VAST NEWS

for the VAST Computer User Group

TI WORLD AND LOCAL NEWS

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

VAST *FEST WEST* A BIG SUCCESS!

The two day TI event that has happened every February for the past several years has happened again. I'm talking about *FEST WEST* and in 1992 it was hosted by the VAST Computer User Group in Phoenix, Arizona. It was on February 15th and 16th at the Day's Inn/Camelback in Phoenix, and by all indications it was a BIG success. Ven-

dors came from all over to show and sell their wares and attendance topped the 200 mark. Some of the Vendors included Bud Mills Services, Comprodine, Crystal Software, RAVE 99, Chris Taylor with Concept 99, ESD with their new, but yet to be released hard and floppy controller card, and REGENA.

8 prizes were raffled off at the *FEST's* finale with Bill Nelson walking away with the Grand Prize, the Star NX-1020 Color Printer.

The VAST Computer User Group was proud to sponsor this years *FEST*. Talks are already under way for the scheduling of the next *FEST*, but no firm committment has been made as to its location as of this writing. It is our understanding, however, that the date will probably be changed to a date in May instead of February, which suggests it will be in what would nor-

SECRETARY'S SLATE

MINUTES

VAST Computer User Group
February 8, 1992

Let me preface this month's minutes by saying that the report will be considerably shorter this month due to the fact that *FEST-WEST* has come and gone and the majority of the last meeting dealt with the *FEST*. It would be redundant to print all of that information.

President Jim Ely called the February meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. A total of 20 members and guests were present. A motion was made, seconded and carried to accept the minutes of the January meeting as published in the February newsletter. The vote was followed by the treasury report.

COMMITTEE REPORTS followed the treasury report.

PUBLICITY: Tom Pfeffer stated that he had mailed the follow-up media information and that he had not received any response to the first mailing. Ralph Rees mentioned that *"Nuts and Volts"* had listed the *FEST* in their magazine.

LIBRARY: Wallace Knight stated that 10 new disks of archived material had been added to the library, but had yet to be cataloged. He thought that the disks contained some music programs.

BBS: A lengthy discussion of conference protection, uploading and downloading were the main topics. Jim Ely confessed that he had crashed the BBS for about 20 hours and steps would be taken to correct the problem. The topic of memory chips was put off until after the *FEST*.

NEWSLETTER: Jim stated that after the *FEST*, the newsletter would be pretty empty. Everyone was encouraged to write a review of the *FEST*. Also needed are more member profiles. A discussion of old newsletter articles and key-in-programs was brought up and it was decided that old newsletters would be scoured for topics of interest to newer members. Jim also mentioned that he is working on an index of all of our old newsletters. Jim stated that he has a copy of every newsletter that the club has ever published and that they are available upon request.

PROGRAM: Curt Mavity was not present, but co-chairman Bud Barnes said that upcoming demos will be of Telco, TI-Base, Disk Utilities and TI-Artist. Ralph Rees is going to speak on Disk Utilities at the March meeting. Wallace Knight will be speaking on TI-Artist at the April meeting.

FEST-WEST: Ralph and Hazel led a lengthy and detailed discussion of the upcoming *FEST*.

Under **NEW BUSINESS**, everyone was reminded that some members still have not paid their dues. The mailing of newsletters will be suspended after the *FEST* to those that had not renewed.

MINUTES, *from page 2*

Ray Frantz brought I.D. cards for all members that had renewed and they were handed out for signatures. Ray laminated them and handed them back out for the *FEST.* Thanks Ray. That being all of the new business, the meeting was adjourned and everyone promised to do their part to make *FEST-WEST '92* the best ever.

Respectfully submitted.
Tom Pfeffer,
VAST Secretary/Treasurer

From the Editor's Desk

Happy St. Patrick's Day!

FEST FACTS

Here are a few interesting things that you might not know about *FEST WEST 1992.*

According to our records, we had 209 registered persons attend during the 2 day event. It is my understanding that 198 of those persons attended at least the first day of the *FEST* and only 11 new persons registered the second day.

We had drawings for 8 GREAT prizes in the final Raffle. Three of the prizes were won by members of the VAST Computer User Group and one of those was won by the draw-er – Hazel Knight, one of the event organizers – who drew for the first prize to be awarded. She drew her own name for a Mechatronic Extended BASIC

Module. Tom Pfeffer won a Mouse and software and Curt Mavity won the Power Director/Surge Suppressor. The Grand Prize, the NX-1020 Color Printer, was won by Bill Nelson.

Our own Chris Taylor seemed to have one of the busiest booths going. There was constantly something going on with his xTI, eTI, cTI demos, and I also understand that he was a big contributor to the first ever TI Vendor's Forum which was held on Saturday night of the *FEST.* (See related news item on page two.)

We had visitors from as far away Amsterdam, Holland. We had exhibitors from Ohio, Indiana and California. Bill Nelson introduced his new "Tower" TI which is a tower type PC housing with the "insides" for a TI which takes the place of the TI PE-box. ESD had a prototype of its IDE hard and floppy disk controller which should be available soon. Unfortunately, one was not hooked up for demonstration purposes. ESD also donated a certificate good for one of these controllers and a 40 meg. hard drive for the raffle. Most major suppliers of TI products were represented in one way or another.

The *VAST Computer User Group FEST WEST 1992* did, indeed, turn out to be **THE BEST YOU COULD GET!**

IN THIS ISSUE

As you can see, this is one of the biggest issues of VAST News in quite some time. We have several contributions from our own members. On page 5, Ralph Rees has his

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HELP WANTED
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Due to the time constraints of working an average of 50 hours per week and the added responsibilities of secretary/treasurer, I am resigning my position as publicity chairman. This move is to take effect on March 14, 1992.

I would like to have someone volunteer to take over the position. Now that the *FEST WEST 1992* is over, the amount of work required will not be as great on the next chairperson and the change will not affect the club adversely at a time of need. Please think about volunteering and throw your hat into the ring at the next meeting.

I hope that I can answer any questions that you might have at the next meeting and somebody will come forward to take over this post. Thanks. See you all at the meeting March 14th.

Tom Pfeffer

4/A Foray

by Ralph Rees

♣ VAST U.G. FEST WEST '92 DEPARTMENT

The BEST you can get. I think that pretty much describes our event, at least as far as I am concerned. The thing went with nary a hitch and I think was enjoyed by all who attended.

Let me tell you, this being the first TI *FEST*, Fair or whatever I have ever had the pleasure to attend, I was FLABBER-GASTED!! I did not get to see as much as I'd like to have seen, but what I did get to see was neat; a BIG roomful of TI stuff and (more importantly) TI Nuts like me! TOTALLY AWESOME!!

I unfortunately did not get to talk to all the vendors and fest-goers present, being busy helping run the thing, but those I did get a chance to speak with were GREAT people...

Three were...

Michael Sealy, MS EXPRESS SOFTWARE

Mike was one of the first vendors to show up Friday before the VAST *FEST*. He utilized one of the 3 Expansion Boxes I had brought for vendors to use and ASKED my permission to install a ramdisk he had brought to use, rather than just installing it. I thought that was nice, being asked.

After Mike had his booth set up, he then proceeded to help everyone else set up their booths, carry equipment into the *FEST* room, etc. He pretty much helped out in any way he could.

Later on in the evening, a late coming vendor showed up asking if he could get a booth and we had NONE available! Mr. Sealy heard of this and allowed the late-coming vendor to share his booth.

All in all, Mike is one swell guy and a TI'er extrordinaire! Thanks Mike!

Cheryl Whitelaw – REGENA

At LAST I got to meet her! What a nice lady! REGENA was my first teacher on using the TI through the book "Programmer's Reference Guide to the TI-99/4A," among many others I own.

If you are just starting out on the TI, then it would greatly benefit you to own these books and read all the articles Cheryl has written in numerous magazines, including MICROpendium.

Bottom line is, If ever there was anyone that is "THE TI TEACHER," REGENA is that person. THANKS AGAIN for coming Cheryl.

Bud Mills, BUD MILLS SERVICES

A real good guy and a REAL BUSY guy! I tried off and on throughout Saturday to meet and talk to Bud a little bit and couldn't get close! Finally made about 10:00 a.m. on Sunday and got to ask about a Horizon card bug fix. Bud had called me about the *FEST* 3 weeks ago and I discussed this bug with him at the time. He informed me of the fix and stated that he'd bring the necessary parts and docs to the VAST U.G *FEST*.

After seeing how busy Bud was when the

4/A FORAY, *from page 5*

VAST U.G. *FEST* started, I was sure he would have forgotten about our discussion and the parts. Guess What? Bud DIDN'T forget and had the necessary materials on hand.

As a final note, the Horizon cards I own are ones I purchased "used" from a VAST member, NOT directly from Mr. Mills. Bud knew this, but it didn't matter. I'd call that fantastic customer support, wouldn't you? THANKS BUD!

Finally, I want to say thanks to all VAST members who helped out at the VAST U.G. *FEST WEST '92*. We couldn't have pulled off such a great event without YOU!

♣ *NEW MEMBERS* DEPARTMENT

I am hoping that the March meeting room will be PACKED with new faces eager to become VAST members and learn all they can about the CLASSIC TI. A couple of things I'd like to say to new people are:

1) Don't be afraid to ask questions! No matter how trivial you might think they are, ALL of us OLD-TIMERS have been there and have asked the same kind of questions! We are here to HELP each other AND have FUN together! So Ask!

2) If you decide to become a member, Another quick way to learn is to par*TI*cipate in the workings of the group. Our President/Newsletter Editor/Assistant BBS SysOp –Jim Ely– is ALWAYS on the lookout for articles, reviews, etc., for submission into our newsletter. If you submit enough items, Jim will have to edit this long winded column WAY down. Wouldn't that make you happy?

3) Take advantage of our library and Bulletin Board Service. Our library contains a wealth of programs you need to have. We have lots of files on our BBS also. These two resources alone will REALLY help your program library grow.

4) Spread the word about the TI. We have recently been using a database print out of all TI-99's sold in the Arizona area, and have had some good results. Utilize these printed sheets and call up some "lost" TI'ers and make their day when they find out about our group.

SEE YOU ALL AT THE MARCH MEETING!

FCTN +   —Ralph...

GAME
Disk Of The Month

O.K. Gang, I have put together a DOM that I think you will like. It contains 4 Assembly games that will knock your socks off. I am not going to give you titles or descriptions so you will have to actually show up at the meeting to see the programs AND buy the disk. I will tell you that one of the games contains 25 different screens.

I have included an Extended BASIC "LOAD" file that serves as a menu loader. I am going to try to put together a GAME DOM every month as time allows and if any interest is shown.   —Ralph...

TI-WRITER TIP
Form Letters, Part I

by Ray Frantz

This week I had the opportunity to avail myself of one of the features of TI-Writer that I would imagine not many of us have used... the form letter feature.

Recently I had purchased some computer paper with computer design borders. My intent was to use it to write separate letters to many people in lieu of Christmas cards. After a few moments of thought, I referred to the TI-Writer and found the perfect answer. Each letter would be exactly the same to all 60 people BUT would have to have personal names in various places, and such salutations as "Dear Classmate," or "Dear Cousin Mary," or "Dear Aunt Jane & Uncle Bill." Naturally there would have to be provisions for 60 different addresses, as well as different endings such as Love, Fondest Regards, Your Friend, Your Classmate, etc. And then I was even able to insert any ending name I pleased... such as Dad, Ray, or Raymond.

After a few minutes reading I found out that the form letter feature indeed would perform all these needs. The first thing I needed to do was to type the letter as though it were going to any one of the 60 people, while adding the appropriate "action commands" for indentations, spacing and paragraphing. I ran a copy to check my spelling, etc., and everything was fine so I went into "Writer" again and replaced the names and addresses with numbers, IE: *1* *2* *3* and a new number everywhere I wanted to insert a different name or different address, closing, salutation or whatever name I wanted to close with.

The next chore was the only laborious part of this plan, and that was typing what is called a "value file" — where I assigned to each number whatever I wanted to be printed in that particular space. Yes, I had to type information for all 60 people... but the beauty of this feature now becomes apparent. After saving the letter with the "signals" inserted and also saving the value file on the same disk, I fired up ever faithful Epson MX-90 printer, and said... "GO, MAN, GO!"

In today's venacular... "*RADICAL!!!*" The letters started to be printed, and as I observed, in absolute awe, each one looked like it was personally written to that particular person because the lines even adjusted themselves in length to accomodate the length of the "insertions" that I had chosen for that letter.

So, in a matter of a comparably short period of time, I had in my possession 60 personally "unique" Christmas letters that would give no appearance of being a form letter.

Try this feature some time and I think you'll recognize what a tremendous time and labor saver it is.   r.f.

[*Editor's note:* This article was submitted in December, 1991. Sorry it took sooo long to get in the newsletter. I have another article along these lines which goes into detail about how to do the above. The article is more on a tutorial level in that it has you set up a "Value File" and a Form Letter and see how the two are mixed together in the Formatter. I was going to publish that article along with this article, but space limitations this month prevented it. I will publish it in next month's issue. je]

You Say You Don't Have A Cold, You Have A VIRUS?

This is a little late, but with all the fuss about the Michaelangelo Virus that was to activate on March the 6th, I thought you might be interested in what it was and what it was capable of doing.

NOTE: With frequent reports of the Michelangelo virus in the news, many users have contacted McAfee Associates asking for more information about this virus. To answer their questions, I have put together a paper on:

COMMON QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT THE MICHELANGELO VIRUS by Arych Goretsky

Q What is the Michelangelo virus?

A The Michelangelo is a computer virus that attaches to the boot sector of floppy disks and the partition table (sometimes referred to as the master boot record) of hard disks. In other words, the virus replaces the bootstrap code at the beginning of a disk. In this manner, the virus will be loaded from that disk the next time it is booted from.

Q How does the Michelangelo virus spread itself?

A When a floppy disk infected with the Michelangelo virus is booted from, the computer reads in the boot sector to find out where the operating system is on the disk. Instead of running the boot code that is normally there, the virus is loaded first. It then installs itself in memory like a device driver

or terminate-and-stay-resident (TSR) program. The virus proceeds to monitor the system for accesses to the first floppy and hard disk drives on the system. When a non-infected disk is inserted into the computer and accessed, the virus infects the disk.

Q What type of damage will the Michelangelo virus do to my system?

A When the Michelangelo virus infects a floppy disk, it copies the original boot sector from the first sector of the disk into the last sector used to store directory information about the disk. This may cause the corruption or loss of files on floppies. Because of this, the original floppy disk boot sector may become corrupted when directory entries overwrite it. This may make disks non-bootable. Also, conflicts with software that perform low-level accesses to the disk such as disk optimizers and sector editors may occur.

On March 6th of any year, the Michelangelo virus will trigger if an infected disk is booted from. The virus will procede to copy the contents of memory starting at address 5000:0000h across heads 0-3, tracks 0-255, sectors 1-9 of the hard disk. This will overwrite about the first 9Mb of a hard disk. Information that was stored in this area of the hard disk will be lost and can not be recovered. Since the erased area also includes the system area of the hard disk, the hard disk will no longer boot and will either need to be FDISK'ed and FORMAT'ed, a process that will erase all of the information on the hard disk or or taken to a data recovery specialist to salvage information off of the hard disk.

VIRUS, *from page 8*

(Q) How can I check my computer for the Michelangelo virus?

(A) Running the DOS CHKDSK command on an infected system will reveal that 653,312 bytes (638Kb) of memory is available instead of 655,360 bytes (640Kb). However, this symptom can apply to other viruses such as the Stoned or can be caused by having a bus card mouse (PS/2-style) installed or using BIOS shadowing on a PC.

The most effective way to check for the Michelangelo is to use an anti-viral program.

(Q) What can I do to protect myself against the Michelangelo virus?

(A) The current versions of most anti-viral programs will detect, remove, and protect against the Michelangelo virus. If you are unsure if an anti-viral program will work against the Michelangelo virus, then contact the manufacturer.

While older packages may not detect the Michelangelo virus, many manufacturers have BBS'es or CompuServe Forums where updates to detect the Michelangelo virus can be downloaded from.

If you have a CompuServe account, then you can download public domain and shareware programs to detect and remove viruses from the Computer Virus Help Forum (GO VIRUSFORUM). If you have an Internet account, you can download from the WSMR-SIMTEL20.ARMY.MIL anonymous FTP site's PD1:<msdos.trojan-pro> directory.

This concludes the list of the most common questions I've received about the Michelan-gelo virus. Please note that while I have made every reasonable effort to provide accurate information, computer viruses are a rather dynamic subject and often information about them will change as more is learned about a particular virus or variants of that virus appear.

Aryeh Goretsky is manager of the technical support department at McAfee Associates, a manufacturer of anti-viral software for IBM PC and compatibles and consultancy on computer virus issues. He is one of the SysOp's on McAfee Associates' Homebase BBS and sysop of the Computer Virus Help Forum on CompuServe and a frequent contributor to the comp.virus newsgroup on the Internet.

He can be contacted by telephone at (408) 988-3832, by BBS at (408) 988-4004, on CompuServe as 76702,1714, or by Internet as mcafee@netcom.com.

Happy St. Patrick's Day

NEWS, *from page 1*

mally be a colder climate in the early part of the year. We'll keep you posted as we get more information.

FIRST EVER TI VENDOR'S FORUM HELD AT *FEST WEST '92*

Don O'Neal hosted the first ever Vendor's Forum at *FEST WEST '92*. Here is the Committee proposal generated at the *FEST.*

To form hardware, software and configuration standards to extend the life of the 99/4a and bring order to the community.

In these hard times, the TI community needs a direction to go. In the past, other committee's have been formed, such as ANSI, to generate standards for hardware and software developers to follow. The standards set forth by the National Committee for TI Standards (NCTIS) will aid the users and developers in providing a better hardware/software solution for you. Once stsandards are set, it is recommended that all current and new software be labeled as standard #1... compliant. These standards should have acronyms for easy recognition.

The following guidelines were discussed and are recommended standards for the community to ponder upon until May, 1992 at the Lima Ohio Fair, at which time standards will be decided and publicized.

LEVEL #1 TI-99/4A Console, 32k memory expansion, cassette and EA/5 loader (EA, Supercart, TI-Writer, Multiplan, etc.)

LEVEL #2 Level #1 system PLUS RS232

Just a reminder...

The **VAST BBS** can be reached 24 hours a day, 7 days a week al **(602) 233-0790.** This is a local call for most area residents. Give it a call for the latest information about the VAST Computer User Group!

and DSSD disk drive and controller.

LEVEL #3 Level #2 system PLUS at least 128k of CPU RAM, bankable at the >6000 space.

LEVEL #4 Level #3 system PLUS 9938/58 VDP with 192k VDP RAM.

Please remember! These are recommendations generated by this first meeting and are by no means locked in stone. They are presented to you, the user, the developer, the market. Please take the recommendations and think carefully about them, and forward your ideas to your local user group and then on to the Lima Ohio Fair.

Programs for Graphics Users

Media Ware Software is a recently founded company supporting the TI-99/4A. according

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to Mark Wacholtz of the company.

Programs the company offers include the following:

European Creatures, described as quality mythological animals and hybrids ready to use as 68 Page Pro pictures in 13 sets. Minimum order is five sets, at $1 per set.

Graphic Grabber Print Module, described as an all new print routine for Bud Wright's Graphic Grabber (included free), for printing labels designed through TI-Artist. It prints on standard mailing labels one or two across, single or double density (double density prints half size one across), or prints graphic disk jackets. The program sells for $6.

Artist Conversions, consisting of two programs, the first of which converts CSGDs to instance format. The graphic is displayed on screen, then the user has the option to save it to Artist format. The second program creates TI-Artist Fonts from Extended BASIC as easily as merging in a program, according to Wacholtz. The disk also contains new CGGDs and new fonts, and sells for $6.

Page Pro Border Fonts, a disk of border fonts which can be saved as pictures and used to create a page. A second disk of sample page files is included. The package sells for $7.

For more information or to place an order, write Media Ware Software. 2141 NW 64th Ave., Ste. 15, Sunrise. FL 33313-3950.

Make checks payable to Mark Wacholtz and add $2.50 per order. Allow one to two weeks for delivery.

New Program From Comprodine

Rodger Merritt of Comprodine has released a new program for use with color printers. "Color Banner Maker" is an all-assembly language program that, like its predecessor Banner Maker (found in Artist Printshop) uses TI-Artist fonts and pictures.

According to the manufacturer, every picture (instance) in a banner can be any of the seven colors supported by the color printer. The text itself can be either all one color; a "rainbow" effect, whereby each successive character changes to the next printer color; or an "alternate" effect, with two colors alternating throughout the message.

As with Banner Maker, pictures and text can be as large as the printer will handle, the manufacturer says.

Color Banner Maker is written for the Star NX-1000 Rainbow Printer and all compatibles.

Cost is $10 plus $1.50 shipping and handling. Send order either to Paul Coleman, 3971 S.E. Lincoln, Portland, OR 97214, or to Comprodine, c/o Rodger Merritt, 1949 Evergreen Ave., Fullerton, CA 92635.

Lou Phillips Inducted Into The UGOC Hall Of Fame

Lou Phillips of Myarc has been named to the UGOC Hall of Fame by the Users

SPEAK OUT!

by Ray Frantz

As I promised our illustrious president, I would contribute "an" article per month. I don't know when this will appear as it's a good guess that the March issue will probably be taken up with the "results" of the Fest West. So whenever.

Most of you, though not aloud, class me as an "antagonist" ...well, you're right, and its OK to say it out loud. I sometimes feel that "someone" (and that's usually me) has to say something about things that are apparently "not" really thought out too well, so as to really benefit "our group."

Some of you may remember that almost immediately after joining VAST, I suggested or should I say, wondered why our dues were so low for what was being offered. The "answer" I got from various people was that "we don't want to scare anyone away" ...C'mon now...

Since the Feb 8th meeting, I secured newsletters from "other" user groups all over the country...and read them all, and was up all night to do so. Here are some of the facts I read... The SOUTHWEST 99er's from Tucson...membership is $20 the first year and $15 thereafter; POMONA VALLEY 99ers...Membership $15/yr... GOOD SO FAR; GREATLAKES COMPUTER GROUP, Michigan...dues $25 per year; KAWARTHA USER GROUP, Ontario... $24/yr; K TOWN 99ers...dues $10/yr...(one for you); NET 99ers, Hurst Tx...dues $20/yr; WESTPENN 99ers, Donora, Pa...dues

$15/yr; WINDY CITY 99ers...$10/yr after $15 for the first year; BLUEGRASS UG, Kentucky...$15/yr; TWIN TIers...Elmira, NY...$15/yr; BYTE LINE, Decatur, IO, $20/yr; OMAHA TI-group...just raised to $20/yr; KANSAS CITY UG...$20/yr; BREA UG...$15/yr; OHIO 99ers (one of the best & most active groups in the country) ...$28/yr; MIDSOUTH 99ers, Memphis, TN...$15/yr; SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA COMPUTER CLUB...$15/yr; POMONA VALLEY, CA...$15/yr; PITTSBURGH UG, $15/yr...... and so on.

Okay...say it...go ahead..."he stuck his foot in his mouth"... but remember one thing... I could have torn this up and thrown it away too!! My point is this — and maybe the other user groups will benefit from this also — the "average" looks to be about $15.00, which is what we already charge. But most of us are willing or even anxious to send $25.00 for MICROpendium or $2.00 for some catalog of TI stuff that is overpriced. We even subscribe to PC Magazine or BYTE magazine. Don't we feel we can derive more from our user group – "direct knowledge" from people that are "doing it" and are not in it for the money???

I also read minds... no, I don't have a lot of money – most likely less than anyone else in the club – but I do appreciate the camaraderie and knowledge that our group furnishes me... 7 days a week!

Why can't we get T-shirts for the *FEST WEST* (which would net us a profit)? We don't have the money in the treasury. OK. How about this. Don't mail out the newslet-

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Group of Orange County in California.

Myarc has provided the Personality Card, the first hard disk controller for the TI; Myarc Floppy Controller Card, capable of single sided/single density (90K) to double sided/quad density (720K); the Myarc Hard and Floppy Disk Controller Card (along with Disk Managers III and IV); 512K Memory Expansion Card (RAMdisk, Print Spooler, plus more); Extended BASIC II: Myarc RS232 interface card; Myarc Expansion System; and Geneve 9640.

The UGOC Hall of Fame was created in March 1989.

SPEAK OUT, from page 11

ter... save a few bucks... give it out at the next meeting... oh no, we can't do that because not everyone comes to the meetings... why don't they??? Because they have nothing invested!!! r.f.

[*Editor's Note:* The VAST Computer User Group governing board always welcomes your views and comments. Space will be made available in the newsletter for comments and any opposing view points. Comments can be uploaded as private uploads to "SysOp only" on the BBS or sent to the return address on the newsletter information page.]

HIND-SIGHT

by Mike Marfisi

Boy, do I have a bad case of "egg on my face!" When I goof, I do it BIG! One year ago I fought to keep this group from getting involved in hosting *FEST WEST '92*. I felt very strongly that we did not have the talent, resources or people needed to put on such an event. Well I never figured on a spunky lady like Hazel Knight or a super dedicated guy like Ralph Rees. These two folks proved me wrong every step of the way.

FEST WEST '92 is now history and a memory. And what a memory it is. I think we can safely say that we hosted a top notch event. I think we can also say that we are probably the only group that has made a good profit on an event like this. Not only did we pay expenses, we made money!

I want to express my gratitude to Hazel and Ralph for the scores of hours they gave to make this *FEST* the success that it was. The list of people to thank is long. Thanks to BJ Mathis and the fine folks of Southwest 99'ers for all the help and advise. Thanks to the staff at the Day's Inn for making us feel welcome and providing us with a great facility at a real bargain price. To all the vendors that came to us from all over the country, we hope your trip was profitable. To Virginia Davis who spent countless hours creating and converting font and graphic disks to be sold. This turned into the biggest money maker we had. To Dave Marfisi for

HIND-SIGHT, *from page 13*

providing the security that allowed all our vendors to sleep knowing that their equipment would be safe. To Gene Gipson for providing all those tables and power cords. And what can we say to Ray Frantz? The buttons were magnificent! Dan Shell & Jim Ely... the signs and posters were top notch! (Is it REGINA or REGENA?)(I think Jim Ely uses the same spell checker that I do.) And to all the other members who pitched in to help set up, staff and tear down the *FEST*......THANK YOU!

We also owe a big thank you to the guys and gals of the Southern California Computer Club (SCCC) from San Diego for manning (and womanning??) the hospitality suite for the youngsters. To the folks of PV 99 User Group in Chino, CA who sent us a check to spend anyway we felt could help, thanks. We bought the 2400 baud modem for the raffle with your contribution.

To each and every person who had ANYTHING to do with this event (and I am sure I left out several), thanks for proving me wrong. This VAST thing is a great bunch people!   m.m.

EDITOR'S DESK, *from page 3*

own impressions of *FEST WEST '92* in his *4/A FORAY* column. Ray Frantz submitted an article on *TI-WRITER* in early December, which missed the December deadline. Because of the *FEST*, I haven't been able to publish that article until now. It is on page 7 and describes using the "Form Letter" feature of TI-Writer. I have included

an article describing the Michaelangelo *VIRUS* that activated on March 6th. I thought you might be interested in what the virus was capable of doing to a PC based system. That is on page 8, and on page 12 is Speak Out by Ray Frantz, talking about club dues. Page 13 has an interesting afterview of *FEST WEST '92* by Mike Marfisi. I think we have quite an interesting issue here.

UP-COMING MEETINGS

Our meeting this month will be in the **MAUVE ROOM** at the Plyc Adult Recreation Center. Below is a two month calendar with our meeting dates indicated.

APRIL					1992		MAY					1992	
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THR	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THR	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4						1	2
5	6	7	8	9	10	(11)	3	4	5	6	7	8	(9)
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30			24	25	26	27	28	29	30
							31						

PREVIEW

Boy, now that is something I don't do very often. But I actually do have 2 articles for the next issue! I have part 2 of the TI-Writer Form Letter series and I have an article on some tips and tricks possible with some of the TI plug in modules. Be watching for those NEXT MONTH.

That's it for this month. See you at the meeting March 14th.
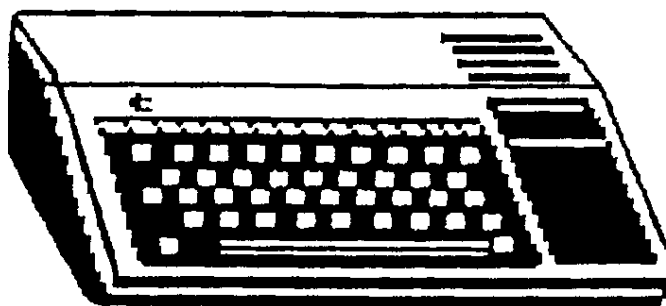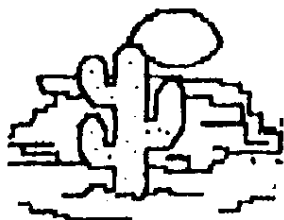
VAST User Group Information

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

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The VAST Computer User Group operates a BBS 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The phone number is (602) 233-0790.

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

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