

The Paper Peripheral

August 1985

Putting you Online with the Central Texas 99/4A Users Group

From the President's Keyboard

Greetings once again from your friendly neighborhood /4A Users Group. Last meeting was well attended, partly because many people who heard about us at the Austin Computer Faire came out to see us. At the meeting we saw the Craig Miller tape from the LA Users Group. The audio on the tape made it difficult to hear, but most of the hardcore /4A users found it a very enlightening evening.

Several things have happened since we last talked. One is that KLRU has asked us to participate in their August pledge drive as phone volunteers. The night that our group will be there will be August 18th, from 6:00 pm to 11:00 p.m. The theme for this night will be "Great Moments from National Geographic". We had a pretty poor showing for the group at the last pledge night, but those who were there had a good time. We got to work for about 15 minutes each hour and spent the rest of the time talking about the /4A. They also showed us the "Austin City Limits" soundstage, which was neat! **WARNING:** If we don't have a better showing this time, this will be the last time we try to get the group some recognition through KLRU. If you want to volunteer, contact me, Mike Schultz, at 835-2377.

Speaking of having a good time, we had our summer party at Susan Donaldson's house in July. There was food, ice cream floats, swimming, and general good times. Oh, and some people even sat down and played with the computer (wink wink nudge nudge). I didn't take a nose count, but I'd say that the party was just the right size for Susan's house, and you should see Susan's house!

Finally, there has been some discussion recently about buying a computer system for the group's very own. The idea was that we could get one of the portable expansion systems and it wouldn't be so hard to get it to the meetings. The problem of the cost of buying a system then surfaced. Recently, however, several people stated that they would be willing to donate money for that purpose. I must admit to dragging my feet on this. I have my reasons, but mostly I thought that it was just too much money for a system that would be used only occasionally. Last month, however, we got an offer from someone outside the group to sell us a system that they almost never used. The system has a stand-alone 32K memory, and a Percom standalone disk drive and controller. The price was \$125.00 and I think that it is a very good price. We are already in the process of acquiring the hardware. Those people who wish to donate money to the group for this purpose should contact me as soon as possible.

That about wraps up this month's activities. At the next meeting, John Young wants to show off his CorComp 9900 expansion system, so he'll have it there. If you have only a console and have thought about expanding it, this will be a good meeting to come and talk with John about this path of expansion.

John also has some software that he is willing to let people have copies of for a good price. If you were at the party and saw the program he was demonstrating, then you'll know the one I mean. If you weren't there, then I'm afraid that you'll have to come to the meeting to get a better explanation than this. Come armed with 5 SSSD diskettes and \$15.00 if you want a copy.

We'll also have a demonstration of the Bit-Mac graphics program by Vaughn Software. See the ad further in for more details.

Mike Schultz

Some Bytes and Nibbles

Not much to be reported this month. What with sick relatives and stuff, we haven't had much time for computer stuff. However, Mike got an interesting letter in the mail recently. A local "trade school" wanted him to know that he could, really could, get a job as a computer programmer if he wanted to, and he wouldn't even have to attend four years of college to do it. Since he already wasted his time going to college for four years so he could be a computer programmer, we decided not to send him to the "trade school". (And I wonder how he managed to get on that mailing list?)

Also, we have some good news and some bad news. The good news is that Infocom has a new ordering address and telephone number which they promise faithfully is much faster than the old ones--and they're right. We ordered *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, it's Hint Book, and two "I Got the Babel Fish" T-shirts from them, and got it all in record time. (Actually, the Hint Book was a little behind the others, but it was still pretty fast.) The bad news is that, with our usual efficient filing system (put the paper down somewhere in the house, usually on top of something), we have managed to lose the *New York Times* which had the information in it. Does anybody else out there have them who can bring them to the meeting? Please?

This is your ever-efficient newsletter editor, signing off for another month. As they say, thank you for your support (ya know what I mean, Vern?) (Have I been watching too much TV this summer?)

Diane Schultz

From the Business End of the Mailbox

The summertime is pretty slow for the mailbox, so I'm slipping in something that didn't come in through the mail. It seems that TI (you remember them, they used to make home computers) will offer a discount on the price of a TI Professional or TI Portable Professional Computer to Users Group members who will submit some software that they write for the TIPC to a Users Group library. The rules are the member must 1) have participated in a 99/4A Users Group Software Exchange Program, must 2) agree to submit one program for the TI Professional to a Users Group within 12 months of purchase, and agree not to resell the equipment within 12 months of purchase. The discounts are more that \$300.00 on selected models over regular software submission prices. If you want to participate in this program, contact John Schier at 250-7303 or Alan Thornton at 250-4111. (I have no objections to this program, but it would make more sense to submit your software to the TIPC Users Group in town, since the /4A wouldn't be able to run it.)

Austin Electronics; 2324 F Ridgepoint Drive; Austin, Texas 78754; 926-5071; wants us to know that they have excellent prices on 64K and 256K dynamic RAMs. They also have a large number of other electronic supplies.

The publishers of the Austin MicroComputer Directory is putting out a new publication, "The Cedar Beetle Express". It is to be a monthly newsletter of the Computer and High Technology industry. Subscription rates are \$35.00 a year. Contact the *Computer Task Force; P.O. 275; Cedar Park, Tx 78613* for more information.

Vik Corporation; 260 Eliot Street; Ashland, Massachusetts 01721 has sent us a flyer. They offer a lot of diskette supplies, including diskettes, mailers, diskette writers (special pens who's tips will break if you try to write too hard on a diskette label), and floppy cases.

The following came to us several months ago, in another users group's newsletter, but somehow I didn't see it until recently. It is a chance to buy T-shirts with a TI message on it. The messages available include: *Texas Instruments Users Group*, *Boot up with T.I.*, *I Love My T.I.*, *Programmers Do It In Groups*, and my favorite, *Texas Instruments Orphan*. The shirts are \$5.50 for short sleeves and \$7.50 for long. Several colors are available in sizes S-M-L-XL-XXL. There is a minimum order of 6 per message. I'm game, is anyone else? Call me.

Want an IBM XT? *C.J. Computers Corp.; 2424 West Ball Rd.; Anaheim California 92804* offers all you need to build an IBM XT compatible for \$795.00 (sans hard disk and controller). The price includes XT motherboard with 256K memory and Bios, 135 W power supply, IBM look-alike flip-top case, IBM style-keyboard, 1 half-height DSDD disk drive, monochrome graphic/printer card, a floppy disk controller and a speaker and stand. They claim 10 minute assembly. (SURE!)

Leaving the twilight zone and getting back to something we can use, *Navarone Industries, Inc. 19968 El Ray Lane; Sonoma, California 95370*, sent us a letter last month. It describes a new program (program as in marketing program, not program as in computer program) that they are introducing for User Groups. It is called HYWAY and works like this. Navarone will send us a copy of one of their

products 3 or 4 weeks before a meeting, free of charge. All we need to do is demonstrate it at the meeting. They would like a thorough evaluation of the product and want a evaluation form filled out and returned. The shipped products become the property of the group and we'll probably raffle them off. They will send us two types of products. One type is finished products that are already being marketed; the other is prerelease versions of products being developed. Other items of note in their letter is that they are setting up a channel of distribution for software developers and are offering "aggressive royalties". They hope to release 8 new products with DataBio Tics in the next 12 months.

Finally, CVC Online Inc.; 801 Second Avenue; New York, New York 10017 has sent us a letter about a new telecommunication service being offered by High Society Magazine. If you know what type of magazine High Society is, and are still interested, then you can look at the letter they sent us at the meeting. I would say more about it in the newsletter, but there's a law about sending that kind of material through the mail and I'm not ready to be arrested.

Mike Schaltz

TI-Writing

All things being equal, this should be an especially short article this month. Last month we covered the Search menu (Find String and Replace String), and all that leaves is Recover Edit and Quit on our command line.

This is going to be especially short since I have never used Recover Edit. Fortunately, the need has never arisen--and I'm not sure it's likely to, with a one-person, one-task computer. I can tell you that the instructions on the TI-WRITER Quick Reference Card say to type in RE on the command line, press ENTER, answer the question *Recover Edit (Yes or No)* (Y for Yes, N for N, and press ENTER again. The Quick Reference Card does not tell me why I would have entered the RE command if I didn't want to do it (although I must admit to doing it a couple of times for this article), but I can tell you that if you just hit ENTER without a Y or N you will be returned immediately to your edit.

Now, those of you who might occasionally use other word processors might wonder what a Recover Edit command would be used for. In my experience, it is absolutely vital for editing on a larger, multi-tasking computer, such as I use at work. In fact, I used our Recover command just today. It is used when for some reason your computer quits (goes down) or the editor program decides not to work anymore, or you run out of memory, or just about anything that takes you out of your edit unnaturally and without your previous consent. A Recover Edit command will look at a file (or in memory) for the changes you've made to the file you were editing since it last replaced that file and attempt to save your changes. My experience is that Recover Edit commands are not always totally reliable--you may not get all of your changes. They are, however, preferable to the alternative, which is you get to start all over again.

Now to the Quit command, the last command among the first group to be covered. Quit is pretty well self-explanatory. You use it when you want to quit editing. To quit, get the cursor to the command line and type a Q. The computer will ask you to enter either an S, a P, or an E. The E is the straight Exit command--as in "Get Me Outta Here!" This takes you back to the TI-WRITER menu. The P is for the Purge command, which has already been discussed (in a previous newsletter). The S command is for those people who start to Quit, then remember that they haven't saved the file they were editing. It is just the same as the Save File. By now I would hope that I've convinced you to save your files frequently and certainly when you're through editing (before you're ready to quit), but if there are a few lazybones out there, this is your last chance.

Next time (notice I don't promise next month!), we'll start in on the second group of TI-WRITER commands, which TI called the Editing Operation commands. These are the commands which use the CTRL or FCTN key in conjunction with another key, and which don't have to be entered from the command line. If you'd like to do a little homework before next time, examine the first several pages of the Quick Reference Card and be sure to review the TI-WRITER manual. Also, there is a rumor that there is another word processor out there, and if I can borrow a copy of it and it's manual, I'll review it. So, 'till next time, boys and girls, Happy Processing!

Diane Scholtz

Going FORTH

This is a little FORTH program which Dave Wolfe gave to me a couple of months ago. I haven't had space to print it until this month.

The program will take a FORTH screen and dump it to a standard 99/4A file. It is better than just redirecting the printer output, because that is one character at a time, resulting in the /4A file having 1 letter per line. This program takes the individual lines on the screen and writes them in one record to the /4A file.

This program is useful in preparing FORTH programs for publishing or for taking data produced by a FORTH program and placing it in a file that a BASIC program can digest. The only thing to be careful of when using to publish a FORTH program, is that it doesn't search for @ signs and double them, and the Text Formatter in TI-WRITER uses those symbols for emphasized printing.

Screen #107

```
0 ( PRINT SCREENS TO 4 FILE (W 4/4/85 ) 0 CLOAD PRT-SCNS BASE-1F
1 DECIMAL 68 CLOAD STAT 39 CLOAD !" 73 CLOAD ?ASCII DECIMAL
2 0 0 0 FILE >FILE C/L 4 + CONSTANT C/NL
3 : LNUM 32 PAD C! 10 /MOD -DUP IF 48 + ELSE 32 ENDIF PAD 1+ C!
4 48 + PAD 2+ C! 32 PAD 3 + C! ;
5 : PRT-SCN ( scn -- ) DUP ?ASCII
6 IF DUP 0 BASE->R DECIMAL <# #8 #> >R PAD 8 + R CMOVE
7 PAD !" Screen #" PAD PAB-BUF ! R> 8 + WRT BLOCK 16 0
8 DO I LNUM DUP I C/L * + PAD 4 + C/L CMOVE
9 C/NL WRT LOOP 32 PAD C! 1 WRT : WRT R->BASE
10 ENDIF DROP ;
11 : PRT-SCNS ( scn1 scn2 -- )
12 >FILE PABS 10 + DUP PAB-ADDR ! 50 + PAB-VBUF !
13 SET-PAB VRBL APPND 80 REC-LEN F-D" DSK2.FORTHLIST" OPN
14 1+ SWAP DO I PRT-SCN LOOP CLSE ;
15 R->BASE -->
```

Screen #108

```
0 BASE->R DECIMAL
1
2 : FLIST
3 >FILE PABS 10 + DUP PAB-ADDR ! 50 + PAB-VBUF !
4 SET-PAB VRBL INPT 80 REC-LEN F-D" DSK2.FORTHLIST" OPN
5 PAD PAB-BUF !
6 BEGIN RD PAB-BUF SWAP TYPE CR
7 GET-FLAG 5 SRL -DUP UNTIL CLSE CR ." Code" . CR ;
8 R->BASE
```

SUPER HORROR STORY *Taken from The Suncoast Beeper St. Petersburg, Florida*

Here's something to think about. It has been reported that, in the line of freeware for the IBM PC with a 10 megabyte hard disk drive, someone wrote a program that was called Super Directory File Name EGABTR. No address was given by the author to send him money or tell him what you liked or didn't like, but it was free. The program was placed on many boards. The documentation showed it to be what every IBM PC owner with a 10 megabyte hard disk drive wanted, and the price was right. When you ran it, you were asked about your system. After you answered the last question, the screen flashed the word "GOTCHA". Now your hard disk was totally blank.

Special Interest Group Meeting

There is currently no scheduled Telecommunications Meeting, but I'm sure that the subject will come up at the party this month.

The assembly language SIG has changed its meeting day. It is now the Wednesday following the regular group meeting and starts around 7:00 pm. It is still at the Health Care International building, just off Great Hills Drive--contact Don Lynch or Mike Schultz for directions. Last month we discussed the 9902 chip that is used in the RS232 card. This month there isn't a planned topic, ... yet!

Newsletter Exchange

Our users group exchanges newsletters with several other recognized 99/4A Users Groups. The exchange is made with the understanding that, with proper credit to both the newsletter and author (if listed), your users group can reprint articles from our newsletter and, with proper credit, we can reprint articles from exchanged newsletters. (Please feel free to correct any typos, misspelling, bad grammar, etc.; we will do the same.)

Notice to Other Users Groups: We now have a new mailing address. Please send your exchange newsletters to:

Central Texas 99/4A Users Group
P.O. Box 200246
Austin, Texas 78720-0246

Commercial Ads

Commercial advertisements are welcomed by our newsletter. This newsletter can provide a select, specialized audience for advertisers. Advertisements also help our group by offsetting the printing and mailing costs of the monthly newsletter. Any advertisement must arrive by the first of the month to be included in that month's newsletter.

The cost of placing a full-page ad is \$20. The cost of a half-page ad is \$10. The ad should be camera (actually photocopy) ready. Some flexibility is allowed in the size of half- and full-page ads--but let's not overdo it!

Classified ads are free to individuals both members and non-members. Send your ads to Central Texas 99/4A Users Group; Box 200246; Austin, Texas 78720-0246

Classified Ads

Wanted: Help converting 6 Amateur Radio programs to run on the /4A. The programs are written in BASIC for other machines and are from a nation-wide Amateur Radio library. The finished programs will be placed in the library, so this is your chance for fame and fortune. Call Jim Lammers at 282-2190.

For Sale: External TI disk drive with power supply...excellent condition...\$85...John 834-6882(W) or 331-8546(H).

For Sale: TI disk controller card with manual and Disk Manager II. Nothing wrong with the card except that its DSSD only. Asking \$50.00. Call Mike 835-2377.

HAS YOUR P-BOX BEEN TOO NOISY? Well, it isn't too loud you say? **WHAT'S THAT? I CAN'T HEAR YOU OVER THE P-BOX!** Has this ever happened to YOU? If it has (or even if it hasn't but you're tired of the LOUD fan in your P-Box) I can help. I will replace your fan with a new QUIET fan for only 15.00 (plus tax) AND even return your old fan back to you! You may ask, "Why so cheap?", and I will tell you. I am not out to rip-off your pocketbooks. I am just trying to help out my fellow 4A'ers, so if you are interested call:

Mark Milam
836-3301 after 6:00 pm

BITMAC disk media software was designed for use with the TI-99/4A home computer. It is written in TMS9900 machine language for the utmost in speed and program function. The program provides bit precision graphics generation and editing. Some of the features are:

Line, rectangle, circle, copy section, mirror, rotate, reverse video, free hand draw, 9 brush sizes, 16 colors, bit "on" color, bit "off" color, screen color, color test area, 40 column text, text on text, text on graphics, 16 color text, upper and lower case, 4 direction bit scrolling, dump to printer (two sizes), save to disk, boolean graphics enhancement, "LIFE" graphics enhancement, second computer input, X Y vector reporting, monochrome and color monitor support, trackball support, single bit erase, single bit placement, block erase, erase colors, erase all, fill, enlarge, reduce, "slide show", "oops" function.

BITMAC is icon driven and is simple to use. Included are extensive documentation, an example coprocessor program and one year warranty.

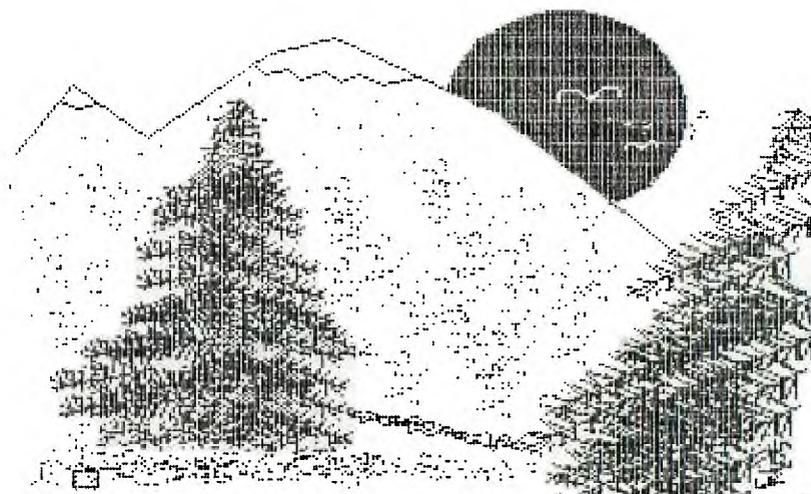
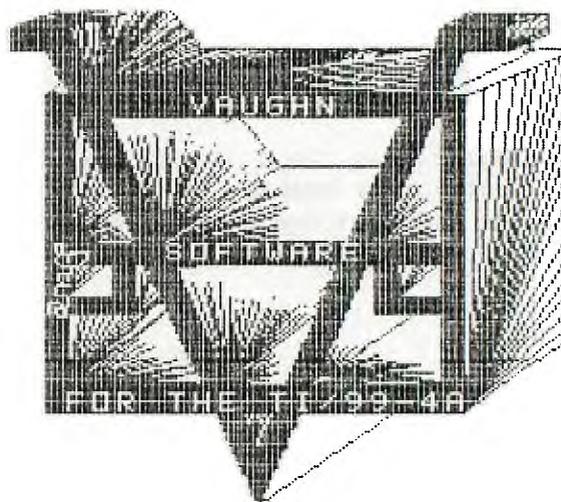
REQUIRED EQUIPMENT: Extended basic, Mini Memory or Editor Assembler module, a display monitor, joysticks, TI-99/4A computer, memory expansion and a disk drive system. THE PROGRAM MAY NOT BE COMPATABLE WITH SOME VERSIONS OF THE MYARC DISK CONTROLLER.

OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT: TI, Gemini or Epson printer, RS232 card, trackball, up to 5 disk drives (limited by the disk controller), second computer (any make) with RS232 interface and cable.

To Order: Send check or money order for \$29.95 plus \$2.00 shipping and handling to:

VAUGHN SOFTWARE
5460 Harlan #84
Arvada, CO 80002

For other inquiries please include a self addressed stamped envelope.



BITMAC

By Vaughn Software

For the

TI-99/4A COMPUTER

BITMAC is a trademark of Vaughn Software.

The BITMAC program is a 1984 registered copyright of Vaughn Software.

Vaughn Software is the only authorized manufacturer of BITMAC.

Meetings Calendar

Meetings of the Central Texas 99/4A Users Group are held monthly at the Pizza Inn, 3000 Duval (near the UT) on the second Thursday of each month. Meetings begin at 7:30.

The following list of meeting dates were compiled from my trusty Dr. Who 1985 calendar. Should any of the dates prove to be faulty, please blame it on the Doctor's poor sense of time (Time Lords confuse easily, you know.) Should there be any mistakes, I'm sure my readers will let me know.

August 8
September 12
October 10
November 14
December 12

Meetings of the assembly language special interest group are held on the following Wednesday. This month the meeting will be held in the Health Care International Building, just off Great Hills Trail. Contact Mike Schultz or Don Lynch for more details.

Current Officers

<i>President</i>	Mike Schultz	835-2377
	4200 Harcourt Drive; Austin, Texas	78727
<i>Vice President</i>	Susan Donaldson	327-4165
<i>Treasurer</i>	Paul Dunn	258-4308
<i>Secretary</i>	Patrick O'Donnell	345-6255
<i>Librarian</i>	Mark Milam	836-3301
<i>Newsletter Editor</i>	Diane Schultz	835-2377

Correspondence for the Users Group can be sent to the address given for the President, or to the Central Texas 99/4A Users Group; Box 200246; Austin, Texas 78720.