL CLEAR
20 RANDOMIZE
30 C=INT(16*RND)+1
40 CALL SCREEN(C)
50 FOR I=1 TO 500
60 NEXT I
70 GOTO 20
```

Editor's Note: This concludes the series we have been doing on BASIC programming. If Dave should decide to do any more in this series, we will re-publish it here. In the meantime, I have a series of articles on TI-Writer that will be starting next month. J.E.

Views and Reviews

TIPPS

A shareware program

An interesting new entry has been made in the fairware market during the past month that should catch the eye of anyone who is into graphics. The program is called TIPPS.

This little ditty written in Extended BASIC allows the user to view graphics on screen, print them to full size paper, convert them to TI Artist instances in 2 sizes and produce signs or banners. Any one of these features make the program worth owning. But the real winner here is the bonus that comes with it. You get a collection of 2 thousand... yes thousand graphics with the program. Printing out the list of available pictures included takes a printout 38 pages long! With the ability to convert to TI Artist instances, these graphics can be used with any graphic program on the market for the TI.

There are some minus factors here that must be considered. The biggest drawback to this effort is its S...P...E...E...D... This thing is so slow that it would take you 67 1/2 years working 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to convert or print all the graphics that come with it. The graphic quality is not the greatest but it is acceptable for most applications.

In SSSD format, this program and its files take up a lot of room. I will upload them to the VAST BBS in Arc'd format with-in the next week and see that a copy goes to the library. Check it out. It's worth it.

Mike Marfisi

tells a little about yourself. I will be putting them in the newsletter, one a month, along with your picture, so others can get an idea of who the people in our group are and what they do. Please help me out with this little project. I think it is worthwhile and we will all get to know one another a little better.

Disk of the Month

Yes, there will be a Disk of the Month this month. Here is the contents of the disk....

The Disk Name is Brain Games 1.

Obviously, all of the following files are games of one form or another:

- | | |
|-------------|-----------------------|
| 15 PUZZLE | 3D TIC TAC TOE |
| HEX PAWN | QUEEN BOARD GAME |
| ABBA | C99 3D TIC TAC TOE |
| FOUR COLORS | 3D TIC TAC TOE GAME 2 |

- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| ALPHA BOX | MINI-MANCALA |
| BLACK BOX | COLOR MASTER |
| COLOR SQUARES | |

There is a LOAD program on the disk and as you finish each program you are automatically returned to the load program so you can run one of the other programs/games. Hope you enjoy this month's DOM.

That's about all I have time for this month. I don't know if I will be able to make the meeting on Saturday, but I will sure try. If so, see you there.

Jim Ely, Editor

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Jim Ely
Owner

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Tempe, AZ 85283 — (602) 431-8228

VAST News

c/o 2120 S. Los Feliz Dr.
Tempe, AZ 85282

MEETING NOTICE!!

August 12, 1989

*Pyle Adult Recreation Center
655 E. Southern Ave.*

— Corner Rural Rd. and Southern Ave. —

Tempe, AZ 85282

This month's program is on how to load and run those mysterious programs you get from the BBS's and how to identify the different files.

Doors open 9 a.m — Meeting starts at 10 a.m.

All Are WELCOME to Attend!



FIRST CLASS MAIL

To:

12/89

RALPH REES
18815 N. 13TH AVE.
PHOENIX, AZ 85027

FIRST CLASS MAIL

August, 1989