WELCOME BACK

by: Bob Pass   Can you believe summer is almost over already? Well this newsletter is your first sign that fall is not far off at all.

This newsletter is quite short this month as I intend to waste very little of my remaining summer beating a newsletter out of a keyboard! This in spite of the several articals some of you have prepared and submitted for this space. The prime purpose of this issue is simply to remind you that the next two meetings will be the SECOND WEDNESDAY IN SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER (the 10'th & 8'th respectively). It will be inevitable that someone will forget and come out on Tuesday. Don't be caught! Get out that red pencil and circle those dates on the calendar. Don't show up on the second Tuesday because we won't be there for September and October only.

Our new executive has held meetings over the summer planning the new session; not for them the lazy days of summer! Look for some new ideas and features to be presented at the September meeting.

This summer we lost two very valuable members of this User Group. Wolly Barabash has gone to Ottawa for an indefinite period to further his education; we shall miss his TI knowledge. Roger Loten has transferred to Lethbridge leaving behind a very empty pair of secretary shoes. Roger was a very capable member of the executive for just over a year; his wit at the meetings as well as his skills are going to be missed. Good luck & farewell to Wolly and Roger.

Finally a reminder to many of you that September is the month for membership renewal. Fees this year are to remain at $20.00.

JUNE MEETING

The June meeting was devoted almost exclusively to group business. Prime activity was the election of new officers and here are the results:

President -- Tom Hall, Vice President -- Ken Godbeer, Treasurer -- Jim Mulligan, Secretary -- Lois Meunier,

Those who attended the meeting will recall that Roger Loten was elected as secretary. However, two weeks later. Roger obtained a new job in Lethbridge and resigned his position. The executive then asked Lois (a candidate for treasurer) to take Roger's place; not realizing what she was getting into, she agreed! Phone numbers of the executive and a complete list of members occupying volunteer positions will be made available in the next newsletter.

The other item of business covered was the reading and adoption of the new bylaws. There were very few changes from the originals submitted at the May meeting. Once the new bylaws are registered under the Alberta Societies Act, copies will be placed in the libraries.

PROGRAMMING CONTEST

Don't forget about the programming contest announced in the June newsletter. Your entry must be in by the September meeting to be elligable.

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SEPT & OCT MEETING DAY CHANGED

The next meeting, our first of the season, is scheduled for Wednesday, Sept 10'th at 7:30 pm in room 849 of the U of A's General Services building on 116 St at 90'th Ave. Doors open at 7:00 PM; meeting starts at 7:30 sharp.

The October meeting will also be on a Wednesday; Oct 8'th at the same time and place. This is a departure from our general rule of holding our meetings on the second Tuesday of the month which we will revert to in November. Sorry for any inconvenience.

A NOTE FROM "THE PREZ"

by: Tom Hall   No one thought, on that fateful "Black Friday" in 1983, when TI announced that they were discontinuing production of the 99/4A, that three years later the computer would be going strong. In spite of all the dire predictions, the loyal users of the Home Computer, rallying around user groups all over the world, did the impossible: they not only kept the machine alive, but by their enthusiasm and dedication, provided the incentive for third party entrepreneurs to showcase their talents by producing a stunning array of both hardware and software enhancements for their "orphan" computer.

The coming year promises to be an exciting one in the TI world. Myarc, after a number of delays and setbacks, is finally coming out with the long-awaited TI-compatible, called GENEVE. Millers Graphics has released some very innovative software, capped by their revolutionary hardware peripheral, the GRAM KRACKER. All of this activity has generated a flurry of activity and publication, and there are now several successors to the now-defunct Home Computer Magazine -- all dedicated exclusively to disseminating news of interest to TI owners.

What does all of this mean? For one thing, more and more information about the inner workings of the 99/4A is beginning to "leak" out into the TI community. One of our chief functions as a user group is to attempt to gather as much of this flood of information as possible, and to make it available to our members, to explain how to use it, and if possible to provide demonstrations of the principles in action.

This is what your new executive will try and do for you this year. We hope that you will be as excited about the burgeoning new trends in the TI world as we are, and will look forward as anxiously as we do to the advent of new horizons for the TI 99/4A.

USER GROUP NEWS

NEW LOOK... Unless you are blind, you should have noticed by now that the newsletter looks different!   This is a trial that reduces your editor's work yet still packs as much info into the smallest space possible. I want to give you the biggest bang for the smallest reproduction buck! Let me know how you like it; monetary rewards gratefully received.

RAM DISK... The Horizon Ram Disk kits arrived in the third week of June and were distributed. Final cost was $217.00 (Canadian). The first kit built was by Paul Helwig for the bulletin board system which is now responding more quickly to users. Out of 340 chips in the ten kits, there were only 4 defective; 3 memory & 1 data output buffer representing a failure rate of slightly more than 1%. To date, the project has been a success!
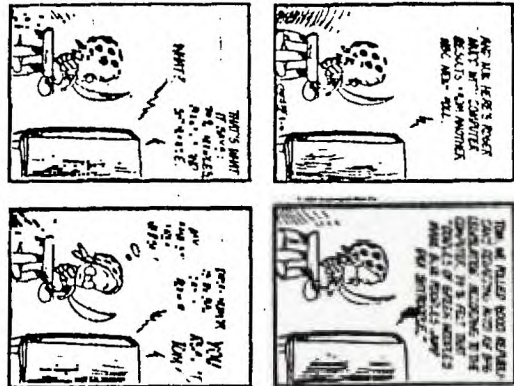
LIBRARIES... all donations to our various libraries are greatfully received. We would especially like to have returned any materials borrowed last session as you have had all summer haven't you? How about cleaning out the closets? If it doesn't look like yours, it is probably ours; if not, we'll take it anyway!

VOLUNTEERS... our new executive has lots of fresh ideas. But don't expect them to do it all for you; they too will need volunteer help.   If you have some time to spare, then get in on the ground floor with our new leaders and help raise our group to new heights by volunteering your services at the next meeting. You will find the time well spent.

BULLETIN BOARD... a BBS service is operated for us by Tom Hall. To get on line, dial (403) 424-3258. The board has been upgraded over the summer with the addition of the ram disk (see above) supplied by your hardware fees and a 1200
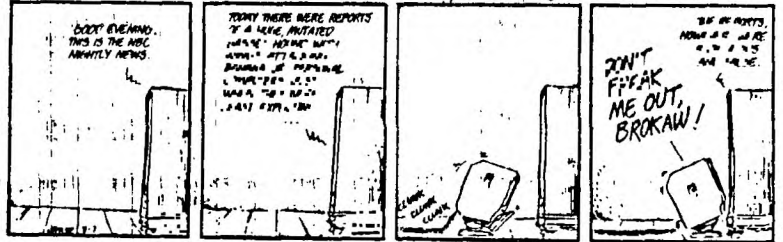
baud modem supplied by Tom.

FREE DISKETTES ... the editor thanks all those who have participated in the "Disk For A Newsletter Artical" program initiated last spring. Your response has been most gratifying. I have a backlog of articals which will appear in the next few issues. Watch this space for those who earned their disk.
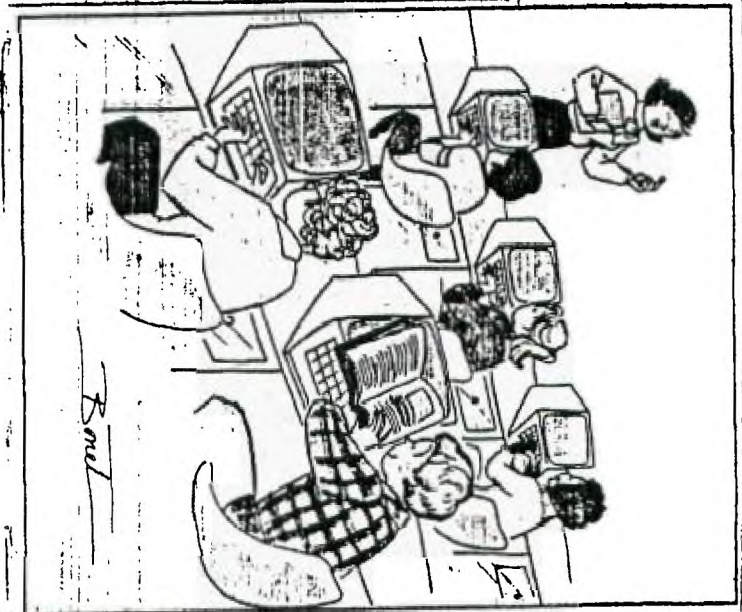

"I can fix it in an hour. Do you think your employees could think for a while?"

BLOOM COUNTY
by Berke Breathed

FRANK & ERNEST

—Photo by Robert Taylor

John McLean of Edmonton's Retail Solutions Inc. demonstrates his radio-controlled, hand-held terminal that local waiters can begin to use this fall to take menu orders.

Dining in the computer age

By GENE LAVERTY
Staff Writer

Edmonton's waiters will take a step into the computer age when Retail Solutions Inc. introduces radio-controlled, hand-held terminals to the city's restaurant industry this fall.

RSI vice-president John McLean says industry interest is already high in the Validec Point of Sale system — a $1,000 computerized ordering pad that relays menu orders directly to printers in the kitchen and to a central terminal for cash handling, inventory control and restaurant management.

Alberta-based RSI has worked with a number of California-based software and technology companies to develop and distribute its line of IBM PC-based data systems for the retail and service industries.

The company is also a distributor for Ontario-based Remanco which is a leader in computerized restaurant management equipment.

Remanco bought Validec from its California parent last year and RSI will distribute the point-of-sale system through its 54 dealers across Canada.

'We were working with IBM PC equipment and we looked around until we found a company that had developed a system for networking PCs," McLean said. "We can network as many as eight terminals to one PC."

EDMONTON SUN - 07/07/86