CLEVELAND AREA TI99-4A USER GROUPS NEWSLETTER

JUNE, 1988

OFFICERS	NORTHCOAST	TI-CHIPS	MEETING DATES	
PRESIDENT	MARTIN SMOLEY 1-257-1661	GLENN BERNASEK 238-6335	NORTHCOAST 1:30 P.M.	TI-CHIPS 10:00 A.M.
VICE PRESIDENT	ERNIE MALNAR 289-7742	RUSS SHIMANDLE 1-887-5330	EUCLIDIAN ROOM	NORTH ROYALTON LIBRARY
TREASURER	JIM MEKEEL 1-286-3179	LIN SHAW 235-3912	EUCLID SQUARE MALL	STATE ROAD RT 82
MEMBERSHIP	CHUCK POULIN 731-6473	JOHN PARKEN 331-2830	THIRD SATURDAY	THIRD SATURDAY
	361 E. 280TH ST.	4172 W. 217TH ST.		
	EUCLID, OH 44132	FAIRVIEW PARK, OH 44126	JUNE 18, 1988	
SECRETARY	CHUCK POULIN 731-6473	MARY PHILIPS 582-4009	JULY 16, 1988	
LIBRARY (DISK)	MARTIN SMOLEY 1-257-1661	MARK McCAULEY 235-8888	AUGUST 20, 1988	
(TAPE & MODULES	TOM NELLIS 475-4067	(TAPE)JOHN PARKEN 331-2830	SEPTEMBER 17, 1988	
(HARD COPY)	DICK ALDEN 1-352-9172		OCTOBER 15, 1988	

When you read Glenn Bernasek's report on the Lima Conference, I think you will agree we had a good time, learned a lot and put faces to names. First we must thank our gracious hosts for superb job, and superb it was for a group of 15 members. I am not good at estimating crowds, but feel there were close to 200 who came through.

Howie Winkler, Dick Alden and I rode down with John Sturman. Jim Mekeel and Paul Wheeler and his family rode together. Bill Johnson came all the way from New Philadelphia to work with the Thalners demo'ing the GENEVE. Can we count Harry Hoffman twice since he belongs to both groups? From Chips there were Les Isreal, Glenn Bernasek, Mark McCauly, Ed Kenelly, Matt Andel, Al Brinkman and the Thalners.

I was able to attend only a couple of the demonstrations, but Lima will be providing each user group that attended with a video of these so that those who did not get the opportunity to attend can see what we saw. Let's hope someone picks up the gauntlet and keeps this going on an annual basis. Lima said if no one else was interested, they would do it again. If another club wanted to sponsor such an event, they would be pleased to sit back and let them do all the work next year.

I don't know how the vendors did, but if most attendees spent even half of what Harry Hoffman spent, they did all right. I was told that Bud Mills sold more ram disks here than at the recent Boston and Dallas fairs combined.

We gave out copies of our newsletter and received many fine comments about same. The only items we sold were Paul Newmeyer's Forth for the Supercart, my graphics and Marty's Filereader, and a disk of basic programs by Glenn Bernasek. I think we grossed about $50 all together. I came back with $33 and Jim Mekeel had some down at his table, plus the hard cover books of the clubs, so I think when we combine our sales it will be at least $50. We told people we came to make friends, not money.

Please remember that next month at the June newsletter meeting we will be doing the annual double issue for July/August. If you have any plans for articles, please get them in or you will not have another chance until September. The sooner you can get them to me the better so that I will know how much, if any, to borrow from others. We seem to go in cycles and this is a down one as far as really good new

stuff being published, so I am counting on each of you to help out.

It was mentioned at Lima, at the Chips meeting and I have heard the same at Northcoast, that new members who only have cassette systems sometimes get discouraged because so many times the demos and information passed on at meetings is above their heads. People learn from experience. Those who do the demos are only sharing their experiences. If you have a cassette system, speak up and offer to do a demo, show how a program is run, etc. etc. Take the lead in getting an active cassette group going within the larger group. You are not being passed over, it just seems that those who are willing to volunteer at the moment are some of the so-called "advanced users". Both clubs are begging for volunteers whether you have only a basic or full-blown system. You should always remember that about 90% of the clubs' library programs can be transferred to cassette. This is done willingly by your cassette librarians, so don't feel that you have been left out when a new catalog update comes out.

EXECUTIVE NOTES - NorthCoast 99er's 5/21/88

This meeting was a little small, as expected. I believe we had about twenty-four people attend. The demonstration by Harry Osterman on Certificate 99 was well received. I ran off at the mouth again, so the meeting was on the late side. For that reason some of the people had to leave before the demo. The twelve or so who remained came right up to the front table, mulled around, asked questions, and even helped change ribbons for a multicolor printout of the certificate. It was more like a SIG meeting than a demo and I think everyone enjoyed it. "Thanks Harry." As some of you know this meeting was small because many of our members went to the Lima UG meeting. I hear that they had a great time and met a lot of interesting people. I hope this will result in some interesting articles for the newsletter.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

I have got to tell you about some of the things that are going on at the NorthCoast 99er's. Things that are fantastic. In no particular order; Paul Newmeyer, Bob Kaspar, Harry Hoffman, Frank Jenkins, Walt Ryder, Jerry Rutter, William Johnson, Steve Bagstad, Tom Nellis and Jim Mekeel have volunteered to be sub-librarians for the NorthCoast Disk Library. By the time you read this most of them will have received a portion of the library and will be familiarize themselves with the system of processing new software into our disk library. I don't know how, but Deanna found the time and energy to organize things to the point where we could distribute the library to all the newly found help. We are also receiving some very appreciated help from Bruce Rodenkirch. He has taken on the task of revamping the disk files which contain our disk library catalog printout sheet. This project is taking an enormous amount of work but will eventually pay off in the form of a new, more complete library catalog. Don Owen has taken charge of the hard copies of the disk library catalog and the distribution of the updates. Don presently has copies of the disk library catalog (IN STOCK) ready to sell. He is also handing out catalog updates to those who previously purchased a catalog. "Here is a little tidbit for you." In the last six weeks more than ten new pages (That's Pages) of software have been added to the library, and by the time you read this two more pages will have been added to that total. "We're on a roll." I have produced a new disk order form which I hope you will all use to request software. I am forgetful and I misplace notes and things on occasion, therefore, I hope this formal approach to library requests will expedite the items you are interested in receiving.

IMPORTANT STUFF

You did not see Ernie Nitschke's name mentioned above. That's a long story for some other time. The short side of this story is that Ernie has decided to become a sub-librarian. He will handle a section on "c99". Ernie has a very full time schedule and cannot dedicate the time needed to maintain the complete library. I would like to thank Ernie and Don for the massive amount of work they have already put into the library. I have been working with

the library myself for a short period, and I now know just how big of a job it is. That brings me to another point. I am working up to the point where I will take over as the main librarian. You are probably saying "this guy is nuts". Well I probably am nuts, but not because of this move. My plan has been to put as much effort as possible into building up the NorthCoast 99er's, and in the last six months of my second term as president, to start laying off responsibilities on other members. I am doing this in order to keep the next president from being overwhelmed by the work involved in running this club. When I am no longer the President I would like to take care of the Library and also be associated with the Newsletter. I realize that being associated with the Library and Newsletter will still mean a lot of work for me, but it will be a welcome change of pace. Here is an interesting thought. Perhaps Ernie Malnar would consider changing places with me. For the next election he could run for President and I'll run for Vice President. I haven't mentioned it to Ernie yet, but the idea has a nice ring to it. Before I change the subject completely I should back up, and clear up one point. All requests for disk copies should now be directed to me (Martin Smoley).

THE NEXT NORTHCOAST MEETING

The next meeting is going to be spectacular. The demonstration will be by Paul Newmeyer and will cover much of our Forth Library. This cannot be an in depth demo of the whole Forth Library, it's to big. However, it will probably be a very interesting potpourri of the games, gadgets and utilities which lie on those mysterious disks which most of us cannot access. Paul has put an enormous amount of work into the Forth section of the library. Our NorthCoast group can take great pride in some of the accomplishments Paul has made in the Forth area. I am going to start the meeting as early as possible and run the demo as early as possible. We'll have the general club business after the demo and see how that works. I'd like to give more people the chance to see the interesting parts of the meeting before they have to leave, but I really don't know what the members thoughts are on how to set up the meetings.

LATE CATALOG NEWS

I just talked to Don Owen about the catalog situation. He said that the two new pages will take a little longer to produce than I thought. However, the new catalog (I mean the NEW catalogs) are ready now. He brought me a copy, and they're realy slick. Here is a new purchase plan for catalogs that was worked out a couple minutes ago. The completely new catalogs, with all updates are selling for $8.00 . We have several new (NO MILAGE), old versions of the catalog that we will sell for $5.00. Plus, if you have an old version of the catalog but would like the new version, we will give you a $4.00 trade in on your old catalog. Note: Original owners only (please). Don's home phone number is 257-2301. He said that people who would like to buy a catalog, but can't get to the meetings can call him after 4:00PM and maybe they can work something out.

See you all at the next meeting. Marty

EXECUTIVE NOTES - TI-CHIPS
MARY PHILLIPS - SECRETARY

The May meeting took place a week earlier than originally scheduled, on May 14. There was much anticipation of the Users Group meeting to take place the following Saturday in Lima, Ohio.

Deanna, our newsletter editor, was present to update all members on the condition of the club's disk library. She asked for volunteers in the group who could download programs from the bulletin board services such as Genie and Compuserve. Please come again, Deanna!

Tom Thalner brought his Geneve setup with a new color monitor and was able to reproduce a super graphic of a regal tiger. It was the closest thing to a photo yet.

Matt Andel was able (at last) to review and demonstrate V2.0 of Certificate99. It has new fonts, borders and graphics, including some originally created by Deanna. Matt is still experimenting with the program and hopes to be able to customize this one as he did with the original version.

Les Kee explained the use of logical expressions used in programming, using binary numbers. This is used extensively in Extended Basic programs. It all does make sense if you follow the logic!! Glenn Bernasek was finally able to present his "Gobbler" program, as presented in the last newsletter. Working without a disk system, Glenn saved his program in a mini-memory cartridge, which made the short program readily available without the need for casette or disk. The program uses horizontal characters (HCHAR).

John Parken passed on some useful information on creating a joystick/alphalock by-pass in the console. He had several keyboards and described the needed supplies and methods for each.

The TI-Chips sponsored a tutoring session scheduled for May 21 at the library. Despite the gorgeous weather outside, there were several individuals of all ages to stopped in to find out what the TI can do. I'm sure they weren't disappointed.

The June meeting should go on as scheduled. Reports will be given on the knowledge shared at the Lima meeting. Those of us who did not go look forward to hearing all about it!

LET'S KEEP ALPHA LOCK DOWN
BY JOHN PARKEN - TI-CHIPS - CLEVELAND, OHIO

A problem we are all familiar with is the fact that commands like OLD DSK1. or OLD CS1 must be in caps. This means that once the old alpha lock gets put on,I am too lazy to hold shift while I type. If the program you load needs joysticks, alpha lock causes a problem you can not go up. The alpha lock and joystick path interfere.

What you can do is to install a diode to block the backfeed caused by alpha lock being down. This truly is a 5 minute job. First turn the computer on its face, keyboard down but the space bar towards you. Remove the bottom of the console closest to you and 3 screws away from you. You can now remove the bottom half of the console exposing the pc board for the keyboard.

There are two types of keyboards I have seen .. one with a metal bracket and one with just a pc board. Count over six solder spots from the right on the connector that goes into the main board. This is where the diode goes.

The end with the marked end of the diode (cathode) goes toward the solder spots. These spots go to the ribbon cable that goes to the computer mother board. On the metal framed keyboard pin 6 circuit trace goes down to the alpha lock key. This trace must be cut with a razor blade and the doide put in to bridge the gap. On the plain board the trace is only 3/4 of a inch long. It must be cut and the diode must bridge the gap. Only solder from solder spot to solder spot. Use insulating tubing on the leads of the diode.

If you have to add wire on to the diode use insulated wire

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KEYBOARD CONNECTOR
15 XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX 1
              !
        THIS THE PIN YOU WANT TO ADD A DIODE TO
        Cathode or marked end towards the computer
        (just about any diode will do). This change
        could be done to the computer mother board
        instead of the keyboard, but I felt this
        change was so simple more people would do it.
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A REPORT ON THE LIMA MULTI-USER CONFERENCE
by Glenn Bernasek - President TI-Chips

It all began when we received an announcement that the Lima, Ohio, TI-994/A User Group was planning a multi-user group conference for May 21 on the Ohio State University Lima Campus. This conference was initially announced as being organized for the "I-75" user groups from Toledo to Cincinnati. This meant a small user group get-together for four groups at the most, and with one or two vendors invited.

However, we soon realized the potential of a conference such as the one that the Lima people were planning, and we found that all TI-99/4A user groups who wished to attend were welcome to do so. It didn't take much prodding to establish a high level of enthusiasm within both the officer and membership ranks of both the TI-CHIPS and the NORTHCOAST 99ers. To put it bluntly, the "Ohio Valley 99ers" pretty much felt left out when it came to 99er user group conferences. After all, if the West coast, the East coast and Chicago can have conferences, why not the "Ohio Valley"? Some of the most interesting software and hardware developments have come from the user group membership right here in our own back yard!

A quick call was made to Dave Szippl, President of the Lima Area UG., and tables were reserved for the Cleveland Area TI-99/4A User Groups. A little more scurring around, and we had handouts made up for both groups, printouts of our disk library, and local talent disks made up for sale. All-in-all it took us about three weeks to get our act together for the trip to Lima, Ohio on May 21.

Well, Les Isreal and I left for Lima at 5:25 AM, and arived at the Student Activity Building about three hours later. Were we surprised to find that when Dave Szippl said we would be at the South wall of the hall, what he meant was that the Cleveland Area User Groups and the Thalners would have darn near the ENTIRE south wall! A better setup we couldn't ask for! By 9:30 we were pretty well set up with our banners and display monitor.

What impressed me the most was the level of detailed planning that apparently went into the preparation for this

event. Everything from the display areas to the conferences and the door prize drawings were professionally done. It was difficult to believe that this was the FIRST multi-user conference staged in Ohio. Later, we learned that the Lima UG has only 15 members, and that each and every member took an active and personal interest in this project. Well Lima 99ers, it certainly did show!

I personally had the pleasure to meet many fascinating people. Among which was Harold Hoyt, Jr. (Vice President of the St. Louis U.G.) and John Parkins of the C.O.N.N.I. (Central Ohio Ninety Niners, Inc.) Both Harold and John, as it turned out, are involved in establishing a TI-99/4A /VHS-VCR connection for either family album archiving or VCR based computer tutorials. The latter idea showed a great deal of commercial potential. With what Harold and John showed us, it wasn't very difficult to envision the posibility of developing a commercial video tape series that would provide the novice user with a convenient and patient tutor that could teach him or her right through his or her home television set. I asked both John and Harold to keep in touch as they develop this technique further. Who knows, these two might be able to get the 99/4A to completely interact with the VCR and allow the user keyboard control with the lessons. I personally do not know of any other computer system that is setup to accomplish this at this time. Another first for the TI-994A?

Tom Thlaner was pressed into service. By this I mean Tom was asked if he would provide the demonstration of the GENEVE 9640 for the conference. Tom said 'yes', and proceeded to wow everyone in attendance with the graphics and speed of the 9640. Job well done, Tom! Paul Wheeler of the Northcoast 99ers put on an impressive demonstration of how the "lowly" 99/4A can, with the proper software and interfacing, control most any electrical appliance in your home! Actually, what Paul showed us, confirmed what the die-hard 99ers have known all along, the TI-994/A has the potential to be one super machine. Thanks Tom and Paul. You both did the Cleveland Area U.G.'s proud!

Speaking of potential, Irwin Hott, of the C.O.N.N.I., showed everyone just what can be accomplished with the 99's speech synthesizer. It was totally amazing to see and hear the TI-994/A interact with a blind user. Mr. Hott developed the system by which, as a blind user, he is able to communicate with the 99/4A as easily as a sighted user would be. Our hats are off to you Irwin. We are looking to meeting and talking with you again.

The vendors were all courteous and helpful. However, I found that practicing a "caveat emptor" attitude, in some cases was valuable. Some of the prices were a little high when compared to catalogs or local supply houses.

I could not possibly recommend an event more highly! A multi-user group conference is just what the 99ers of Ohio and surrounding states need! The Lima U.G. showed that, with dedication and hard work, a successful event such as this can most certainly be accomplished! Thanks again Lima!

FORTH SYSTEM DISKS
Paul Newmeyer
Northcoast UG

A prerequisite to running any Forth program lies in the Forth System. This System contains the dictionary/interpreter and all the support necessary to program in Forth or run a Forth program.

The System to Forth is sort of like the motor to an automobile. Once the driver starts the motor he can then engage the transmission and control the car. Or he can turn on certain options, like air conditioner, radio, etc. If the car has no motor and its component parts, the options won't work either. In that case the car sags uselessly on its tires, unless, of course, one wants to raise chickens in it.

Some Forth disks (such as utilities and games) include the necessary Forth System on the same disk. But other Forth disks, like a person without a brain, don't include the System necessary to run the programs. In other words, knowing a bit about Systems will help you run Forth disks.

So, let's discuss the Forth Systems. When TI abandoned us, several years ago, it released the Forth System disk at the point that they had developed it. I refer to this as the Original TI Forth System. This System had some errors in it, and lacked many features that would have made it a more powerful tool. It loaded through E/A option 3.

However, after the TI release, Forth programers began needed corrections and improvements to the original System. Thus, new Forth System disks rapidly hit the hot line.

One of these I will refer to as Revised Forth. It had some new dictionary words and booted up with all graphic options active. This means that when a user runs a disk requiring graphic options they are already on board, and so he doesn't need to load them.

Another System I will refer to as Forth System with XB (loads from E/A option 5). It had some new options such as, Sound, Speech, and Math.

Fast Forth came out as another System. This one also loaded from Extended Basic, and seemed to load faster than previous Systems.

In the mean time, many programers developed Systems we'll call Personal Revisions. That is, they developed their own enhancements that served their purposes.

Another System, which I hesitate to mention, is Super 4th and came out in either Bsaved or source code version. It loads from E/A option 5 and goes into the Supercart. This is a commercial product.

We also mention in passing another commercial product--Wycove Forth, which has a structure somewhat different from the other Systems mentioned here.

Finally, the best System on Forth wheels--I consider my compiled Lego Forth Super-Cart the best System for me. This System loads most options into the Supercart, thus putting your options at instant command and leaving memory free for significant programing. It includes such things as auto cursor, lower case letters (Funnel Writer's CHARA1), Forth-83 enhancements, plus other enhancements. It boots up from E/A option 3.

With the exception of the Super 4th disk and Wycove Forth, you may secure all these Systems from our Club library. You'll need at least one of these to do much in Forth, but will probably want several.

Sometimes confusion and crashes result when users attempt to run Forth utilities or games because the author wrote the program while using his own specially designed System, but didn't pass that System along to the user. So, having all these Systems in your collection can have positive advantages.

TI-WRITER TIPS
by Jan Knapp - The Computer Bridge - St. Louis - May, 88

We're all aware of the frequently used TI-Writer command codes, but here are a few nice ones that are often overlooked.

CTRL K - Deletes all text to the right of the cursor to the line, including the character under the cursor.

CTRL V - Moves the cursor to the beginning of the line on which it is located.

PRINT LINE #'S ON TEXT - Sometimes while editing it's nice to see your line number on the sheet you are proofing. Select PrintF command. Type L and space once. Then type the devicename. Example - L PIO> NOTE: Maximum line length for printing is 74 characters per line. Any characters in columns 75-80 are not printed.

CANCELLING PRINTING - This is often forgotten. You can cease printing in the **EDITOR** and the **FORMATTER** simply by pressing **FCTN 4** while it is printing. This will return you to the COMMAND/ESCAPE location in the Editor or the TITLE screen for the Formatter.

PRINTING A PARTIAL FILE - On occasion a complete file is not wanted, only a small section needs to be printed. To do this, simply select the PrintF command. Type the line number of the first line to be printed, space once, the line number of the last line to be printed, space once, and the printer devicename. Example - 25 58 PIO - Will print lines 25 through line 58 only. This is another case where printing with line numbers comes in handy.

LINE #'S - An important thing to remember when referring to line #'s is that the top line is line 0 and the last line is E. This can save you a lot of time and aggravation when merging, printing, copying, etc. lines.

DELETING LINES - To delete lines from a file from the COMMAND MODE, type L for lines, then D for delete. Type the line number of the first line to be deleted, space once, and then the line number of the last line to be deleted. Example - 25 58 - Will delete lines 25 through 58 from the text.

REQUIRED SPACE - TI-Writer FORMATTER has some built-in spacing features that need to be understood. That is where the required space comes in handy. SHIFT 6 (the caret) joins words for the purpose of filling, adjusting, underlining, and overstriking a group of words.

ADDING A CARRIAGE RETURN - There are many times when proofing material it's nice to add carriage returns **AFTER** the material has been typed. This can easily be done **OUT** of word wrap (hollow cursor). Simply enter CTRL U shift M where you wish to have a carriage return. Unlike the CTRL 8 command used **IN** word wrap (solid cursor), you do **NOT** get an additional line. This last tip comes from HAROLD HOYT. Thank you Harold.

PURCHASING FROM TEX COMP
an editorial by Charles Good - Lima UG - May, 1988

TEX COMP, advertising themselves as the "largest independent TI-994/A retailer in the world", gets a lot of bad press in the newsletters. They are criticized for selling public domain and fairware software or "giving away" such software with the purchase of specific items. They are also faulted for not having a live person to talk to when you call their order line and are forced to listen to pre-

recorded messages long distance before you place your order. I have purchased a number of items from this dealer over the years and have had no problems with timely delivery of the goods. In this context, I would like to discuss the above to criticisms.

The sale of goodies that are public domain is quite common. All the Sherlock Holmes stories and novels are now in the public domain, but you don't find your local bookstore giving these away at cost. Anyone who wishes to republish and sell these novels is free to do so without payment of royalties, since the international copyrights have expired. TEX COMP, which sells some PD and fairware software for $5 a disk is certainly not the only outfit in the TI world to do so. Most user groups do the same thing. In many cases this is a primary way of earning money for such expenses as newsletter publication and meeting room rent. Five dollars per SSSD disk is not at all unusual for a user group copying fee. Both TEX COMP in it's catalog and user groups in their newsletters specifically state that fairware authors should be compensated for their efforts over and above the copying fees charged. Amnion Helpline's "Free Access Library" isn't free. The library sells pd "volumes" at $5 each in SSSD format. This pays the Helpline's phone bill and allows TI users access to a valuable free service. TEX COMP is also not the only organization that "gives away" PD software with the purchase of specific items. Tigercub Software "gives away" PD stuff with the purchase of a disk full of copyrighted Tigercub programs. PD software is included in the fairware PLUS! package. There is nothing illegal about selling PD software. It is up to the consumer to decide if there is anything morally wrong with doing so. If user groups sell PD and fairware software at $5 a disk, why fault commercial dealers who do the same thing? The lack of personal over-the-phone help from TEX COMP is not total. You can get help if you know who to call, and if they have a problem with your order, they will call you! One of the things the prerecorded message on their order line states is that you should leave a phone number where you can be reached evenings. The "voice of TEX COMP" (the same lady you hear on the prerecorded message) actually called me once about an order. She was not sure that UPS would deliver to the rural address that I had given. I assured her that I often got UPS deliveries.

818-993-5606 will get you through to a real live person at TEX COMP!! I recently purchased a pair of half height DSDD drives and a cable kit for PEBox installation from TEX COMP. They had the best advertised price by far. I sent off an order form and money order (they hold on to personal checks for several weeks) and my order was delivered to my door 14 days after my order was mailed. Hand written on the invoice that came with my new drives was this note: "Call Jerry at 818-993-5606 M-Th 6-9PM California time for any technical help!" I was being offered over-the-phone assistance in setting the jumpers on each drive for drive 1 and 2, finding and removing the termination pack on drive 1, and fitting the drives into my PEBox. It turned out that I didn't need this phone assistance, but it is nice to know it was available. I had trouble finding the jumpers on the drives' circuit boards. Lots of people would get lost with these jumpers. Please note that the phone number above is NOT the regular published TEX COMP number. Now that I have published it, anyone who needs to can get through to a real live talking person at TEX COMP. I believe that the "Jerry" referred to in my invoice note is the owner.

I think TEX COMP has received undeserved bad press. (Please note that under my editorship, this newsletter has in the past had nasty things to say about some less than honest organizations such as HOME COMPUTER RIPOFF and RYTE DATA.) TEX COMP offers a lot of nice goodies, sometimes at excellent prices, and has always delivered ordered goods to me in a reasonable time. If they can make the price right, they deserve your business.

(ED NOTE: The practice mentioned above concerning selling public domain software (it's called a "copying fee") is very prevalent in the MSDOS world. Just check out the pages of Computer Shopper. I don't know why we are so shocked at the practice in the TI world. Just like TRITON, TEX COMP can reach a lot of people who are not in user groups and who would not otherwise have access to these programs.)

THE VCR CONNECTION

By John Parkins - Central Ohio Ninety-niners - March, 1988

Have you ever considered or wished that you could hook up your TI COMPUTER to a VCR? Or have you ever thought about the consequences or effects that you might achieve by doing so? Well, I had in the past, but never quite knew hot to do it, or what the effect might be until I tried it. And I liked it! Just think about it for a minute and let your mind wonder with me for awhile, and we'll see what happens.

Let's just assume for instance that you like to play games on your computer. Or, maybe you have a favorite program that you like and run it quite often, such as one of those cartridges like Personal Record Keeping, or one like Tax Investment Records, or Household Budget Management. As a matter of fact, any kind of a program or game that you can think of that will give you a display that shows up on your screen or monitor, whether or not it can be printed out on a printer will be considered here. One might ask by now, what's the point?

My main point is this. Let's take the person that does not have a printer and only uses the console and monitor, or a TV set for the screen. Once you are done with the program and turn the console off, all is lost and gone forever. Right? OK. Now, let's assume that you have, or can get your hands on a VCR, since there are more households that have VCR's for home entertainment than those that have a printer for their 99/4A computer. Anyway, even if you do not have a friend that will let you use theirs, one can be rented from any of several video tape rental places very cheaply when comparing it to buying one. Just make sure it is a VCR (video cassette recorder), not a VTP (video tape player) for the VTP will not record, only play your tape. Now, with a VCR set up in the record mode and hooked up to your computer, everything that is shown on the screen is then captured or recorded on the video tape and can be played back at any other time that may be convenient for you. In doing so, you can immediately view your files or records, or, you can find out by watching the tape how skillful your keystrokes are in a session such as a TYPE TUTOR, etc. With a program such as a typing tutor, there is not way that you can save or record each lesson as you go to enable you to study it later, or be able to analyze your particular situation. Just imagine watching your mistakes as they happen. Seeing is believing, and I'm a believer. The TOUCH TYPING TUTOR cartridge is one that will not save your lessons to either a cassette tape or to a disk drive, much

less give you a printout on paper.

Now, maybe you can envision the importance of the VCR in the scope of an analysis in any type of given situation, even those that have the TI P/BOX with all of the cards in it, can and will find a practical use for their VCRs with the TI-99/4A system. The ones that can benefit most are those of you that are operating with only the bare console and a cassette recorder. Andy by the way, I might add that if you hook your VCR up right, it can entirely replace the need of your old audio cassette recorder. If you save your program on the VCR tape, you will then be able to reload it into the console from the VCR at a later time. Now you can think of all the possibilities of use for it.
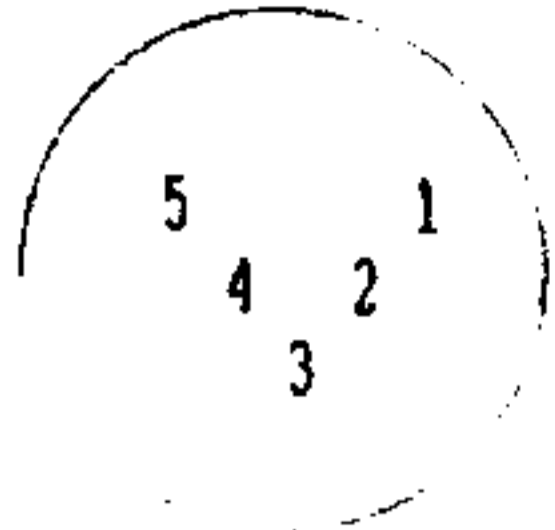
THE GOOD PART comes next!

I can hear the questions rattling in your mind! How in the world can I get mine hooked up? If you are truly interested, read on! If not, you can skip the rest.

I noticed that my VCR had four RCA jacks on the panel, one for video input, one for audio input, one each for video audio output. I had all ready inspected and repaired my video modulator when it malfunctined and was familiar with what was inside that little box that hangs from the back of the TV. I knew it had a video and audio and the ground connections inside. That's where I had to make the repair to the broken wire. I'm not digressing here, only letting you know how I stumbled onto this in the first place. I had some old 8mm movies of the children taken in the 50's that I wanted to convert to VHS and make copies for the children. A very dear friend and computer enthusiast of mine, Jack Montag, a professional photographer, agreed to make the conversion for me. Another friend in the club, Frank Skinner, had purchased a program from J&KH SOFTWARE called Video Titles II which will make automated sequences of custom titles for in-store advertising or video recordings. Frank had used this program to make a title display for his Computer Robotics Business with great success. I borrowed this program and generated some fancy titles for my homemade movies. My next step was to make a cable to connect it all together. Needed was a plug that was on a spare video modulator from Radio Shack. Now, all I had to do was desolder the plug from the wires. Next, I found a pair of jumper wires with RCA phono plugs on both ends. One happened to be red and the other black. I cut the plugs off of one end of each cable and stripped the insulation back to expose the wrapped shielded wire and the inside solid wire of each cable where the old RCA phono plug was.

I then twisted and soldered the shielded wires of both red and black cables together. This left the center wire of each cable to be dealt with. (This one has the small plastic covering on it . Trim only a small portion of this plastic off of each cable so that only a very short portion of wire is extending from it. The next step is to find your plug from the old video modulator. If you were to hold the plug in your hand and look into the open end, you would see 5 pins, arranged in what could be determined to look like a (happy face without eyes). The pin arrangement makes the big smile. Looking at them from right side to the left, we will call the right-most pin #1. It is the audio pin, where the red audio wire is to be soldered to. The very center or bottom pin is the common ground, where the twisted shielded pair is to be soldered to. The black wire is the only remaining wire and is to be soldered to pin #4, located just to the left of the center pin. This is the video pin. After the solder joints have been completed, replace the plug hood and it is ready for use. Just plug this plug into

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your console, and place the other ends into your VCR where the black RCA phono plug goes into the Video-In Jack and the red RCA phono plug goes into the Audio-In Jack of the VCR. From the VCR, you then connect you regular cable from VCR to the TV in the normal manner. (This would depend on the type of connectors whether they be twin flat leads or cable-ready which uses the 75 Ohm resistor.)

```
        5     1        #1 AUDIO-OUT
                       #2 NOT USED
      4   2            #3 COM-GROUND
                       #4 VIDEO-OUT
        3              #5 NOT USED
```

SPEEDY CURSOR?
Downloaded from GENIE and condensed by Dee Wellman
SNUGLETter - Las Vegas, NV - May, 1988

This fix by Peter Hoddie and uploaded to GENIE by Steve Mehr of the Tri-Valley User Group in So. Calif., shows how to speed up the auto-repeat of the cursor in the Funnel-Writer Word Processor.

First, using a sector editor, locate the second sector of Funnel-Writer file "ED". The first line contains the HEX characters "909F 1006 06ff 0003 000A 000A, etc." The first "000A" controls the speed of the cursor while it is in motion. The second "000A" controls the initial delay speed of the start of the cursor's auto-repeat.

Now that you have located these two words, change the first "000A" to an "000f" for the faster motion of the cursor. Then change the second "000A" for a lower value such as "0005". This shortens the time delay of the auto-repeat. Try it out! Remember the first "000A" controls the cursor repeating speed, the lower the number the slower the motion of the cursor. The second "000A" controls the time delayed start of the auto-repeat. This "000a" equals approximately 1 second. Changing to "0005" makes it about a 1/2 second delay, the lower the number the less delay before auto-repeat starts.

One drawback to this change: When entering the ShowDirectory function of Funnel-Writer, the flagging of a file to load into F'Writer is changed. As you know, you have the ability to flag from 10 files per page in the Show Directory routine. This is also the default (10) or "A" in HEX for the cursor speed. If you don't mind typing in your filenames to load into Funnel-Writer, go for it.

Like Steve says in the GENIE file; "Maybe someone can come up with a fix for the SD flag feature to have it get it's value from elsewhere in the file".

Thanks for the idea Peter and Steve!

EXCERPTS FROM CANADA NIGHT CONFERENCE
WED, MARCH 116, 1988, ON DELPHI
COURTESY ART BYERS, CALL SOUNDS - MAY, 1988

Following are the highlights from a verbatim transcript regarding the above.

Steve Mickelson reported a member of his club (Jim Ballantyne) has dumped Z80 based cartridges and has them running on the TI (ED note: I think they are from the ADAM Computer). Jeff Guide remarked that Z80 basic is not far off TI Basic. Art Byers corrected him in that it was Assembly. Steve Mickelson reported he has been approached by Chris Bobbitt to do some work, but the programs will have to run on both the TI and GENEVE.

S. Mickelson elaborated that J. Ballantyne is working on a Z/80 simulator/interpreter for the TI. It runs slowly on the TI because the Adam's 9918 clock speed is faster. In other words the Ballantyne program interprets Z80 machine code into 9900 machine code. He developed it after reading a report written by S. Mickelson about a year or so ago on how ADAM users are translating TI assembly code to run on the ADAM. He currently has Antarctic Adventure running in a Maximem.

Art Byers asked if this means some compatibility eventually with the huge library of CPM programs? S. Mickelson replied that is means all CPM cards can be relegated to the same shelf as the P-Code cards sometime in the future. Also, NINTENDO software may be translated, but it would require a royalty.

S. Mickelson reported that Gary Bowser is working on a GPL interpreter for the GENEVE and hopes to have a utility for PC Transfer to take IBM art into GIF for the GENEVE.

Art Byers commented that the Canadians were putting us to shame in the programming area.

TI-BASE
New from INSCEBOT, Inc.

The perfect place for all your data needs.

TI-BASE is the place to collect and organize your data. Record Definitions are customized to your exact needs. Data can be freely interchanged between all types of records. Simple structured command language allows an easy implementation of needed functions. Address lists, checkbooks, business aplications, all easily performed and maintained on diskette by TI-BASE.

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o File Copy	
o File Deletion	

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Quantity prices available up on request

INSCEBOT, Inc.
P.O. Box 291610
Port Orange, FL 32029

Requires 32k memory expansion, a minimum of one disk drive and either Extended Basic, Editor/Assembler, or Mini-memory modules for the TI-99/4A.

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LIBRARY NOTES
Deanna Sheridan "Temporary Librarian"

Things are looking up! The entire Northcoast library has been backed up. Sublibrarians (see Marty Smoley's notes) are on board, and in most cases have copies of their sections, plus new programs to catalog.

Thirty+ programs were cataloged in the freeware area last month, but a catalog page was held back in anticipation of more programs being added this month. I took a copy of our library alphabetized on Marty Kroll's CATLIB program and passed it out to all the groups in attendance at Lima. So far, I have only received 2 groups' library listings in return. I keep telling you that we have most of what is out there, and when you look at these other catalogs, you know we do. However, here and there, I find something interesting and will be sending out disks to obtain them soon.

Les Kee of Chips took on the task of the 25 special disks mentioned last month. If we never see Les again, you will know that he is probably trying to dig his way out of the mess. It was a load off my shoulders and much appreciated. Les, feel free to take your time on this project.

The Graphics SIG has sent a check to Mark McCauley to pay for 3 hours of download time for just graphic programs. These will go first to our SIG for distribution and then be included in the clubs' libraries. In addition, we have authorized Mark to use time for other programs and bill the clubs up to $5.00 per month each. we will be caught up and it won't take so much. But it will assure that we continually have new and interesting programs.

Funnelweb 4.1 was announced at Lima and was demoe'd. Unfortunately it was after we left, but in talking with others who were still there, the new features are mostly in the configuration file. This is consistent with previous information that about all has been done that can be done to the other parts of the program. Matt Andel says that it has "windows". Evidently Lima is helping with the Beta testing. I do not know if they gave a release date.

I have a backlog of several nice programs to review and chose the newest, and I think, the hottest, for this month. See the review for 1000 Words elsewhere. In addition, I bought several disks from the Nutmeg 99ers, 2 of which are graphics in GRAPHX format, one called ZODIAC, and a lottery game (which I thought was something else, oh well).

Just a little background on the Nutmeg group. These programs are freeware, and I hope that if you use them, you will send some type of donation. This group consists of all of 7 people. Each year they collaborate on a disk to be sold at the Boston Fayuh (Faire to the rest of us). Each person takes a portion of a program to develop. It is then put together and this is their ONLY money-making project so that they can afford to put out a newsletter and get other newsletters in exchange. I know a lot of you have gotten and been enchanted by the Woodstock program. I can guarantee that if you like Woodstock, you will also like Zodiac, and would urge you to send a little something along to the Nutmeg group if you use it.

At Lima I was given two disks developed by Jan Knapp of the St. Louis group. She is doing some geneological work and needed forms to keep track of everything she is doing. These are TI-Writer files which can be printed for that purpose. She also has a "Student Organizer" which is also composed of TI-Writer files to help students. More will be said about these next month.

Two months ago Jack Sughrue sent me a copy of his PLUS! disk which has a lot of handly transliterates for TI-Writer, plus some public domain programs he has enhanced. I have gotten no further than printing out the DOCS because of other pressing matters. The docs are worth the price of the disk as they are great tutorials on transliterates, etc. of TI-Writer. I hope to do an in-depth review next month.

I also received a disk which is not fairware, but commercial from Rodger Merritt who did PRINT-IT. This is called PICTURE-IT. Similar to the Art/Convert program, you can take Artist Instances and convert them to TI-Writer transliterate files. His has an option for double density which makes for nicer printing. You can also take instances and view them on the screen with pretty borders, or convert them to IBasic or sprites for inclusion in programs. There is also a banner program. This is only $10, and I hope to give it a thorough review soon.

A couple of comments about PICASSO. Asgard will NOT be distributing this program. It will only be sold through Tenex. I guess that the copyright violations mentioned before are fact and that Arto Heino did use routines he should not have from the Paint 'n Print program. Jack Sughrue said that about a dozen people asked him Saturday what they could do since they had sent Mr. Heino money and had never heard from him. I only mention this because to hear tell it, we never pay anyone for anything in the TI world. There were probably 200 people at Lima and considering not everyone is into graphics, I think this is a pretty good percentage of people who paid and got dumped for their troubles and possibly will be much more cautious in the future. It is too bad, because this is a fine program, but it has made it much harder for other faireware authors who come behind.

We received a letter from INSCEBOT this past week, and they have a new database called TI-BASE. They are offering user groups a copy for demo purposes and then to be raffled off. They will also give a group discount. The regular price is $24.95, but the group price would be $19.95. I have written a letter stating we would be glad to participate. See summary of its features elsewhere.

I once overheard one of our members say, "there is a lot of junk in the library". Just as with the "Trash and Treasure" sales, it depends on your viewpoint. This person was able to come into the TI world with a full-blown system and did not spend 2 years with just a console and tape recorder. He did not realize that when a lot of us first started, if you put two lines on the screen, typed RUN and had action of any kind, you feel you had really accomplished something. I made this statement several times while cataloging the main part of our library. The disks we got from AMNION through the Youngstown group were in fact the old International Users Group library and included some of the very earliest programs ever written for our machine. By today's standards, many do indeed seem to be junk. But, on the other hand because of their simplicity, many are excellent building blocks for people who would like to do their own programming. About the time, I would be on the verge of trashing a program completely, I would find it had a nice opening screen (even if the program itself was a dud), or an unusual scoring routine on a game. I could go on and on. It is too bad in a way that we have so many programs available because we no longer feel the challenge to learn to program ourselves. I know that most of you put your TI aside for the summer to go fishing, do some

gardening, whatever. But, in the fall, I think it would make a nice project to pick out some of these early programs and see what we could do as a group to enhance them and along the way, learn some programming ourselves. Sublibrarians, how about going through and picking our some possibilities and presenting them to our people?

1000 WORDS
A REVIEW BY DEANNA SHERIDAN - NORTHCOAST 99ERS
CLEVELAND, OHIO

Thanks to Jack Sughrue of the M.U.N.C.H. group, who was at the conference in Lima, I was priviledged to meet Norman Rokke of the Pittsbugh group who had written a program to meet his needs in his profession. He is a chemistry teacher at a college in Stuebenville and a member of the Pittsburgh group.

He stated he needed a program to do graphics then text, then graphics again and could find none. So he decided to do his own. We all ready have a couple in that class...the Art/Convert by Ann Dhein and enhanced by Trio+ Software. Rodger Merritt has recently come out with a program with some additional enhancements to do the same thing. These are both Extended Basic programs and take about 20 minutes to convert a TI-Artist instance over to a transliterate file which can be printed by TI-Writer.

If you want to go from graphics to text with both of the above-mentioned programs, it is necessary to prepare your text with a carriage return symbol at the end of each line for it to print properly since you use PIO.CR instead of PIO.LF in order to use the graphics.

1000 WORDS does what the above programs do, only faster and better. It is written entirely in assembly. I have a favorite letterhead I use and decided to test 1000 Words to see how it handled it in comparison to the two programs above. The 20-minutes to convert was suddenly cut to about 1 minute. It was almost unbelievable. When you do your conversion, you are allowed to insert an .IF DSKN. command. I used "header" so that I could go in at any time and "include" whatever file I wanted to immediately follow.

1000 WORDS uses the PIO.LF command, so now I can print my letterhead and have my text follow without any special formatting.

The other two programs use TI-Artist Instances, while 1000 WORDS uses the program format. If you use one file, it will center it on the page automatically. If you desire to use two files for a full-page width, the process if very simple. Create the left side of the page in TI-Artist. Save in the normal manner, only use an "L" as the last letter on your filename. Go to 1000 WORDS and use option 2 which connects two files. It will process this file and create a new file with an "R" extension for RIGHT. Take this file and load it in TI-ARTIST. On the left side of your screen, you will see the ending of the first file with a red line about 1/2 inch wide. Use this as your "ruler" to create the right side of the screen and you can visually see that you have everything set up so that when the two files are put together, they will match perfectly.

Then go back to 1000 WORDS and let it processs the two files into a runnable TI-Writer file, and remember this last process will take only a minute or so. You cannot make any changes to this file in the editor and you cannot save it from the Editor without creating havoc. This is stated in documentation. The instructions are easy to follow. There

is a sample file included. All, I can say is that it is a great program!. My $10.00 is in the mail!! If you like graphics, this program is for you and well worth the asking price.

I continue to be amazed at the things that people are doing with graphics in TI-Writer. Do you realize that the new versions of Wordstar and Word Perfect for those "other" machines are priced at about $500. TI-Writer, or Funnelweb, is free for most of use and these great enhancements are only $10 apiece. We need to encourage people to continue to produce items such as this. PLEASE do so when the quality of the work is outstanding. It is in the Cleveland Area User Groups Library and you can also get it from: Norman Rokke, 231 Woodridge Drive, Apt. B204, Wintersville, OH 43952.

FROM THE LIBRARY
Steve Weinkamer - Northcoast 99ers - Cleveland, Ohio

Do you have files in your disk library that you rarely refer to or need, but you can't quite bring yourself to delete? You know what as soon as you do, you'll sure as heck need them. How about those TI-Writer files sitting around that you might look at some day, but are afraid to erase? Maybe you have some old Multiplan spreadsheets that are filed away that you can't seem to part with, and might not need for a long time. Finally, how many sectors are sitting there filled up with pages of documentation for who knows how many programs? You need the docs in case you misplace the hard copies, but it bugs you to have good disk space sitting there inefficiently. I have lots of stuff in all of the above categories, just wasting good disk space, and I'm sure most of you do too. Finally, if you download or upload on a long distance BBS, wouldn't it be nice to drastically cut access time? If that's the case, then ARCHIVER II 2.4 by Barry Boone is for us.

What the program does is archive (pack and compress) disk files into roughly half the current space they now require, depending upon the particular file being archived. (In less than 10 minutes, I took a 420 sector set of Multiplan files and reduced them to 206 sectors. I read a report of someone whittling 229 sectors down to 65.) ARCHIVER II 2.4 can be loaded from E/A 5 or the E/A loaders utility of Funnelweb, (My preference). Once in place, you have a menu screen with six choices: 1. Pack files, 2. Unpack files, 3. Compress, 4. Decompress, 4. Utility menu, 6. Return to FW 4.0.

First, you must back your files using menu selection 1. Follow the on-screen prompts, (which are extremely user-friendly), asking the source and destination drives, new file name, and if you wish to pack all or some of the files residing on the disk. At any time, you can press FCTN 9 to abort a command if you need to. The resulting files are in D/F 128 format. Next, pack your files. This further reduces the file size to it's final limit. Again, follow the on-screen prompts. The resulting file will be in an I/F format. To recover your files at a later time, do the inverse of the archiving process: decompress, and then unpack your files. Note that it is a two-part process for archiving or recovering your files.

Main menu selection 5 allows disk manager type utilities such as cataloging a disk, cataloging archived files, deleting files, protecting and unprotecting files, renaming files, and copying files.

While 2 or more disk drives are desirable, a SS/SD

system can be used with no problems. The advantage of having a multi-drive system will be in elimination of disk swapping, which could become heavy with a fully archived disk. Other requirements are 32K, Extended Basic, Funnelweb or other E/A option 5 loader, or the E/A module. Also, you will want 2 or 3 blank, initialized disks handy when unpacking and decompressing files in order to make sure that you have enough room for your end results. While this may not be a program that the average user takes advantage of every day, it is certainly a handy one to have when doing your occasional disk housekeeping chores. This program is on Disk II3 in the library. It is Freeware and is supporting a young man's college education.

(Ed note: Steve was totally unenthusiastic when I mentioned this program to him as he thought is was only for people who upload or download from a BBS. Not true as he has discovered. Barry Boone is still working on the program and hopefully when V3.0 is available, the compressing and packing can be done in one process similar to the archiver programs on MSDOS machines. Also, if you want to unarchive only one or two files on a disk, this is possible and you do not have to unarchive the entire disk to retrieve the file you want to work with. Soon we will be able to do "almost" everything that Big Blue does!)

AN OPEN LETTER TO MYARC
D/L from Delphi TI NET

The following is an open letter from John Johnson of the Miami Users Group.

Note: This letter is being sent to Myarc on Monday, April 18, 1988. If you ever have hopes of seeing the 9640 survive as a competitive computer, please send a letter to Myarc, stating your feelings about their marketing strategy.

Myarc Incorporated
P.O. Box 140
Basking Ridge, NJ 07920

Dear Mr. Phillips,

You told us many things about the 9640. Things like included speech, ability to run TI programs from an A> prompt, A COMPLETELY OPEN COMPUTER, a good basic, etc.

We finally got the machine, and the promises kept coming. We supported you and bought the machine, even though the price climbed from the initial $350 dollars you and we planned on (remember the initial poll you put out on Compuserve back in 85?), to the $500 or so that you now ask for it. We supported you as part of the team, one of the orphans. We didn't buy clones, even though we knew that it would have been the most economical thing to do, and believe it or not, there were a few of us that were willing to take the beating because we wanted to support one of our own.

After all, you knew what it was like, having to struggle through a completely closed system, learning it from scratch, and making the most of it. Well, you gave us real power, brought us out of the orphanage, and we appreciate that. We're still supporting you.

Even though we still haven't seen ADVANCED BASIC, or the finished MDOS, or the PASCAL, we still stick with you, waiting. Waiting while you develop more software for the computer, software that you can sell to us, and probably expect to sell to us before the above products are completed.

You talk about a protection card to go into the p-box that will prevent piracy. Why are you wasting time on a piece of hardware that won't contribute to the computer? On the same note, why are you wasting time on software programming at all?

You are taking the same course as TI, aren't you? I hear a lot of rumors about your plans to not give out much technical information on the computer or the operating system. I find it hard to believe that you could be so stupid as to try that on us! Incredibly stupid is what you are if you stab us in the back by trying to keep the machine closed.

TIers have learned to program in the last 8 years. Why won't you let us and third party software developers handle the software, and you handle the hardware? I feel I'm a fair programmer on the 4a, but I don't know squat about the 9640. And I don't really have the time to learn it. You won't provide information on how to program it, again, because you want to monopolize the software market. If you had half a brain, you'd have sent a technical manual full of information to any and all who requested it, at no charge. If you would have, there would be no software shortage for the machine, as there is now. Instead, you choose to limit the number of programmers to damn few, and you've managed to get on their bad side too.

So we have My-art. So what? With documentation on the computer, by now we could have had 10 different drawing programs. People don't buy an IBM (or clone) because of the software IBM sells.

I really enjoyed my 99/4A, and I do see a huge advantage to having a machine like the Geneve. I probably could never go back to a 4A, but if you decide to continue with the foolish marketing scheme of a closed machine, with you writing software alone, I will not buy any software or hardware from Myarc. I won't sell the machine, or threaten to make you buy it back or any other foolishness, but I will do my best to persuade others not to do business with Myarc.

I will continue to use the 9640 with whatever software comes along in the form of freeware, third party sales, etc. I will continue to support my peers (all the TIers and 9640 owners) as best as I can, but I feel you really screwed us. You gave us a compatable computer to upgrade to, and we supported you with our dollars. We put up with your limp excuses as to why products were constantly late. We put up with your labor dissagreements with your programmers, while products bought and paid for weren't delivered. Now you are pulling a TI all over again. I have just about had it.

So I guess what I'm trying to say is that I have lots of patience. I can put up with delays, tap dancing etc, but when you start talking about a closed machine that I can't program, that's when I call it quits. I hear that your new managing genius, Riley, is responsible for this type of marketing.

Straighten him out, let him know that it won't work with this 9640 owner.

I'm also posting this letter on GEnie, and I'll encourage others to write to you.

With much bitterness,

John A. Johnson
*******************EOF**

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THOSE NEARLY EMPTY EARLY SECTORS
From Lima Area UG - May, 1988 - Charles Goode?

Have you ever used a sector editor and wondered about all the unused space in the early disk sectors? Sectors 0, 1, and subsequent low numbered sectors have a lot of zeros, or >FFFF's stored in them. Each file has a separate File Description Record sector, usually near the beginning of the disk, in addition to the sectors that hold the file contents. The FDR sector has the file name at the beginning followed by a few bytes telling the disk controller where on the disk to find the file. Most of the FDR sector is filled with zero's and represents, for the most part, wasted disk space.

DISK UTILITIES v4.0 by John Birdwell does something with some of the sector 0 and FDR sector extra space. You can date the disk when it is named, and you can put a 35-character comment after the file name of each file on the disk. These date and comment data occupy disk space that normally goes unused. Other software, such as "disk Information Manager" exists which will create special disk directory comment files, but these represent extra files on he disk and thus take up extra disk space. The comments created by Disk Utilities v4.0 are much more efficient in terms of their usage of available disk space.

When you print a disk directory from DISK UTILITIES v4.0 to your printer using the DISK REPORT function, the comments are printed out alongside each file name. The disk date and file comments can only be printed to a printer or copied to another disk using file-by-file copy using DISK UTILITIES. Other disk managers such as DMII and DM1000 still work on a disk formatted with DISK UTILITIES v4.0, but don't have the ability to read the disk date and file comment data, or to transfer these data to a copy disk if file-by-file copying is used. Sector and track copiers do pass along the date and comments, but you still need DISK UTILITIES v4.0 to read them.

USING DISK UTILITIES V4.0A AS A DATABASE
By Charles Good, Lima UG - May, 1988

The power and versatility of DISK UTILITIES V4.0 continues to amaze me. Because of the very rapid "FIND STRING" disk global search, you can use DISK UTILITIES as a "keyword" database in a manner similar to some commercial databases.

What you do is use the "EDIT SECTOR" option of "SECTOR UTILITIES" to type any text you want onto a disk sector. When you see the desired disk sector displayed, press CTRL/A for a display in ASCII, and then begin typing your text. You can use any sector you want, including sectors 0 and 1. You are given a 16x16 character grid to type your information. You can type as fast as you want, because the assembly routines of DISK UTILITIES will keep up with your typing speed. Each sector of text data is like an index card full of related data. After filling a sector with text, press CTRL/W and then <ENTER> twice to write your text to the disk. You are not entering a program onto the disk, just text. The disk acts as a blank sheet of paper, and

will accept anything you want to type in. You can print any data sector to your printer with CTRL/P any time the data are displayed on the screen.

You could, for example, enter the title, date, place of publication, and several keywords of magazine articles you wish to subject index. To search your database for all the articles on a particular topic, enter a keyword as the FIND STRING string, and if this word is in the title or keywords, it will be found VERY FAST. You can also enter the album title, artist, and songs on each of your record albums. DISK UTILITIES can then be used to find every album in a vast collection of albums that contain a particular song.

Using DISK UTILITIES as a data base, you can only search for one keyword at a time. You cannot sort your data sectors, and you can't catalog your data disk because there are no files in the normal sense of "file" on the disk. however, for the two "keyword" applications described above, DISK UTILITIES does a super job when used as a database. A few years ago, I wrote XBASIC programs to do these "magazine article" and "album song" searches, and the speed of DISK UTILITIES beats my efforts hands down. I now search my data disks, created by my XBASIC programs, with DISK UTILITIES.

CATALOGING LIBRARY Author: Marty Kroll
A quick review by Martin Smoley NorthCoast 99er's

The NorthCoast 99er's recently took on the task of revamping their library procedure. In order to do this, we needed a catalog program that would be easy to use and quickly handle as many utility-type problems as possible. I am referring to sorting, printouts, etc. We chose Cataloging Library (CATLIB), V.1.5 by Marty Kroll. CATLIB has turned out to be a great choice for our club, and it would also be a great choice for any individual who merely wanted to keep track of their personal library.

This is an Assembly Language program which makes it quite fast. It comes with an XBasic loader. The program can utilize from 01 to 99 data files, which is the way it records or saves your library list. In each of these Data Files, you can contain the Catalog for up to 123 disks, with the total number of files or programs on those disks up to as many as 900.

For Example, The NorthCoast library has one sub-library section on Music/Graphics which contains 42 disks with 662 programs and files. This information is stored on one of the 99 possible data files CATLIB can handle. It can sort, save and then produce either summarized or complete listings. It can list them to screen or your printer. It can search for items. If you decide you don't want a bunch of small sub-libraries, it can merge them together into one big library (provided the grand total is not more than 123

disks, or 900 programs). CATLIB can be used with one disk drive or several. It comes ready to work with Gemini/Epson or Okidata printers, but can be modified to work with others.

CATLIB comes with 12 pages of instructions, but in can amost be used without them. While using CATLIB, the majority of the time, you are merely making menu selection and shoving more disks to be cataloged into one of your drives. The documentation also mentions that Marty will soon release a CATLIB COMPANION. This companion will allow you to keep a set of comments for the disks you have in your library. You could then write yourself notes on how to run programs or special items you may need to efficiently run certain programs. The addition of the companion program to CATLIB will make it a complete library system for large or small libraries.

I intend to send Marty the $10.00 Freeware donation for this program as it is worth much more than that to anyone with a pile of disks that need straightening out. You can contact Marty or send the $10.00 by mail. Martin Kroll Jr., 218 Kaplan Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15227.

NOTE: For HORIZON (Bud Mills) Ramdisk users. I had to access Extended Basic and the drive one load routine from the first screen after turning on my TI. If I pressed the spacebar and then selected C for Ibasic Module from the menu screen, my 4/A locked up when I picked a printer type after CATLIB loaded. This is not a problem and after that point CATLIB runs perfectly.