AUGUST, 1991

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CEDAR RAPIDS/MARION

NEXT MEETING: 6:30 PM AUG 13, 1991
WEST MUSIC, COLLINS ROAD SQUARE

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MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Our July 9th meeting had ten members in attendance. The evening started out with a demonstration by Gary Bishop of the Mystery #2 Program, from the Cleveland Area User Group news letter. Also shown was the Match It program that was reprinted in our news letter. These programs were originally from Glenn Bernasek of the Cleveland UG. John Johnson demoed a program he recently received from Tex-Comp, called Animator.

The treasurers report had no change from last month and the minutes from the June meeting were approved as written.

NEW BUSINESS: 1. The Hamfest comming up on August 11th was discussed and it was decided that we would not have a TI demo table this year. 2. $65 was collected to be sent to the McGoverns for Funnelweb.

Bruce Winter finished out the evening with a demonstration of a software demo from the Tiger Cub.

Submitted by Bob Wahlstrom, Secretary

The Prez's Blurb

Trivia- Here are a couple for you. First the easy one. What key is the backslash on? I am finally starting to study some more C language programs and they seem to like to use that one a lot. Second- Does any one remember the magic inputs to escape the tape recorder screen instructions? That ought to produce a little head scratching.

Things have slowed down some in my computer world but still there has been enough to get me late with this article. As I mentioned I am starting C language again but the book I have is for Big Blue (IBM) users and it looks to me that C is about as universal a language as Basic is. It all looks the same until you get into it a ways. Then the little differences can kill you if you don't watch every step carefully. I know I am a pain about this particular subject but I am really glad I learned Assembly first. Big help.

I do have a few progams for the library but not as many as I had hoped. The French Skyscape with the screen dump is good. Again as above the new 1988 c99 language is a big improvement over the old one. (It says. I don't have the expertise to prove it yet.) Animator 99 is good but has, in my opinion, copywrite problems that will have to keep it out of the club library. If anyone anywhere has info on that particular progam please contact me. This leaves me with no DOS so far. Any volunteers?

More on the Cedar Rapids Public Library BBS. After Gary Bishop reminded me at the meeting that you can change the Telco setup from 40 to 80 column I tried it again. I found that there is a setup for the screen and another one for the terminal. You can therefore set up Telco for an 80 column terminal with only a 40 column screen. To do this go to the Setup Options. Choose Terminal Setup next. Now change the Terminal Width from 40 to 80 and you will have a terminal that operates like TI writer. That is it will have two windows to view 80 columns. Note that you must use function 3 to move back to the left windows. If you save to a log it will be 80 column also but you will need an 80 column program like TI Writer to view it. It will print out 80 columns on the printer etc. It is nothing compared to an 80 column card but it works. There is another problem about the library program I should warn you about. It does not always scroll up off the top of the screen like most BBS's so the log will not contain much if you are searching for a particular book. This problem is common to all terminals using it and I can vouch that it is very little easier to use at the Library itself. There is a section with some info that can help. Get it first if you are interested in using their BBS much.

Well the 500K card is still up as of this writing so the method of turning off the PE box first has stood the test of time so far. How about some Trivia answers! First answer is....function Z. Everbody and his brother knew that one--right? Second answer.....just press "E" and then enter. I hope that is correct. I am betting no one tries it. I think I will right now.

EOF...J C Johnson..CR

GEMINI 10-X PRINTER FIXED AT LAST!

Do you remember a few months ago, while I was still editor for the NEWSLETTER, that many times it looked as though parts of the printed characters were missing from the newsletter? I was constantly fighting my Gemini 10-X printer in order to get the NEWSLETTER printed each month. Seems like I have been fighting it for at least a year! Usually, the ribbon would pop out of its track about half way down a page. Then I would have to reset the printer, put in the commands to the Formatter again, and start over on a clean piece of paper. What a pain! I finally figured out that the ribbon would stay in its proper place only if I put some finger pressure on the slack wheel that was feeding ribbon to the print head. This provided enough tension to the ribbon so that it wouldn't jump up. Of course, when the ribbon came to its end, and the spools had to reverse functions, the slack spool became the take-up spool, and if I wasn't quick enough to move my finger from one spool to the other, the ribbon jumped again! It was like it had a mind of its own, just trying to make me frustrated! Funny how this always happened on deadline night, when I was desparate to get the NEWSLETTER printed and delivered to the copier.

Well, after Gary volunteered to take on the NEWSLETTER editing job (thanks again, Gary!), I had enough time to really look at the problem in my printer. Truth was, I figured that the gears that drive the spools were going bad, and that meant a repair bill that I was not ready to pay! That's why I put up so long with the finger tension fix! When putting the ribbon back on track, I usually noticed that there seemed to be an obstruction in front of the print head, and the ribbon did not seem to want to slide down between the print head and the paper. This caused me to remove the print head to see if some rock had found its way into that thin space. Instead of a rock, I found a red colored rectangle of plastic that was protruding out from the print head about 1/16 inch or so. I learned that this red piece, with nine tiny holes punched vertically in it, is the guide for the pins that fire out of the print head and make contact with the ribbon. AHA! I had found the cause of my problems! (Then I asked myself why it had taken a year to find it....)

When I removed the red piece, which I am told is not plastic but a precious stone (did I say rock?), I found tiny gobs of ink behind the guide piece, around the pins. Boy, was it dirty! I told myself that this should be an easy job to clean the ink out, put the print head back, and I'd be back in business in no time! WRONG! Cleaning out the ink was easy all right, as long as I used a fine brush that didn't bang into the pins. Boy, are they fragile! I could just see myself bending one of those small pins and then having to buy a whole new print head for $50 or more. Anyway, I was careful, and the caked ink from so many newsletters was quickly cleaned out. Now all I had to do was put things back the way they were.

Guess what? Have you ever tried to thread nine sewing needles side by side, all at the same time? Well, that's what it seemed like to have to line up all nine pins so that they would go into the guide holes in the red rectangle! (Do you suppose that thing is a ruby, or a garnet?) Anyway, I was not having any luck with this at all, and I was quickly finding out that my eyes are not as good on small close-up work as they used to be! I decided to ask for help from our Group members. Surely, one of them have done this trick before!

Well, Bob Wahlstrom was my savior, or so I thought. Yes, he had taken out his print head and had experience with lining up the pins. But, alas, he does not have a Gemini printer. His model comes with a tapered emerald, so that his pins just naturally followed the taper into their respective holes! My hopes were dashed! His secret was not going to help me at all.

That evening, after dinner, I retired to the work bench where I had left my printer in pieces. (My kids are finally old enough that they don't usually bother anything on my workbench any more.) I picked up the ruby and the print head and started to once again search for a method that would allow me to get all those little pins lined up in those little holes. I had no taper on mine. The tweezers were too big for the job! I thought about tying a piece of thread between each pin in order to hold them all in place. Nothing seemed to work! While I was thinking about the next brainstorm that I hoped would come, I just started working the ruby over the pins, trying to get the feel of the difficulty, so to speak. And WHAM! All of a sudden, the ruby (I sure hope it's not just a piece of plastic!) fell over the pins, and the thing just dropped right into place! All the way into the print head so that it was flush with the surface! I couldn't believe it! I had been stewing about this for 36 hours, asked advice from three or four other TI'ers, and I fixed the thing with blind luck and persistance!

Well, I'll take success any way it comes! I smiled to myself, said a short prayer of thanks under my breath, and proceeded to attach the print head back where it belongs on my printer. I now had a new problem. What if the ruby (or whatever) decided to kick back out once I started to test the printer? There certainly was no glue holding it in place. Would I smash one or two pins, and then have to buy a new head after all?

There was only one way to find out, so I bravely turned on the re-assembled printer, and it worked great! All the dots on the characters were printed! The ribbon stayed in its track! I then keyed up a four page report that my daughter had typed, and it printed all four pages without an error. Boy, was I relieved! I think I've got this problem finally licked!

This has turned into a long story about a short subject, but it is a good example of the lesson that any of us can do maintenance on our system, and after careful study of your problem, reading the manual that came with the equipment, and conferring with your fellow TI'ers, there's no substitute for BLIND LUCK!

Jim Green

(I should explain a trick I have pulled on Jim Green concerning the above article. When people submit items for the newsletter, they usually provide their inputs on a disk, and also provide a print out of the material, so I can use it as a check copy of the contents. Jim gave me a check copy of his article, and it clearly demonstrated the success of his repair technique. Well, instead of reprinting the contents of his disk, I pasted up the check copy he provided, and used it directly in the newsletter. This printout is proof of how well Jim's technique worked. Compare it to the April 1991 newsletter, where the top of some of the lines show up the problem Jim described. - Ed.)

Speaking of newsletters, if you have someting to include in our newsletter, try to get it to me by the end of the month. Submissions on disk are most welcome, and "newsletter ready" printouts are awarded my prize of a huge thank-you. / Gary Bishop.

Note from Decatur 99UG received 7/18/91 that they will be sending their newsletter to other exchange groups every quarter instead of monthly, to save postage costs. Thanks for informing us - Editor.

Tic Toc, Rocky Mountain 99er July 91, received 7/19: catalog of all articles from all newsletters ever sent to Rocky Mountain group, programs that write other programs #4 by Jim Peterson, Border and scroll program, letter header for writing multiple text headers, Rave 99 expansion box endorsement and review, TI still cares listing, 4A/Foray - the 99/4A is a survivor, the dark theory of things, listing of the Disk of the Month (DOM).

Snuglet, So. Neveda UG July 91 received 7/8: Tips from the Tigercub #42 by Jim Peterson, BBS report and description of new files, 9640 Corner, newsletter blues, winds of change are blowing.

Cleveland Area UG July/August 91 received 7/6: TI emulation on an IBM PC with VGA card, accelerator to TI, computer controlled robot, file deleter, home computer defined by Jim Peterson, TI Base tutorials 22.1.1, 22.1.2, printer commands for TI Writer, letters from members, label and envelope addresses.

TI Topics, LA99ers June 91 received 7/3: console lockups, TI Writer tips on define prompt and alternate input, password program, XB misc. info #1, TIPS review, marketplace listing.

Spirit of 99 CONNI July 91 (no August publication) received 7/15: user group problems and suggestions, Tips from the Tigercub #65 by Jim Peterson, TI world news, newsletter printer program review, speech and subtract program in XB, make a diskette case, VCR connection, Rave PS/2 expansion box revieww, Pix ease from Comprodine review.

K-Town 99er July 91 received 7/5: back to Plus! by Bob Buehler about printer fonts, swap list of some CD's and 78 RPM records, sauerkraut salad recipe, welsh rarebit, olive-nut spread, newsletter printer tips for graphics and printing 2 columns by Art Gibson, XB boot tracking (reprinted in this newsletter - Ed), TI Writer tips.

Chicago Times May 1991 received 5/7: Chicago TI Faire has a new location, several Geneve disk utilities and support articles and library listing, MIDI Master is available and shipping, War zone - Legends game reviews, 1000 words, TIPS 1.8 review, Smash program review, Pat in TI Land (that's our Sister Pat Taylor - Ed.), encyclopedia of graphics offer.

Chicago Times Jule 1991 received 7/3: Geneve support articles.

Western Washington Computer Club July 1991 received 7/13 (a new exchange for us, howdy! - Ed.): comparison between Smash and Dezip.

" June 91 received 7/13: planned club garage/bake sale, faster XB module with more commands for $25, Corcomp repair info, load bug in YAPP, label maker, TIPS review, New Age #14 by Jack Sughrue discusses gentleman genius, ad for Asgard extended graphics interface.

" May 91 received 7/13: TI casino discussion, newsletter exchange list, spotlighted members, using your speech synthesizer, New Age #13, Logo video from Eunice Spooner description, latest Multiplan news.

" April 91 received 7/13: congratulations on the marriage of two club members, Notung software info, member spotlight, using your speech synthesizer, fonts and border examples, New Age #12, Multiplan tutorial 3.0 .

Byteline of Decatur, IL March 1991 received 7/1: Tips from the Tigercub #61 by Jim Peterson, music duration and frequency translator, mon echo, disk lister to display.

" April 91 received 7/1: TI still repairs equipment, protecting your computer from electrical surges, New Age #13 VCR connection, PC power supply in P Box.

" May 1991 received 7/1: basic math program, some notes on video, PC power supply in P Box part 2 + 3.

" June 1991 received 7/1: dangerous DOS, puzzle-12, program music the easy way part 1 by Jim Peterson, make a diskette case, Burma Shave quotes.

Snuglet So. Neveda UG May 1991 received 5/21: hard disk comments, 9640 corner, graphics in text comments.

QB Monitor May and April 1991 received 6/1: Tips from the Tigercub #63 by Jim Petersonn, fanfare program, D.O.M. contents, programs that write other programs by Jim Peterson, helpful hints.

Oakland Computer Club Spring 1991 received 5/20: trip to Boston Computer Fair, Logo VCR tape, picture of the faire, trip quiz, blast off program.

Topics LA99ers July 1991 received 7/27: MIDI Master 99 distribution update, Funnelweb 4.31 file descriptions and identification, MG Explorer for 9640 available?, Standard home banking of California info, robot names program, dice roll program in PC basic and how to convert to TI XB, financial planning one-liners by Tony Falco, mail list manager by Bill Gaskill - use - comments - XB listing, pin outs for Geneve/Magnavox/Amiga 1080 monitors, editor's column and Page Pro usage.

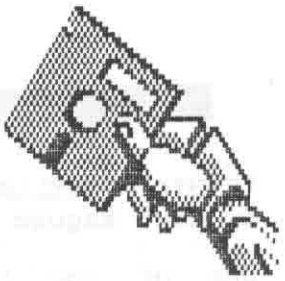
FOR SALE:

Kantronics Interface and terminal unit, used to connect up a ham radio transceiver or shortwave receiver to the TI computer. Will copy Morse code, radioteletype (RTTY), ASCII at 110/300 baud. With cables, manual, lots of extras, $75; Widget $10; Jiffy Card and Jiffy Flier, unused, $8 ea., or make me a package offer; Tigercub Nuts and Bolts #1, $5; 720K 80 track half height disk drives, can't be used on the TI, except by a techie, for CP/M systems, or maybe the adventuresome on IBM, 2 brand new, several in good condition, $20 each, or offers?; Epson FX-100+ wide carriage, good condition, with cable for TI, it prints this newsletter every month(!), could stand a new ribbon, $50; printer enclosure, will fit the FX-100+, $20. Will deal, but better catch me quick before the next ham fest. Gary Bishop 319-377-9574 after 5PM CDT.

The next page of reflections was provided by Sister Pat:

WHY COMPUTING?

HOPEFULLY, TO ENJOY THE PRESENT, TO EXPLORE ITS POTENTIAL USE AND PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS.



IS IT REALLY LATER THAN YOU THINK...

If you remember a time when "boot" normally referred to footwear, not a program loading into a computer...

Or days when "bulletin board" was simple school equipment and not also electronically sent messages...

Or times when we spoke of "animation" in reference to a person's enlivened spirit, not a screen imitating life...

Or when "conversions" were mostly religious, political, not ASCII, hexadecimal, or binary...

Or "utilities" were normally electrical bills, not terrific helpers to aid a floundering computer novice...

When "default" referred a shocking failure to meet an obligation instead of a comfortable choice made for you...

When you might have concluded that "software" must refer to clothing instead of programs on disks or cassettes...

Was it only yesterday when you assumed "hardware" was a simple tool, not expensive electronic equipment...

Or when "character" was a quality admired, not a letter, number, or symbol...

When "font" was a part of type setting, not an everyday term for collections of alphabets, numbers and symbols with which to type....

Or when "terminals" were bus/train depots normally, not input, output devices such as printers...

Or when you assumed a "buffer" was to shine one's floors, not a temporary printer or computer storage device...

When "bugs" were pests in nature, not a man-made error in a computer program...

When "monitors" were humans who watched school halls instead of equipment displaying a screen...

Or when "dump" referred to a location where waste materials were placed, not a print-out of screen materials...

When memory and memory loss belonged to the world of people, not computers...

It is easy to see how the present has built upon the past. In some cases it modifies, in others, expands, builds, or creates. Is it later than we thought, or is it simply a question of the past and present not fully integrated into that which is yet to be?

1

XBASIC MISCELLANY #1

By Earl Raguse

One of the things I learned while reworking TIPS 1.6, to 1.6/ER and writing TIPSLABEL was that TI didn't tell us in the XB Manual, or the later addendums, all we should know about XB. At least in what I could find. You may recall in my article on TIPS 1.6, that I found that after I had converted TIPS to using CALL KEY(3,K,S), DISPLAY AT, and ACCEPT AT, I could not enter lower case in ACCEPT AT.

I had some recollection that I had done it once upon a time, but I was not sure about it. Then I remembered that XB does not have a command to restore the lower case character set once they have been redefined. CHARSET does not do it, it only restores the uppercase set. That presumably was because early XB did not have a lowercase set. I then reasoned that since that was true, it made sense that ACCEPT AT would only take uppercase.

I had plans for writing an assembly routine to LINK that would do it, I had once written an assembly program to take keyboard text input, and further I knew that Adrian Robinson had written in the ROM, a very detailed ACCEPT AT routine in assembly. My problem was that I didn't know how to get into Irwin Hott's LOADER program for TIPS. That is where there assembly routines are hidden, submerged below the XB.

How wrong I was! I did not know until I got a call from Adrian (Robbie) Robinson, that the problem was not with ACCEPT AT, but the fact that I had used CALL KEY(3,K,S) to insure that all entrys to CALL KEY would be upper case, instead of running them all through Ron Wolcott's assembly routine for converting inputs to upper case. I didn't recall where I learned that CALL KEY(3) did that, surely not in the XB manual, but I knew it. It turns out, it was the Users Refence Guide.

What I didn't know was that once you do a CALL KEY(3,x,y) all, and I mean ALL, keyboard input thereafter, for CALL KEY, INPUT, LINPUT, ACCEPT AT, ect, etc, is restricted to upper case. I had used that fact for CALL KEY in my DIRectory programs. I didn't know that it stayed that way until you returned to the Title Screen. Or that you must do a CALL KEY (S,x,y), to restore normal upper and lower case, before any statement that calls for keyboard input. It matters not what x & y are so long as they are legal numeric variables. Lower case character redefinition has nothing to do with this. That is another story, later alligator, where again Robbie used his assembly knowledge to help me out of an of an XB problem with CHARSET.

After that phone call, I searched everything I had on XB, to no avail, I could find nothing to tell me this. The best source on the keyboard is the User's Reference Guide (the "Green Book"), but it does not even imply that it works that way. About two days later, I got a letter from Australia, from the Hunter Valley Assembly Guru, Ross Mudie, telling me the same thing Robbie did. I then got suspicious, why are the only people who know this the Assembly guys, I then scoured the TI Editor Assembler Manual. Firstly, I found a reference to the User's Reference Guide. There was however, a discussion, see page 250, about the fact that the Keyboard "device" was selected by placing a number, they discuss only numbers 0-3, into >8374. (Hex numbers are indicated by preceding with > as in >8374). Now this discussion makes no reference to CALL KEY, it is generic, and therefore refers to all keyboard input. Also, once a number is loaded into location >8374, it stays there until changed. I can now assume that the XB CALL KEY does among other things, a CALL LOAD of the key number into >8374 which requires a new CALL KEY or CALL LOAD statement to change >8374 to a new number. I have tried to test this theory in XB, but to no avail, Robbie says it works, but it won't for me. If I were working in assembly this would be rather understandable, but to the average XB Manual reader, TI left it quite totally unexplained. I wrote a very interesting program called LOAD/PEEK to test CALL LOAD and CALL PEEK. Next time I may publish it, you could use it to learn a lot about how this TI computer works.

So what does this all mean? If you wish XB to return upper case only, do a CALL KEY(3,x,y); to restore lower case, do a CALL KEY(5,x,y); and to keep the previous state (ie don't disturb the keyboard device previously selected) use CALL KEY(0,x,y). I note that most XB programmers use CALL KEY(0,x,y) almost exclusively. They are then not taking advantage of the computer's (and XB's) capabiliies. I hope after this you will.

In the following months I plan to write about some of the other things I have learned about XB in recent days. Also including the above program LOAD/PEEK. One thing I have looked into is error trapping, and some things I have thus learned are not documented in the XB Manual. I have also learned some some other helpful things which I will get around to talking about. I will have something to say about the power of ACCEPT AT, that even my High Priced Spread computer does not have. Until next time, may your 99/4A's never do a hang-up in 1991.

R 1225
Date: 26 Jul 91 15:07
Message-ID: <1225@WA0RJT>
From: N0BJK@WA0RJT
To: ALL@MIDUSA
Subject: Cedar Rapids Hamfest 8/11/91...
Path: WA0RJT

SUMMERFEST '91 courtesy of the CEDAR VALLEY ARC
Sunday 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM
August 11, 1991 at the Teamsters Hall 5000 J St. SW

-VE Testing @ 10:00
-Handi-Ham accessible
-Same Place as Last Year
-Prizes:
TS-440 complete station
TM-241A 2M Mobile
TH-27A 2M HT
TH-47A 70CM HT
SW-2100 VSWR Meter
and more!

-Free coffee
-Air Conditioned
-Catered cafeteria
-ARRL attending
-Lodging within 3 minutes of hamfest site/restaurants
-Easy to find: 2 minutes off of I-380 (146.145/.745)
-VE Info: Tom WE0F 319/377-7629

-$4.00 at the Door
-Shady Tailgating
-Full Line Dealers
-Computers and more!

-Hamfest Info: Pat Wilcox KF0AD @ WA0RJT (or) 319/396-5232

NQ0V de WA0RJT: at 1342z on 910729 B,D,H,?,I,J,K,L,N,R,S,T,U,V,W >

ATTENTION: GREENHORNS!

My friend was retyping the history of a scaled model of our community's original prairie home on my TI using Funnelweb. Imagine our shock when she received a message: Text Buffer Full.

When she asked me about it, what could I say? I didn't even know I had a text buffer! She had 3 1/2 paragraphs to go, the thought of her retyping was enough to get my adrenalin going up to 3rd. floor for the TI-WRITER manual.

The Index helped me find LoadF/Merge and Text Buffer Full, but the subsequent pages only impressed me with the fact she had already typed 23,000 characters and there was no room to merge! Horrors!

Next I called a local TIer who also was puzzled. Before I called another TIer long distance, I decided it was cheaper to experiment on 100 pieces or so of computer paper. My first idea was to break the file when it ended on a page, and thus have to type that part over and make an end file and print it independently. It wouldn't co-operate and end perfectly.

Back to the manual. Why not try this Include File stuff on page 109? So I broke the original into two files and saved one as Pat/E and one as Pat/F(oh, I was past numbers and earlier letters of the alphabet by now!). I tried the fancy part on file Pat/E and successfully merged the end in the beginning. Good, there is hope.

Next, I stripped the two files of all codes except the dot command to center the title .CE2. Then I put all the dot commands in a file I called PAT/EF. It looked like this:

```
.IF DSK1.C9
.IF LM12;RM73
.PL 62
.HE %
.IF DSK2.PAT/E
.IF DSK2.PAT/F
```

It worked! Only one thing remained, how to match it perfectly as I was one line off. I had left a line at the end of one file and at the beginning of the next. Once it was removed, it was perfectly merged and all the pages sequentially numbered as if it were truly one file. I had never used the .HE %, but while I was looking for answers came across it and decided I may as well learn all I can so the paper is not educationally wasted. It was neat to see every thing so cleanly merged and pages numbered sequentially, treating it all the same.

I thought there must be greenhorns like myself who would take courage in knowing we can produce work that looks like we know what we are doing.

Take heart, if I can, you can! One last experience. I knew the formatter would consider a period a dot command, and did not

know how to write about code using the dot in front of the code as a sample. I knew I needed a space marker and thought Function W was it as it looked like it. It is Shift 6. It only took three retypings to straighten that out!

Do I find this discouraging? Absolutely not, when you learn this way, you tend to remember it well. The end product is eventually you do know what you are doing in one more tiny area of computer experience!

Sr. Pat Taylor, BVM

THINGS THAT SCRAMBLE RAMDISKS, by one that owns a pre-scrambled disk. - Gary Bishop

I have experienced not one, but TWO crashes on my 1.5 Meg Horizon ramdisk in the last month. I haven't lost a whole lot, because I try not to keep the real important stuff on the ramdisk. It is kind of a pain to go back and reload all the software I have been using, going through the configurations, setting all the options, etc. Anyway, the first crash was caused by a Widget. I knew it was decidedly hostile toward ramdisks, and I even advised our own John Johnson about them when he obtained his ramdisk. Well, the Widgets are so handy and convenient, that my son used it on my system to play his favorite games. This sounds innocent enough, but for some reason, when the Widget selector switch is changed while the console is powered up, it eats the ramdisk. I don't know why, nor am I going to investigate why. It just happens. After the ramdisk was blown, I knew I couldn't hurt anything, so I tried an experiment. I performed the minimum amount of configuring for the ramdisk; just enough so it thinks it is actually a ramdisk. I then switched the Widget to find out how often it blows the ramdisk. No more that 10 times, and the ramdisk setup is gone! It doesn't even matter if there are any cartridges in the Widget. The mere act of moving the selector switch is enough to upset the ramdisk. Don't use a Widget on any system that contains a ramdisk. I'm not sure what the Widget would do to other brands of ramdisks, but play it safe. If you don't have a ramdisk, the Widget is almost a necessity; but a ramdisk is mucho more useful.

Ramdisk rip #2 was an odd combination of programs. I was using Tarik Isani's extended Basic TI Writer loader program that doesn't require the TI Writer cartridge. I had his program loaded on the ramdisk, so I could choose TI Writer directly from the menu. This combination worked most of the time; often enough, in fact, that I wasn't aggravated enough to find and fix the problem when it didn't work. Well, one time after it didn't work, I accidently hit the Load interrupt switch, and the TI Writer menu immediately appeared. Ahah! I thought. Maybe his loader uses the load interrupt, and this is a convenient way to get the program jump started when it didn't load directly from the menu. It worked a few times; other times it didn't. About the sixth or seventh time I tried loading it, the ramdisk light came on steady, the speaker emitted a disheartening howling tone, and I instinctively bolted for the master power switch for my system. Ha! In the reaction time it took me to dump the power, megabytes were trashed. Looking back on the situation, I shouldn't have been surprised. Oh well, another lesson learned. Messing with the load interrupt switch without a solid assebmly language program in control was foolish. I paid the price. By now, I had just recently rebuilt the ramdisk, and made backups of all the files, correctly configured and set up. Restoring the ramdisk took only a few minutes. One thing I did not restore was the TI Writer loader. It works flawlessly from the floppy disk, but just not reliably from ramdisk.

Closed Circuit from Gary Bishop. Messages to individuals that will read this section: To Stewart Prince: I have your disk drive checked out and it works OK. I will bring it to the next meeting for you. If you have any books or disks for the Sanyo, bring them to the next meeting or send them with your envoy. I may have found a final resting place for the computer.

To Bob Heiderstadt: If you think of it, bring the toroidal balun core(s) that you put my name on. Thanks!

To Ed Edwards: If you can conveniently round them up, would you bring your collection of Home Computer On Disk? I will return them to you quickly. Thanks.

From Bryan Bishop, assistant, scribe, and general do-er of helpful things: don't eat yogurt over the keyboard of any computer. His 6 and 7 keys still stick.

NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY

AUGUST 13, 1991 6:30 PM

WEST MUSIC COMPANY
COLLINS RD. SQUARE, MARION
NORTH OF LINDALE MALL

PRESENTATION: ENCORE OF HOME GROWN GENEOLOGY PROGRAM BY BOB HEIDERSTADT

Cedar Valley 99'er Users Group
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FIRST CLASS

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