CLEVELAND AREA 99-4A USERS GROUPS NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER. 1986

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BULLETIN BOARD------(24 HOURS) (216)(944-1072)

By the time you receive this, we will have passed an anniversary of some sorts. There are those who remember where they were and what they were doing at the time of the market crash in 29. Others remember coming home from Church on a winter morning, December 7, 1941, to discover we were at war with Japan. And there are those of us who remember a passing comment on the evening news on October 28, 1983, that Texas Instruments was leaving the Home Computer market and the almost total disbelief that followed. In that vein, the following is taken from the September Bayou Byte which was taken from the San Fernando Valley 99er Times, in part....

"Back in 1981, when I was shopping around for a computer, the one final thing that sold me on the 99 was the small number of used ones for sale. I constantly checked the Recycler, swap meets, and other used equipment lists. I could find scads of IBMS, Apples, Commodores, Ataris, etc., but very, very few 99's for sale (and that's still true today!). So I decided to go for it because there had to be something special about the 99 because people who bought thee kept thee.

Along this same line, I was sitting in our meeting a couple of months back listening to Steve Mehr talking about some of the fantastic features of DISKMASTER I (DataBigTICs). It created some questions in my mind as to where would be ??ers be today if TI had not dropped the ??? Mould we have things like: DISKMASTER, MASS TRANSFER, GRAM KRACKER, BAWRITER, FUNLWRITER, 512K RAN, TRIPLETECH, TI ARTIST, SUPER SKETCH, SCREEN DUMP, ETC., ad infinitua? And even if we had half of these, what would be the price? Would we have the large number of active 99ers, Users Groups and newsletters we have now? Well, I don't think so, and I came to the conclusion that even though we complain about being orphans and throw darts at TI for abandoning us, I think it is one of the best things that could have happened to us. It caused us to dig more deeply into understanding our computer. It caused us to band together to share knowledge and programs rather than to sit back and continue to lay out large sums of money for the meager periodic bits of information, hardware, and software being doled out by TI (there's another dart !). But, of course, I also came to the conclusion many years ago that 99ers are a unique (peculiar?) breed. So, I think we ought to be thanking TI

(but not too strongly), but most of all thanking those persistent, creative 99ers responsible for a large ascust of what we have today."

The following is taken from the same newsletter under the "President's Remarks"..."As I read through the memsletters our User Broup receive, I am reminded of the progress users of the II 994/A have made since Texas Instruments abdicated from the home computer field. Prices were high with a number of command modules retailing at over \$50 with Ti-Writer, Multiplan and Extended BASIC at just under \$100. At the same time the owners of the 99/4A's were full of enthusiase and scraping together enough cash to be able to buy the Peripheral Expansion Box or maybe an external disk drive. User Groups were being organized and sending in their applications to Texas Instruments for official recognition.

A few months after Texas Instruments dropped its bombshell (or layed an egg), spirits were dampened and doubts were raised in the mind of the user as to the window in expanding a dead computer. Prices for hardware and software packages tumbled and people questioned whether they should keep their computer or immediately switch to one of the other currently popular models either currently marketed or announced as soon available.

Three years have now elapsed and the Aquarious, VIC-20's, 800 XL's and later models like the Adam are all history, but the 99/4A still survives with new software and peripherals still being introduced. The fact is that the 99/4A is better than ever. Users with expanded systems, including at least one disk drive are enjoying an ever-increasing versatility while the owners with only the console and a tape recorder will either expand or drop out.

We can't afford to stop and acurn the aecbers we have lost; our future is providing users with new-found capabilities and with those users new and old who are eager to explore these new fairware and commercial software offerings and the developers of new and exciting hardware.

The real user knows the 99/4A is not dead or even resting. It is a dynamic as any other model of home computer on the market and if an affordable Peripheral Expansion unit reaches the earket place, we could be out in front again. "(Roger Hickerson, President)

October's meeting was excellent! As promissed, Russ Shimandle dismantled his PEBox and installed a "quiet" fan. The result was definitely less noisy than the original, but was still audible. Russ performed the exchange with no difficulty and showed us how this seemingly-improsible job is.

For those interested in the MAX/RLE graphics, the library will be getting 20 disks of RLE pictures in GRAPHI format.

Les Kee dissected a basic program. Using a fairly small Christmas Tree program, he explained the lines in detail. Very informative, Les.

Judy Thalmer of Edu-Comp explained what equipment is necessary to install a Home Control Unit with which you can pre-program lights, appliances, thermostats, garage doors, etc., in up to 8 rooms. This can be done very inexpensively with the Thalmers' assistance. Next month they will bring a working system for demonstration. Thanks, Tomand Judy.

Lastly, Terry Vacha demonstrated "Display Master". With this program, you can produce a type of automatied slide show. Despite a few drawbacks, such as the inability of the material to be printed, and the blank periods on the screen, this made an excellent presentation.

Next sonth we will have a talk on "LOGO"; Les Kee will have another instructional presentation on basic programming, the Thalmers will have Super Extended Basic and a working Home Control Unit.

It was suggested we have a meeting on troubleshooting equipment. Your comments about this and any other topics you would like covered, would be appreciated.

Hope to see you all on November 15 at 10:00 at the North Royalton Public Library.

JAN FEBOR

GOLDEN CRESCENT EXECUTIVE NOTES

The Goldon Croscont Users Group is alive and well in Amberst, Ohio. After a lapse of several aonths, we are once more in the newsletter. Our group's ranks have been reduced quite a bit in the past aonths. So such so, we are now down to a core group of around 10-12 aeabers. This group is very interested in <u>ALL</u> phases of the TI world.

Our last emeting was held on October 16 with a deep of PRBASE and Creative Filing System. Also, a unique clock program in A/L written by Dwayne Hughes for the CorComp TTT card. This is a "Clock Manager" program. Thanks for sharing it with us, Dwayne.

Our next meeting will be held at Dick Durger's <u>MEN!</u> computer store on November 20 at 7:30 p.m. Dick's new operation is called:

Computer Advantage 920 Amchester Drive

Amherst, Ohio

West of Kmart off 254 and a block North of Rte 90. Tel No. 960-1312.

Stop in at our meeting, at which time we will elect new officers and set our direction for the coming year. We will also be starting an A/L SIG. Anyone having information to help get us started, please send to:

Chuck Mareno 42920 Haven Brive Elyria, OH 44035 ATT: Golden Crescent Users Group

CHUCK MARENO

MORTHCOAST EXECUTIVE NOTES

The Iupkos demonstrated MusicSynthesizer at the October aceting. An adventure game donated by Edu-Comp was raffled.

Contrary to last month's report, Larry Prickockis will be continuing as a sysop for the Bulletin Board along with Tom Mellis and Elao. The bulletin board was down for a week due to a broken cable.

A TI-Writer class was held at the meeting room on October 25.

In place of a program next sonth, there will be a trade/swap seet. In order for this to be successful, we will need several people to volunteer their systems. If you can bring one, call se at 943-2791. This is your chance to sell/trade those games, etc., you haven't been using for awhile or get rid of any excess equipment.

The next <u>TWO</u> months are very critical to the future of our group. The By-laws state that in November a nominating committee is to be appointed to select a slate for election of officers in December.

Are we going to have to BEG people to accept positions in the club, or will there be sufficient volunteers for these vacancies? Not only will there be officer positions available, but the new officers will need consittee chairpersons and helpers in every phase of our club.

If, at anytime this past year, you had said to yourself that you could have done as well as such and such did in making a presentation, providing information, presiding over a meeting, etc., then you are obligated to yourself and to the club to be willing to help out. Again, it must be stressed that it is up to YOU to come forward. If you would like to serve on said nominating committee, please call me at 943-2791.

the have to face the realization that we probably will not be any larger group than we are at the present. We could become a much smaller group if we aren't careful. At least, let's make what we have stand out for quality. Vocalize your hopes for the next year at the next meeting.

RON MINADEO

SOLON EXECUTIVE NOTES

Due to a business consistent, I was not able to attend the October meeting, and Vice President Walt Ryder presided Frank Jenkins was the featured speaker, demonstrating PRBASE. Our November meeting will be highlighted by a presentation given by Walt, who will demonstrate linking to assembly subroutines from I-BASIC. Walt will show how an assembly language sort routine can be used in programs, such as the newsletter mailing list, to really speed things up. Anyone who uses or has written any type of data keeping program should be interested in Walt's tutorial.

Now that 1986 is winding down, it is time to take a hard look at the direction in which we (the Solon group) want to proceed. We have continued to decline in numbers this past year, and our finances are now almost stretched to the breaking point. How long we can eaintain the current status is of primary importance. Although we have increased

the annual dues, this can only be of small help in improving the overall picture.

We have a core of loyal and regular followers who make up the bulk of the group at this point. This has made a very warm, friendly, intimate atmosphere for the meetings to take place in. It is nice to be able to interchange ideas and information in this environment, and I consider it to be a real plus. However, existence depends on bringing in new people and keeping the ones that we already have. At this point, I am really at a loss at to how to accomplish these tasks. I have almost begged non-actives to show a renewed interest; tried to tell them what they are missing; asked for their feedback; all to no avail. At this point we need to step back and evaluate our status and decide the direction we must take in 1987.

Our survival depends upon each and every one of us; everyone must participate and be willing to help wherever possible. I know that all of you who are bothering to read this must care about your group. Let's not let it die a painful death because of apathy. We have come too far to let that happen!

It is approaching the time of the year to consider officers for 1987. Mone of the positions require any experience, particular knowledge, or more than an hour or two of your time each month. SU--please start thinking about next year. All volunteers welcome.

See you on November B.

STEVE WEINKAMER

THIS N THAT

From the Lima Bits, Bytes Pixels, October, 1986,... Three members of the Lima Ohio User Group have purchased flexible "Peripheral Extension Cables" from the Tenex catalog, and one has worked properly. After flexing too much, some of the small wires in these ribbon cables break and give irregular operation. Sometimes they work and sometimes they don't. In 2 cases, members blame the cables for causing computer peripherals to blow up. The following is from the Hurst, Tx, News Met 99er, August, B6, and I couldn't have said it better syself... "WANTED: Your experiences with your computer. How are you using your 4A? Built any interesting hardware? Written a program you are proud of? Discovered something you didn't know? The purpose of a users group is for the members to get together and share their experiences. One great way of getting your experiences, questions, etc., is through YOUR newsletter. That's right YOUR newsletter. If you've got a problem to solve, write it down. If you nearest computer buddy can't answer it, maybe someone in the group can. How about that EXTENDED BASIC program you've just written. You want to show off your stuff, so why not write an explanation of what you did and how. Sounds like newsletter material to me. What! Your program's too big to print in the newsletter! Well, why not give a copy to your local librarian and write up a review to let us know about it. REMEMBER, your newsletter is just blank paper without YOU."

From PUNN, the Portland, OR, newsletter comes a warning excerpted from RAndy's RueDR RaG (A northwest BBS) to beware of a program which may be floating around the country's 188's called SUPERTRACK. At first appearance, it seems to be a track copier, but in reality is a diskeater. This program was uploaded to by \$85 recently and I suspect that it will show up around the country. I was suspicious at first because the program tells you to remove the write-protect tape from your master disk. I could not understand why this would be necessary, so I stuck 2 junk disks in my drives. When the program starts, BOTH drives come on and the heads chatter like crazy. Whatever was on your disks are rapped, and I doubt that the action the heads are getting is doing them any good also. The noise is quite loud. I have heard of similar programs for IBM which will zero-out a hard drive, but this is the first one i've seen to the II. I just wanted to warn everyone so that no valuable programs or data are lost.

Rusors from MADHUG and POUG are that Millers Braphics will be merging with a "larger" firm in January. They will be producing a hardware attachment which will make the 99/4A MSDOS, IBM compatible. The unit will attach in such a fashion that you will not have to add anything. Also, they say that there will be 3 new pieces of software for the 4A prior to Christmas.

The CorComp Cursor (promoting their 256/512K cards) notes that <u>Computer Shopper</u> will be adding another TI reporter reviewing TI hardware. He is Lance Parr, President of the Corpus Christi UG. He is a college student pursuing a degree in Electrical Engineering. If there are any hardware or hardware related software products you would like to see reviewed, drop his a line in care of: The Corpus Christi 99ers Users Group, 534 Vaky, Corpus Christi, TX 78404-2609.

This same flyer states CorComp will be releasing a new word processor "MriterEASE" with a built-in spell checker which can be accessed while typing. Elsewhere you will read an enthusiastic writeup for the FREE-NET. If you haven't entered this area of computers, yet it has become one of the less expensive areas in which to branch out. A flyer received Saturday from Radio Shack has a direct connect modem for \$39.95. You would have to make sure that the pinouts were provided so that if their cable was not compatible, you could get one or have someone in one of the groups' make one for you. I have also seen 300 baud modems advertised in Computer Shopper for as little as \$25 with the companies which deal in surplus items. This is not much to "try it out" and then if you like it, move up to the 1200-bauds which are also dropping in price.

NEWLETTER EDITORS:

Next sonth we will again be reviewing our exchange list and deleting those which have not forwarded newsletters within the past two months. We feel we must optimize our exchange list because of the cost of printing and postage. If you would like to continue receiving our newsletter, we need to hear from you moon.

CONVERTING FILES TO PRBASE FORMAT BY WILLIAM WARREN THE FRONT RANGER, OCTOBER, 1986

Ever wished you could take all those hoards of data files that you accumulated with Futura or Mame-It and convert them over to PRBASE? The PRBASE disk format is a mystery to many, but it is really laid out very simply. The following tutorial explains how you can easily convert those old data files into PRBASE format without the hassle of retyping.

Different programs use differing formats for delimiting the data that they manipulate; that is, they have different (and spectimes unique) ways for determining when one piece of information ends and the next begins. Some place each data element on a separate record in its parent file; some mark the end of a piece of data by placing a comma, some use another type of market (4,!, and such), and still others have a prescribed size for every data element and stands by that size definition whether there is any data or not. PRBASE subscribes to the latter of these techniques. In PRBASE, one sector is assigned for very record you enter, and within each of these records, a standard number of characters is reserved for each individual data element (mostly referred to as a field). Hence, if your first field on a PRBASE screen is 20 characters long, every entry for that field will be saved with 20 characters, even if you leave the field blank at entry time. Generally speaking, this is a relatively inefficient use of storage, but this drawback is compensated for in swiftness of retrieval.

I should note that before attempting this procedure, you should have at least a bit of experience handling files in BASIC. I am not presenting a standard program to convert your files, but rather an explaining the principles involved so that you can apply your own programming skills to the task.

The first thing that you should do is copy some of your files onto a "scratch" disk, one that you can work with without fear of loosing your data. Although you could accomplish this procedure with a single disk drive, it is auch easier with a two-drive system. Also, make sure that the new output file resides on a clean, newly initialized disk, as this will ultimately become your PRBASE data disk. Take a look at the filespec with a disk catalog program. Your conversion program will have to open your data files in its current disk format and logical record length. Files have two types of attributes, INTERNAL and DISPLAY, and two access sodes, SEQUENTIAL and RELATIVE. Logical record lengths indicate the number of characters in each record within your file, and may vary from 1 to 255. II- Writer, for example, uses a DISPLAY/VARIABLE 80 disk format, so if you can load your data files into the TI-Writer text editor, you know that they are in DV80 format (There are exceptions to this, but that subject is beyond the scope of this tutorial).

Let's assume that your file exists as an INTERNAL/VARIABLE 120.

The next thing that you need to know is what data delimiter is being used. If your file is DV80, load it into the T1-Writer or Editor/Assembler editor. Look for the obvious data fields, and try to see what is separating them. Future, if memory serves me correctly, marks the beginning of each data element by placing a carret and the data field number. For example, a name/address/city/st/zip file may look like:

Iname 2address 3city 4st 5zip

Another format you may run into could be:

name, address, city, st, zip

Files that use separate records for each data element would look like:

mame address city st zip

A file that is made up of fixed character fields would appear as:

name address city st zip

This example assumes that the name field is 12 characters, and so on.

What if your file is not DVBO, and as such you can't read with one of the above text editors? Well, this is where your programming skills come into play. There are two ways to do this: one is to write a short extended basic program to open your file in input mode, and then read a record and display it on the screen. On display type files, you can use the LINPUT statement to get a picture of the entire record, but with internal files, you will just have to read your data directly into individual string variables. Placing a ; (semicolon) after the variable should prevent the problem of your machine trying to read the next record 🚁 without finishing the previous one. Be advised: In some formats, failure to observe this may result in your not reading some of your data, and may result in a PRBASE file that contains lots of unwanted holes!!! The second way to examine what your file's delimiter is would be to take a look at it with a disk editor, such as Miller Graphics Advanced Diagnostics. I don't suggest this unless you're experienced in handling such a program. (Note: We here in the Cleveland groups could use Filereader by Marty Smoley or Disk Helper by Jim Mekeel to accomplish this task. ED)

If you're lucky enough to have a file that is delimited with commas, or each data field residing on a separate line, this process will be such easier. If you don't, you will have to write a routine that takes your string (freshly acquired from the disk file), finds the data separators, and breaks the string into substrings so that you can sore easily handle them. You can use the SES\$ function of basic to aid you in accomplishing this feat. Another technique that I one time used for a Futura file was to convert the data file to DV80 format, and then used the RS (Replace String) command of TI-Writer to replace all the 1's, etc., with commas, and resaving the file. This just becomes an intermediate file from which you end up making your conversions. Not convenient, but better than typing in your data from scratch.

Assuming now that you have figured out how to read in your data and have been able to establish the different data elements within each record, you can move on to outputting your data to a separate output file. The filespec of your output file must be DISPLAY FIXED with a minimum logical record length of either the total of your desired character fields, or 128, whichever is greater. The trick here is to make sure that your output file takes up one sector per

record. So, I don't have to do any figuring, I usually just open the output file as DF 254, and consequently remove any doubt as to whether the resulting data will take up one sector per record.

Next, you will have to figure out how many characters you wish each of your data fields to contain. You will use the basic function TAB to accomplish this. Essentially, you will be using the TAB function to pad each of your data fields with the correct number of spaces to ensure that they are consistently the same length.

Assuming that your original data was saved with one field per record, the basic code to convert it to PRBASE

format may look something like this:

100 CALL CLEAR

110 OPEN #1: "DSK1.OLDFILE", IMPUT, DISPLAY, VARIABLE 80

120 OPEN 02: "DSK2.NEWFILE", DUTPUT, DISPLAY, FIXED 254

130 IF EOF(1) THEN 210

140 LINPUT #1: NAMES

150 LINPUT \$1: ADDRESS\$

160 LIMPUT #1:CITY\$

170 LIMPUT \$1:8T\$

150 LIMPUT \$1:ZIP\$

190 PRINT #2: TAB(0); NAMES; TAB(25); ADDRESS (TAB); 50); CITY\$; TAB (75); ST\$; TAB (80); ZIP\$

200 SOTO 130

210 CLOSE #1

220 CLOSE #2

230 END

Note that all of the fields were allotted 25 characters except the ST and ZIP fields, which were assigned 5 and 174 characters respectively (80-75=5, and 254-80=174).

You may wish to "spruce up" your version of this short program by adding some code to have it display the current record number, current actual data, or some such on the screen, just so you can agmitor the progress of your conversion. By the way, if your program should halt with an error AFTER completely writing your data to your output file, don't worry. The output file won't be closed, but PRBASE doesn't rely on standard file management anyway, so if your data is on the disk, PRBASE will be able to pick it up.

One thing you should bear in mind is that PRBASE is restricted to 350 or 710 records, depending on whether you are using single or double sided data disks. If your

current database is larger than this, you will most likely have to break your files up into some kind of logical division before beginning your conversion.

The next step is to go in with the CREATE program and "retrofit" a screen design to match your data from the conversion program. Actually, this part is extremely masy. Just be sure to leave the same number in each field as you allotted when you set up your tabs. In the above example, your name field would be 25 characters long, so you should allocate this number of characters to this field when designing your screen. Where on the screen you position your fields is irrelevant, but you may wish to leave some

space at the bottom for future additional fields.

Sreat, now you can load up PRBASE and boot your new database, right? Well, not quite, you can load up the database Okay, but you will find that when it begins indexing that it stops immediately after reading the first record. This is because PRBASE locks for its End Of File indication by detecting the >ES character left over from the disk initialization process. The reason for this is because the TI file management system starts writing its first file at sector 34, reserving the first 34 sectors (33+0=34?) for file management overhead. When file managemet gets to the end of the disk, it will come back and fill up this space, still open. PRBASE storms its data sequentially, starting at sector 10. If file management didn't come back and fill up these reserved sectors, PRBASE assumes that it has already reached the end of the database. You can use the N command to go but and look at your data, for such purposes and making sure your screen design matches your data, but you will have to delete the first 24 empty records with the D command, or if you have some other data to enter, 24 of them will fit nicely right here. If you are skilled with a disk editor, you say wish to use a command such as the MG AD COPY READ AND COPY WRITE to reposition the last 24 of your records to reside starting at sector 10. If you do this, be sure to remove them from the and of the database, so you don't end up with double entries.

Well, that about does the job. If may seem like a lot of work, but I have found that I can convert files with standard delimiters in about 30 minutes or so, which is auch faster than retyping. Once you understand the process, you also know what the kinks are and figure out ways of getting around them. Best of luck. Questions on this can be routed to se through Compuserve, SEnie, and, of course, by sail or shone.

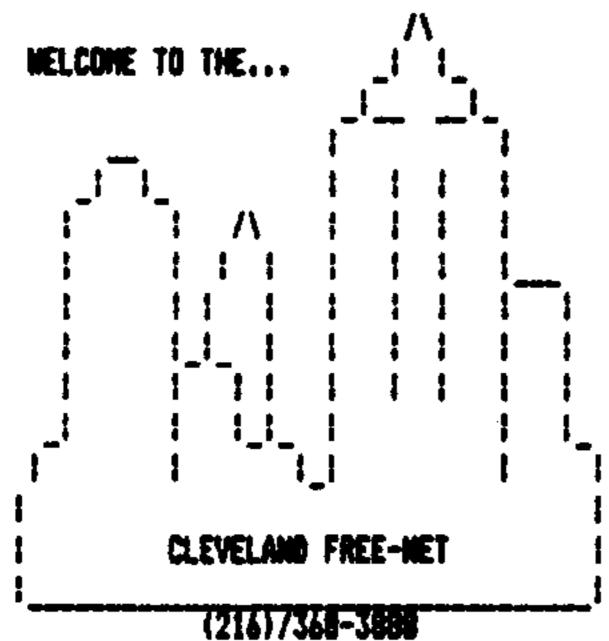
LIBRARY UPDATE

Ernie and Don Nitschke have volunteered to take over NorthCoast's library and we have begun to gradually phase in their participation. They are following up on some contacts and have some ideas for their own for additional sources for programs. Welcome, and hope you have as such fun and learn as such as I have the past year and a half.

I forgot to mention last month that there is a section in the library called "General Information". I started this last winter when I got several disks from Art Byers of the Westchester group, some of which were tutorials from CompuServe, Etc., and others which he had featured in his newsletter in 1985. As new items of interest come along, I have added disks and now have disks devoted to one subject such as: Il-Writer, Multiplan, c79, Grankracker. As I come across info from newsletter, etc., I try to type in these articles. Some clubs use 9/V80 files as we do and archive their newsletters on disks, and I am able to write and obtain them without retyping. Even if you obtained one of these disks several menths ago, I have been adding to them and will continue to do so until all of the disk is full.

About October 16, I took advantage of an offer by Asgard Software to obtain 20 disks of RLE graphics in GRAPHX format, which means that you will meed II-Artist or GRAPHX in order to load, display and print these RLE pictures. We were charged 75 cents apiece copying fee, plus I had to forward initialized disks and postage. The following will apply to NorthCoast sembers only and it will be up to each club as to how they want to distribute these. Because it

(CONT P6)



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T.M. Grundner, Ed.D
System Administrator

>>> THE TI ON FREE-NET <<< by Dave Talan

Do you have the Bulletia Board Blues? Need someplace new to call with your modem? Well, if you have mome spare time, the FREE-NET has a thing or two for YOU! That's right, a new 816 devoted solely to the TI is up and running. The entire FREE-NET is a revolutionary concept which is being presented first in our area. FREE-NET offers all the features you expect in a 335 and even some of those on commercial databases such as The Source, GENie, Compurserve, etc. There are features for almost any interest group, but of prime importance to us, are the computer SIGS. We will be joining Apple, IBM, UMIX, Timex, Commodore and Atari in having a SI6 for our respective computers. rightfully called TI Talk, offers a Question & Answer Section which can explain all your hardware and software problems. An online newsletter gives you the latest TI news at your fingertips. No longer do you have to wait till the next month to find out what's new, and what's not! There's also meeting and membership news on how to join ALL four clubs, and tells who to contact; in hope of increasing memberships of ALL four clubs. Lastly, there's the bulletin board itself. If you wish, you can JOIM this sig as an official member, leave messages, send messages, upload and download software, etc. Save the best for last, right?! I

spoke to Dr. Grunder and he informed me that the hard disk should be in by mid-November!! This will solely be for the purpose of downloading and uploading!!! I asked him, "Do you think that's enough room for ALL of the TI programs?" He simply replied, "And then some..." So off to the wonderful world of FREE-NET we go!!!

As you may have guessed, registration and use of the Free-Net system is FREE!! No, you don't have to be from a particular group to have access; its open to ALL computer users, and for that matter anyone interested in telecommunications!

To register (if you haven't done so already) simply fill out the registration sheet in the newsletter and sail it to: The Cleveland Free-Net Project

Repartment of Family Medicine Case Western Reserve University Cleveland, Dhio 44106

After this simple process, they will send you your ID number, a temporary password, and a brief Users Suide as soon as possible (no more than one week!) In the meantime, feel free to use the FREE-MET as a visitor. The number is the same as the old St. Silicon system (216)/368-3888 (300/1200) band). When you do get your ID, you're on your way to enjoying FREE-MET for hours at a time!

When it comes down to the bare basics, you might ask yourself, "What's so unique about II-Talk...I've seen many boards and this looks no different?" Well, this is where you separate the amesome from the ordinary. II-Talk offers weekly news bulletins from Compu-Serve(provided by Terry Vacha from II Chips) and GENie(from Rich Johnson of Northcoast). Thus with a staff of myself, Rich Johnson, Tom Hellis(who writes excellent tutorials I might add), and Terry Vacha, II Talk is off to a fine start! Futhermore, there is a comprehensive list of other II BBS's thoughout the country! This way, you can call other II boards and find out what they have to offer!

If you have a modes, I urge to try the FREE-NET. Also, please register, especially if you like telecommunications, but have found some "locked" doors. (Special Note to Sut-of-State readers: Please feel free to call the FREE-NET system, I think we have alot to offer that ordinary BBS's can't!) Finally, here's how to get to II-Talk from the main menu. After you have logged on and gotten to the main menu. After you have logged on and gotten to the main menu, hit "4" for "Public Square." Then select "6" for "Computer Corner," and then select the II section!

Any questions or comments should be directed to:
Head Sysop-Dave Talam (333-5829)
Assistants-Rich Johnson (261-8114)
Tom Hellis (475-4067)
Terry Vacha (225-5368)

(Library Cont)

would be an impossible task to copy 20 disks for a person at a regular copying session, special orders will be taken for these and you will be charged \$5.00 for the set, plus you provide disks and postage, if necessary. You will be saving about \$10.00 in copying fee over what it cost the club.

A similar arrangement will be made for the 10 FORTH disks we received. FORTH must be copied with a special FORTH copier and again would be impractical at a regular copying session. You will be charged \$2.50 for this set,

you supply the disks and postage, if necessary.

I have forgotten to thank Kim Jones who did cataloging work on the second FORTH demo disk we have had in the library for some time. Kim, do you want to tackle these?

will the gentleman who took the LOGO disks some time ago for cataloging please contact me? I foolishly did not teep a master copy of these for the library.

DEANNA

•	ID#:
·	Ent: Dte:
DO NOT W	RITE ABOVE THIS LINE
REG	ISTRATION FORM
the system's directory of use optional, but we would like to ability to easily locate other	e following information will appear in rs. "Affiliations" and "Interests" are suggest you fill these items out. The rs with interests and affiliations eature of this system and of tele-
Please PRINT each item as "handles" or obvious false na	you wish it to appear but, please, no mes or cities.
Required Items: (Please PRINT	!')
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City (add State if NOT Ohio):	·
TD or massword. (It will all	requested in case you should loose your low us to identify that you are really NOT BE SHOWN IN THE USER DIRECTORY.
Mother's Maiden Name:	
YOUR Date of Birth:	
Optional Items	
Please separate each liste	ed item with a comma.
Affiliations (including school	ols):
Interests:	
To where/whom should we send THIS INFORMATION WILL NOT BE PLEASE PRINT)	your ID number and temporary password: SHOWN IN THE USER DIRECTORY (And, again
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SIMPLIFIED INSTRUCTIONS

IF YOU DECIDE THAT REMOVING THE TRUSTY SPEECH SYNTHESIZER FROM IT'S HOME ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF YOUR CONSOLE, WHERE IT'S BEEN SINCE YOU SPENT \$240 SOME ODD DOLLARS (SIX CARTRIDGES YOU GET ONE FREE SPEECH SYNTHESIZER, REMEMBER?), JUST TO PUT IT INSIDE THE MACHINE WHERE NO ONE, NOT EVEN YOUR FRIEND WITH THE ATARI, OR THE COMMADORE (WHO BY THE WAY PROBABLY DOESN'T EVEN HAVE SPEECH ON HIS)CAN SEE IT, IS WORTH IT, THEN READ ON. (SAY THAT WITH ONE BREATH WILL YOU?)

I'M GOING TO LEAVE THE FACT OF WEATHER OR NOT YOU HAVE ALREADY INSTALLED 32K OF MEMORY INSIDE YOUR CONSOLE NOT CLOUD THE DESCRIPTION HERE, EXCEPT TO STATE THAT THERE IS ROOM FOR BOTH INSIDE THE CONSOLE ABOVE THE UPPER SHIELD, TO THE LEFT OF THE GROM PORT.

FIRST YOU SHOULD PREPARE A STATIC FREE PLACE TO WORK, NO CARPET UNDERFOOT, TRY TO WEAR COTTON CLOTHING, MOVE AROUND AS LITTLE AS POSSIBLE, AND TRY TO PROVIDE YOURSELF WITH A GOOD EARTH GROUND AT THE IMMEDIATE WORK AREA. GOOD LIGHTING IS IMPORTANT, AND THE JOB WILL ALWAYS PROGRESS FASTER AND YOU WILL BE LESS FRUSTRATED IF YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TOOLS. A PHILLIPS SCREWDRIVER (#2), A 15 to 25 WATT (GROUNDED IF POSSIBLE) SOLDERING IRON, SMALL GUAGE RESIN CORE SOLDER, 10" OF RIBBON CABLE WITH AT LEAST 17 WIRES (OR ANY MULTI-STRAND WIRE EQUIVELANT TO THIS), ELECTRICAL TAPE, AN EXACTO (TYPE) KNIFE, SMALL SIDE CUTTERS OR WIRE STRIPPERS, AND A SMALL PAIR OF PLIARS, PREFERABLY NEEDLE NOSE.

REMOVE THE SPEECH SYNTHESIZER UNIT FROM THE ENCLOSURE, AND TAKE THE SHIELDING OFF OF THE BOARD. USING THE TOP PART OF THE DRAWING ON THE PREVIOUS PAGE, ORIENT YOURSELF WITH THE COMPONENT LAYOUT, AS WELL AS THE PIN LOCATIONS ON THE VERY TOP OF THE CARD ITSELF WHERE D3, D1, D5, D6 ARE SHOWN. IF YOU DO NOT WANT ANY CONNECTIONS MADE TO COMPONENTS, YOU CAN ALSO MAKE ALL YOUR CONNECTIONS TO THE PINS COMING FROM THE BLACK PLASTIC CONNECTOR WHICH SOLDERS TO THE SPEECH CIRCUIT CARD. THE PIN NUMBERS ARE:

PIN:	TERM:	PIN:	TERM:	PIN:	TERM:	PIN:	TERM:
1	+5V	19	A15	36	D6	40	Dl
2	SBE	23	GND	37	DO	42	D3
3	RESET	34	D7	38	D5	43	-5V
5	A5	35	D4	39	D2	44	AUDIO
12	RDY						

MAKING THE ABOVE CONNECTIONS WILL KEEP THE BOARD CLEAN AND ELIMINATE THE LIKELY-HOOD OF DAMAGING A CHIP IN THE SPEECH UNIT WITH A HOT SOLDERING IRON, AS WELL AS ENABLING THE WIRES TO GO TO A MORE COMPACT LOCATION ON THE BOARD.

ATTACH THE WIRES TO THE BOARD EITHER AS SHOWN IN THE DRAWING OR TO THE EDGE CON-NECTOR AS DESCRIBED ABOVE.

REMOVE THE COVER FROM YOUR T.I. COMPUTER, AND TAKE THE TOP SHIELD OFF OF THE CPU BOARD. (THE BOARD MUST BE OF THE OLDER TYPE, IN THAT WITH THE BOARD LYING ON THE WORK AREA AS IT WOULD BE IF YOU WERE ACTUALLY USING IT, THE GROM PORT AND I/O PORT ON THE RIGHT, THE CPU PROCESSOR CHIP, THE 64 PIN CHIP, MUST BE HORIZONTAL TO THE FRONT EDGE OF THE CPU CARD) IF THE CPU CHIP IS VERTICLE TO THIS EDGE, THAT IS GOING AWAY FROM YOU, CLOSE THE MACHINE BACK UP AND STOP WITH THIS PROJECT.

YOU MAY LOOK AT THE TOP SHIELD AND SEE THE BEST WAY FOR YOU TO ROUTE THE WIRES THAT GO TO THE CPU BOARD COMPONENTS, THROUGH IT. THESE WIRES COME FROM PINS, 1,2,3, 12,23,43, AND 44 AS SHOWN ABOVE. YOU MAY WISH TO CUT A SLOT IN THE SHIELD FROM ONE EDGE TOWARD THE CENTER OF THE SHIELD AND PROTECT THE EDGE WITH SILICONE CAULKING, OR USE JUST ELECTRICAL TAPE, TO PREVENT DAMAGE TO THE WIRES THAT GO TO THE CPU BOARD.

ATTACH THE 7 WIRES JUST MENTIONED, INSTALL THE SHIELD, AND ATTACH THE REMAINING 10 WIRES, DO THRU D7 AND A5, AND A15 TO THE REAR OF THE GROM CONNECTOR AS SHOWN IN THE INSERT ON THE FIRST PAGE. INSULATE THE BOARD FROM THE SHIELD EITHER BY USING NYLON OR PLASTIC SLEEVES AND SCREWS TO HOLD THE BOARD ABOUT 1/4" TO 1/2" ABOVE THE TOP SHIELD. ASSEMBLE THE CONSOLE. USE A SPEECH CARTRIDGE, OR WHATEVER MEANS YOU HAVE TO TEST OUT THE CARTRIDGE. SEE I TOLD YOU THIS WOULD BE SIMPLE. GOOD LUCK!

JOHN F. WILLFORTH WP99'ERS (412) 527-6656

THE VIEW FROM MILAN, ITALY By Paolo Bagnaresi (Author of BA Writer) Via Ottawa TI U6, Aug 1986 and Call Sounds Oct 1986

TI-994/A seems to be the fourth largest used computer, Commodore, VIC 20 and C-64 being first. They are followed by ZX Spectrum and QL (Sinclair) and Apple II. However, PC IBM and compatibles are catching up really fast. Other computers, Atari 510-1040ST, Apple McIntosh; are slowly increasing their market share. Commodore Amiga hasn't shown up yet: it will be available in the next few sonths.

TI-99/4A typical configuration is console and tape recorder. A 5-10 percent of owners have also the disk drive system, expansion memory, a RS232 and a printer. Few users also have a second drive and maybe some fancy disk controller (CorComp or Atronic, this one from Germany).

Users of TI-994/A have not gathered into any user group. This may be due to the Mediterrian way of life: everybody does not trust too such anybody else. Moreover, in a user group you would have to work for free. Are we crazy? We do not like to work even if we get paid for, let alone for free. Now way we will do it. Some others argued that a TI club could be seen as a blatant American supporting team: we could be bumbed by our mighty meighbor on the other side of the Mediterranean Sea (Khaddafi) as a dangerous US base (since we would have US computers we might as well have some US missle, couldn't we?). I think that it is mainly for this second reason why we do not have a user group.

There is a wild Frontier life here. You exchange a program for another program, sometimes for two programs, if you are lucky. If you do not have anything to exchange with, chances are you are gonna pay for that program you want. Mind, we are talking about programs that have been imported, that are copyrighted, that are sold by dealers in North America at regular prices. Anyway, no one here seems to give a damn about copyright, about rewarding a programmer. The only concern seems to be "is it copyable?"; that's enough , what the hell!

Here the real smart guy will join a user group in the US, get some really good stuff and then he will sell it all over Italy: prices for any program from US span \$15 to \$35. To the smart guy that programs costs \$2.00 each, the copy fee he payed to the US user group! Good business, isn't it? Here there is a real spaghetti market. Only spaghetti, the meat balls are gone forever.

I know one of those smart guy, he lives in Bologna. He used to write US user group pretending he was an user group! He was also able to get his name publised on Home Computer Magazine, Oregon, USA. In this way he was able to receive a vast number of programs. Now he can see you ANY program you can think of, no matter what. Obviously, having been in this business for over three years, he did not have time to learn to program yet. But after all, who cares? Good money will come to him as a steady flow anyway: net income, no income tax to pay, no anything. Sood life, isn't it?.

Ah. I forgot to tell you: documentation will not be provided by the pirate. It is like a "mafia": a dumb user is not supposed to have the right to know how to use a program. The less he knows, the better for the pirate distributor. Obviously, the dueb user gets hungry for some understandable program. Eventually, he will buy some other

program from the pirate distributor, a program that will be core or less the same as the one he bought previously. That program was rather useless, wasn't it? The next one will be the same. By now, the trend has already been started. The duab user gets addicted to the pirate distributor. He will consider him like a good willing person who does his best to help the fellow man. The pirate distributor is his friend, not doubt about it. If only those darned programs were easier to use....

On the other hand, photocopies are too costly and too time consuming. As a result, intelligent users will have to figure out by themselves how to use that pirate program: well, well, well, that is the fun of it, isn't it?

So such for the bad naws. As for the good naws: we have none. Here everybody seems to be waiting to see when the new Myarc computer will be working and ready to be shipped to Europe.

As for the rest of Europe. Sersany (and Austria) are the strongest market for the TI-994/A. There are several companies that are developing good hardware and software. Most of what is available in Germany is already imported in North America by RYTE DATA of Canada.

France used to be a good country as for TI-99/4A. After all, the fabulous "TENNIS" game, by Nicesoft, come from Nice, France. There was a French magazain *99 MAGAZINE", from Paris, that used to be pretty good. Unfortunately, it ceased publishing last year. Now we do not hear too much anymorm from our cousins on the other side of the Alps.

We do not know what is going on in England. We know the Queen is still kicking and alive (God save Her), but we are afraid that TI-994/A is dead there. I'll be happy to be wrong on that assumption.

Greece does have some small market, but they seem to have only the console, no disk drive and only a few few aemory expansions.

We do not know anything about Spain, aside from the fact that Bill Gronos lives there.

Back to Italy. There is a slow, but steady, shifting of users toward the PC IBM (and compatibles). Each month some friend calls me up and says: "Paolo, I am sorry, but I wanna sell out ay system. Can you Help? You see, I have been offered a true PC IBM compatible. It's such a deal... I know, I know, we said we will never give away our beloved TI-994/A. But you see I simply need it for work. They recently asked us employees to become PC IBM expert. Our office will be fully equipped with lots of PCs. and I don't want to be the least informed person in my office. C'mon, don't take it so hard, after all, we did not marry TI did we?"

This rap kinds goes on now and then. Boys, does it give me a chilly on my back! Will I be the last survival of an dwindling race?

If you ever publish this article, I would be glad to receive a copy of that newsletter .

Yours truly, Paolo Bagnarese Via J.F. Kennedy 17 20097 San Donator Milanese, Italy Phone 415.202 (Milan Area Code: 2. Calling from U.S. dial 01-39-2 first)



MEN PRODUCTS FROM MILLERS GRAPHICS

6K UTILITY I - \$10.00 (INCLUDING SEH)

This Utility Disk adds the following new enhancements to TI Extended Basic and the Editor/Assembler Modules for Sram Kracker Owners:

Extended Basic Enhancements:

LIST Now allows you to specify the column length

(i.e. 28,132,etc.)

RES Resequence all or just part of a program.

TRACE The output from TRACE can now be sent to a

copies a block of program lines to another

location in your program.

DEL Deletes selected blocks of program lines.
MOVE Moves blocks of program lines and automatic

Moves blocks of program lines and automatically adjust all GOTOs, GOSUBs, etc. to point

to the new location.

CALL LOAD No longer checks to see if CALL INIT has been

executed

CALL PEEKS For peeking values from GRAM or GROM

addresses.

CALL POKEG For poking the values into GRAM addresses.

CALL PEEKY For peeking values from VDP memory.

CALL POKEY For poking values into VDP memory.

CALL QUITON Enables use of the QUIT key. CALL QUITOFF Disables use of the QUIT key.

New Cursor Control for program Line, Inputs and Accept Ats editing. FCTN-Shift and the Up and Down arrow keys now allow you to move up and down screen rows within a program line listing on the screen. FCTN-Shift and the Left and Right arrow keys move you to the beginning and end of the program line listing on the screen.

All Error Messages are now in Upper and Lower case.

Auto-Load of the file DSK!>LOAD can now by bypassed with the press of ANY key.

ALL of the XBCALLS from the MILK disk are still

available (NEW, BYE, CLSALL, CLOCK, CLKOFF, CAT).

A new lower case character set with better ascenders and descenders is placed in GRAN O.

Editor/Assembler Enhancements:

For E/A input prompts, the Auto Repeat and Erase (FCTN3) are now active.

Clear (FCTN 4) will erase the input line from the cursor to the end of the line.

FCTN-Shift Left and Right Arrow will place the cursor at the beginning and end of the input line.

Automatic Filename Recall - The last filename input will always be retained (even after powering off).

PLEASE READ THIS!

By Curtis Alan Provanc###

N#w Hampshir# 99#r's User Group, June 86

Via MUNCH, S#pt#mb#r, 86

I have had my computer almost four years now, and it works very well except for one key. I suppose I shouldn't complain; there are 47 other keys I can use. Besides, what difference can one key make?

After giving it some thought, I realized that the keepboard on my trusty TI is similar to our club. There are numerous members in the club; some are more 'visible' than others. Some members participate to a great extent; some won't participate (or can't) must at all. I certanly

3 new items have been added to the E/A menu: (6) Extended Basic - directly executes XB without going through the Title Screen. (7) Format RAMdisk - Formats the Myarc Ram disk by doing a CALL PART and CALL EMDK; (8) Catalog Disk - Catalogs a disk or Ram disk without leaving the E/A module.

MEW PROM SET FOR CORCOMP DISK CONTROLLER CARD - \$34.95

This new PROM SET enhances the usefulness of the Double Bensity Disk Controller Cards. The following NEW features have now been added and can be accessed from TI BASIC, Extended BASIC and a GRAM KRACKER MSAVED Basic program. This will allow you to build a menu of all your favorite software and load it with a single key press. These new enhancements will allow you to load any type of assembly program without using the Editor/Assembler module. The new CALLS added to the card are:

- 1. CALL ILR Loads the standard E/A utilities into Low Memory.
- 2. CALL LR("DSKx.filename") Loads a DIS/FIX 80, compressed or uncompressed, auto start or non-auto start Assembly Language Program. (This is exactly the same as option 3 Load and Run, on the E/A menu, including the automatic loading of the E/A utilities)
- J. CALL LLR("startname") This starts a non-auto start program. This is the same as option 4 - Run, on the E/A menu.
- 4. CALL RUN("dSKx.filename") This loads Assembly PROGRAM INAGE files like option 5 Run Program, on the E/A menu. This CALL also automatically sets up the E/A environment in VDP Memory. (i.e. Characters, colors, registers, etc.)
- 5. CALL RUM This CALL without brackets or a filename automatically loads DSK1.UTIL1.
- 6. DELETE "XILR" Sets up the E/A utilities into low memory from a running Extended Basic Program. It also sets up the Link names for the above CALLS and the other Tool Shed Utilities so they can be accessed from a running program!

Other enhancements include: (1) Removed *9900 Disk Controller* Title Screen which eliminates the lockup problems with some modules; (2) Improved error handling on all utilities; (3) decrease error time out; (3) The Disk Hanager will now auto load; (5) For the advanced user we have added a DIRECT CPU RAM SECTOR I/O ROUTINE for faster loading; (6) For Gram Kracker Owners we have modified the Tool Shed Utilities to allow them to be used in a running MSAVED program.

understand those individuals, who due to other commitments, can't participate more fully. I also understand those individuals who do not participate because they feel they can't make a difference. Let me assure you, your participation does make a difference! You could be the one 'key' who would really make this club Excell. Perhaps you could review a piece of hardware or software at a meeting? We can always use an article - if it's important to you, it's important to at least half our readers! How about donating a module or book to the club so eversone can use it? The possibilities are not endless, but they certainly are many and diverse.

If there is a moral to this story, let it be that all members are 'key' members.

MORIZON RANDISK SOFTWARE UPDATE By David Romer, Northwest Chic 99er, Oct., 1986

HORIZON COMPUTER LIMITED is pleased to announce the release of VER_04 of the Horizon Randisk Operating System. The NEW System Master disk contains Version 04 of the Randisk Operating System, Version 3.3 of DM-1000, a new easy way to use loader system and a new comprehensive MENTEST program for the Randisk.

Version 04 of the operating system incorporates some small changes that will be essentially invisible to the Randisk user. However, FAST-TERM and FUNNELMRITER will now load without any program alterations. Version 3.3 of DM-1000 is the latest from Canada. The new loader system allows the Randisk user to load all software essential to the Randisk as menu choices from an Extended Basic LOAD program. Alternatively, Randisk software can be loaded using Option 5 Editor/Assembler or Option 3 TI-Writer.

Copies of the VER_O4 System Master disk and Source code disks are available from:

HORIZON COMPUTER LIMITED

C/O DEANNA SHERIDAN 20311 LAKE ROAD ROCKY RIVER, OH 44116

CLEVELAND AREA 99/4A USERS GROUPS

PLEASE NOTE - NEW ADDRESS

CHECK YOUR EXPIRATION DATE.
THIS MAY BE YOUR LAST ISSUE!

MOX 554 WALBRIDGE, DH 43465

The System Master disk alone is \$5.00. The System Master and complete Source code disks are \$10.00. Make checks payable to Morizon Computer Limited. Do not send blank disks. Add \$2.00 for orders shipped outside of North America. Orders shipped to Ohio addresses sust include 5.5% sales tax. Please allow 4 weeks for receipt of order.

RAMDISK TIP;

On occasion you may find it necessary to take your Horizon Randisk offline. Rather than physically removing it from your PE-Box, simply execute the Randisk Operating System loader program (UTIL1 on your System Master) and type an N in the field for DSR for the Randisk you wish to disable. The Randisk Operating System will be erased making the card invisible to your computer. However, your disk data NILL NOT be affected in any way. To bring the Randisk back online, load the Randisk Operating System as usual.