

FLUG99ER

AUGUST 1988

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EDITORS: Oscar Smith/Roy Willis

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NEWSLETTER Librarian	
MEMBERSHIP Committee	Lee Dellenbaugh
SOFTWARE LIBRARIAN	Sam Lee

Next meeting of the Forest Lane Users Group is:

AUGUST 7, 1988 --- PROGRAM : Joy Paint, Other Educational packages

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AUGUST MEETING INFORMATION

By - Oscar Smith

Below are the planned activities for the August 7, 1988 meeting of the Forest Lane TI Users Group.

2:00 - 2:30-BUSINESS MEETING

Reading of the last Minutes
TIBBS report

ANY NEW BUSINESS

Newsletter help

Officers Meetings

Suggestions for future demos (hardware)

2:30 END OF BUSINESS SECTION

2:30 - 2:40-QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

2:40 - 3:15 JOYPAINT DEMO

3:15 - 3:25 BREAK

3:30 - 4:00 OTHER EDUCATIONAL SOFTWARE

4:00 - 5:00 LIBRARY SWAP--QUESTIONS, HELP, DISK TRADING;ETC.

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VP NOTES

by Roy Willis

Well members with this newsletter, July, we pass what is known as the "HUMP", month. We are on the down side of the year. And with the year end approaching, it comes time to start considering several things that will take place in the months ahead.

The first to mind is the upcoming holidays. These last months are filled with holidays that are for getting together with friends and family and enjoying the festivities, always keeping in mind, if you are traveling, "Safety".

Though it is w a a a a y early, it is time to start considering the people that you want to administer the affairs of the club for the upcoming year. So get the thinking cap on and lets see if we can continue with the upbeat attitude the past officers have instilled into the unit.

As always, there is a need for people that will fill the different positions available in the club. If you have thoughts of suggestions on any of the offices, Please contact one of the current officers, or wait until the committee is appointed and contact them. Help is always needed everywhere.

The next thing to mind, is with the completion of our recent Faire, do we want to again put forth the effort to make this an on-going event each year? If we do, now is the time to start with the necessary work to get things rolling to get ahead for next year. We almost ran out of time this year, and when you think about it, if we decide to hold it in April again, time is getting short.

There are many more things that come to this persons mind that I could be here all night, but the President is breathing down my neck to get this finished so will say THIRTY FOR NOW.

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RAF'S ROUNDUP / 1

By - Richard Fleetwood

Hello everyone...Seems like forever since I wrote something for the newsletter. A lots been happening for me, and I've been trying to keep my head above water, as catastrophes occur. My wife Annie has been in the hospital since June 18th, and will probably be there for 6 to 8 more weeks. My son Robert was rushed to the hospital on July 4th weekend with convulsions, and my daughter Laurie was admitted for overnite observation after a visit to the pediatrician alerted us to the fact that she is pre-diabetic, with good chance of her having the disease in the next several years. Fortunately, my baby boy Kenny has been ok, and all that's happened to me is a third degree sunburn from a fishing trip up to Lake Texoma at the Dam below the lake today (caught 3 nice stripers!)

This part of the year holds for us computer users danger, in the form of THUNDERSTORMS! Yes, these bearers of much needed rain that many of us long for here in the south, holds more then h2o. Lightning, in any form, can destroy any computer you may have, and any equipment attached to it. A little over two years ago, our tibbs suffered a dead drive from a local lightning strike. Roy Willis lost part of his system, and the July newsletter, when his home was struck by lightning late one afternoon. And I just spent the past two weeks at work cleaning up from a direct hit on one of our buildings at work. This bolt knocked out every CRT and printer in the building, and then the power surge went thru the data cables (much like your serial cable) from that building, back into our main building, into our computer room, and into the back of our mainframe, taking out over 40 of almost 150 ports on our Vax 11/785. This one little bolt did over \$20,000 damage, and there was nothing we could have done, sort of taking the power plugs out of the wall during the storm. All printers and CRT's were turned off, yet all of them were knocked out. Just think what could happen to your system next time you hear thunder in the distance. Unplug EVERYTHING in your computer room, including your modem phone line. Don't take any chances! And please, be careful if you get caught in a storm.

The June issue of the Flug Newsletter contained my review of the Texas TI Faire, and while going back over it later (after printing) I found several grammatical errors and a few confusing sentences. Sorry about that! I sort of had to rush it after not getting written by newsletter deadline time. Coverage of the faire in Micropendium and other newsletters were very positive. I have yet to see any negative feedback, with the ONLY exception being that my picture was conveniately cut out of the May issue of Micropendium, with a notation that "Not pictured is Richard Fleetwood". That was the only mention I got in the whole issue. The article about the Forti Music card, and info about where the last remaining few cards are located (Bob Lawson in New York) were given to Laura Burns by me, and she didn't mention that either. However, besides these moot points, the Fiare did generate four complete articles for that issue, with the Forti Card, the Grandram card demo by Scott Darling, the Videoflex system by Dave Miller, and TI's presentation. Thats the best coverage I think I've seen of any faire, I believe. Not bad for the first time either!

The FLUG TIBBS is moving along, although very slowly. We have lost one out of four drives, and drives 3 and 4 have been acting up. The message base moves only slightly faster than Christmas, although I am rewriting the code to speed it up as soon as possible. Oscar and Roy have been notified of the problem and hopefully we will get the bad drive replaced pronto. The Texlink BBS is sitting here in front of me waiting for my spare time (which I have none of right now, as you should be able to understand with all the trips to the hospital and babysitting, and cleaning house, and painting the apartment, and washing dishes, and). I spent about 20 minutes this evening making a cable that is needed to run Texlink, only to run out of solder with only one connector finished. I expect to have Texlink up and running for good by Mid August, if nothing else happens. At this point in time, I am preparing to set up for 4 message bases, and five upload/download areas. Oh, I forgot to mention...the hard disk loaned to the TIBBS by Wilson Taylor, which was the reason I spent all that time getting Texlink in the first place, doesn't work! I powered the thing up a few weeks ago, before all the BS hit the fan, to get it ready to put online, only to have the drive spin a bearing (as I was told by an individual knowledgeable in hard drive operating characteristics). This means that we'll be using floppy drives for a while longer....
(sigh....) Oh well...

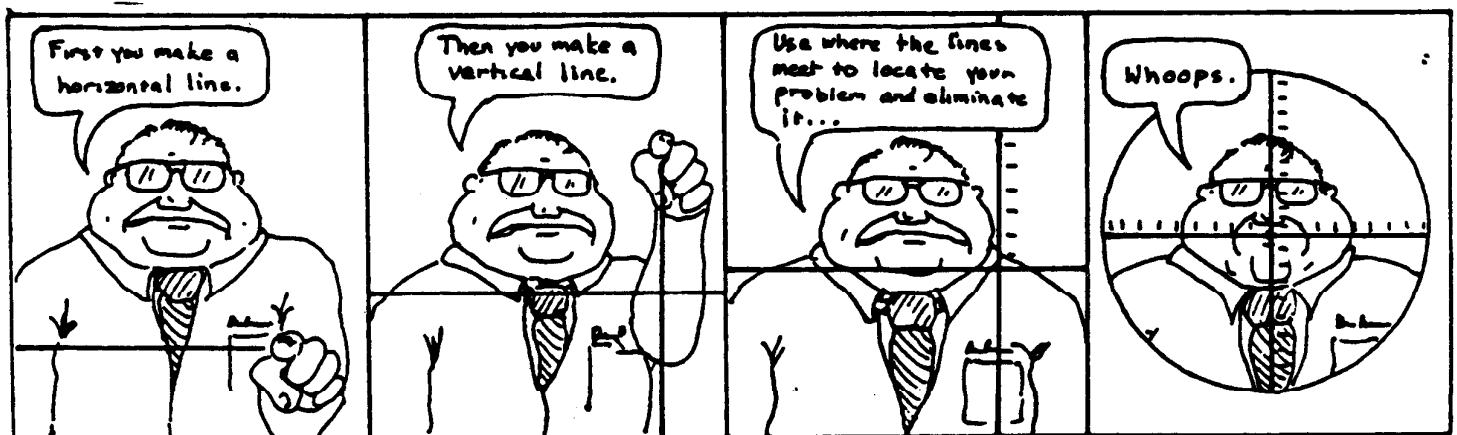
One last thing I want to mention before closing up is that I found a neat display using TI systems not too long ago. Its in, of all places, the Dallas Science Museum at the State Fairgrounds here in Dallas. They have four systems in use there, with three sitting there for all to use in a display pertaining to Oil Drilling in Texas. These systems are using Laser Videodisks (and the Video controller card) to run a very nicely set up game, where the player gets to choose where to drill for oil, what kind of equipment to buy, how much to spend, and how deep to drill. Sprites, graphics, lots of sound effects, and the video imagery make for a fascinating and unusual game. The fourth system I mentioned, runs 3 (thats right!) laser video disks showing film clips for three more displays (all different). Now you tell me another computer that can do this for less than \$10,000 and I'll buy it! If you live in the Dallas area, or come to visit someday, drop by the Science Place II (the same building as the Planetarium) and play some OIL DRILLING fun. Just for those who might be interested, I've been requested to rewrite some of the code for the game by the lady in charge of the systems. The display was set up in the summer of 1983, only months before TI left the home computer market, and the code used to write the software is just this side of archaic. I plan on using all the latest tools and ideas to make the thing MUCH more user friendly and 2-3 times faster! It should make for a nice project for the next few months...

Signing off for now... Happy belated 4th of July!

=raf=

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Earl English on "Problem solving"



PREZ TALKS

by Oscar Smith

Well it's newsletter time again, sorry about last months issue. It has really been a crazy month for me. I have been working in Houston for the last four months at Texas Instrument. Things are really picking up around here. You would not believe the amount of new faces here or the new classes/lectures held on how to create fewer particles and make faster and better devices. I was reading the other day in one of the papers about a new product T.I. is making. It's the first education toy to respond to a child's voice, the new product is called the "voyager", it's a futuristic looking headset that speaks to the child through a synthetic voice and responds to four simple statements: yes, no, true, and false. Aimed at children ages five to nine, the unit is designed to lead the child through interactive adventures and educational experiences. The headset comes with expansion cartridges that delve into dinosaurs and prehistoric times. Other cartridges deal with space, exotic animals, birds and reptiles. This is a technological breakthrough for TI because the device will respond to any child's voice, no small feat in a country with a number of dialects and for a product that will be used by persons fairly new at speaking. The self-contained toy, with no cords or attachments, has already won design awards for its simplicity.

How many of you have been reading the USA today? There are numerous articles daily about the growing shortage of computer chips and their demands. One article even talks about what TI is doing and the part or affect it has on them. It stated that in Dallas there were some 400 Engineers in masks and white jumpsuits churning out up to 330,000 chips a day in a squeaky clean factory that runs 24 hours a day except for some holidays. It went on to tell how people have to take air showers before entering the clean rooms and that makeup is barred. For some of you that have never entered a clean room this is all Greek to you but it is one experience you must take on. I know you will enjoy a tour and would be amazed at the amount of equipment needed just to make one little memory chip.

How are you all enjoying the warm weather? As the long hot summer spreads across the nation bringing record temperatures and what experts fear might be one of the worst droughts in history, we in Texas know what to do, head for the nearest air conditioned room. Since the days of the mighty Pharoah of Egypt, we have been trying to escape the heat. In those days homes were doused with water stored in reservoirs on roofs, cooling the buildings by evaporation when the hot desert winds blew. Homes of the nobles in ancient Rome were cooled by snow, hauled from the mountains by slaves. Centuries later, Italians dug tunnels into grottoes and caves along the seacoast and pumped the air into their homes with huge, hand powered fans. The first mechanical air conditioner was designed by a Duke, constructed of a 12 foot paddle wheel and placed in a river which passed his castle. Four weighted air scoops inside the wheel pushed cool air from the river and pushed it into a center passage from which it was blown into a conduit leading into the castle structure. How about that???

Computers, computers, computers, everything we do has to be entered into a computer for record keeping and data gathering. In the future, computers will become such a part of our life that we will own several, and we will notice their absence. Today we notice when a house has no telephone, refrigerator, or television set. Tomorrow we may think it is strange not to have several computers. Imagine walking into a room and pulling down from the shelf an electronic notebook that is automatically networked to a bigger computer. You begin writing on it but it doesn't acknowledge you because you have inadvertently pulled someone else's notebook off the shelf, and the computer has been taught to recognize handwriting of that individual. That is the magic of computers. So...hang on to those little orphan 99/4A.

On to a more serious note. Our software librarian has stepped down due to his work schedule and Sam Lee has stepped in to take his place. We wish Sam the best at that new position and we are behind him all the way. He has also alerted me that he has a DDM for August. Way to go....Sam... The newsletter librarian tasks are still in mid air with a couple of volunteers...Thanks guys.

Looking forward to seeing each of you at the next meeting, we need to talk about what we are going to do concernig the drive for the TIBBS.

Fall is on the way....

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RAF'S ROUNDUP/2

By - Richard Fleetwood

ITS ME AGAIN!! Don't you just HATE Super DOUBLE Issues of things that have TWICE as much (supposedly) as a normal issue does? It also means I have to write TWO columns (this is the second one!)

I'll take this opportunity to tell you about the latest and greatest from the boys on the other side of the world. Tony and Will McGovern sent us version 4.10 of Funnelweb a few weeks ago. It had many enhancements, and bug fixes for version 4.0, and also a few quirks I quickly found out I didn't need. DM1000 3.5, version 4.10, having been thouroughly massaged by Tony, caused me much distress in that it ate one of my most important disks while doing a simple catalog! Also, in its attempt to finally work, it kept getting lost, saying that I had such and such number of files in such and such sectors, and then showing me blank screen. Very Strange! After this, I decided to set it aside and wait for the sequel. Well, lo and behold, what should appear in my mailbox this weekend but version 4.11 of Funnelweb, with a 3 page letter from Tony to boot. Below are exerpts from the letter that will be of interest to all users of Funnelweb. Thanks, Tony, for continuing to share with us the best thing any TI user could ever have!

"Dear Richard,

The Gremlins were busy again--a bad bug crept into DM-1000, must have been at the final polishing stage--it doesn't reset the name entry routine after first use. One unnoticed <fctn-3> too many I suspect. Anyhow it works out to be a fairly bad bug.

So I've fixed it and done some more work on it while at it. It is a lot better to use now. Seeing as I had to update, I've made it into Vn. 4.11 and done a few other changes. DP has been upgraded to handle bad sectors more gracefully. UTIL1/FW has been modified (& CF1CG) so that it can be configured to boot up with the user list showing. This could be set in version 4.0 (useful to make "game disks" say for kids to use, in which only UL's showed, keeping the FW machinery hidden). 4.10 didn't include UL in FW/UTIL1 so it couldn't be done trivially but it now can flag a load of UL before display. Unless any other BAD bugs show up, Vn. 4.11 should do for some while, and you can put it up on BBS's, networks, etc.

Finally got a copy of April Micropendium to look at in detail. The character who runs TEX-COMP is up to his ...tricks again. His offering of FWB is totally unauthorized, and I have not knowingly been in contact with TEX-COMP, as of this date. (I may write them an unpleasant letter soon- I will write to Micropendium--not that that will do any good as TEX-COMP seems to be their

major advertiser. Very cunning--the price is pitched not far above the level that many user groups would consider as reasonable--but the fairware message and weasel wording are in small type. He knows what he can get away with--it would be a breach of copyright if he ever tried to sell on to Australia, but for the amount of \$\$ involved... Being in the USA he can obviously get away with it on Australian or Canadian software (note from =raf= here...remember when TEX-COMP "gave away" DM-1000 with the "purchase" of one of their software packages? You got the DM1000 alright, with TEX-COMP's name plastered all over the boot screen, instead of the rightful owners!))....

You are welcome to place my sentiments on BBS's....."

I just wanted to mention at this point something I've heard more than once in the past year or so, about people making comments about Funnelweb, and other programs that seem to have updates almost constantly. If you'll remember, version 4.0 of FWB came out in November, with an update in December of last year. 4.0 was an incredible jump over earlier versions. Now with 4.10 and 4.11 coming out almost back to back, I'm sure its going to happen again that some souls will complain about it. All I want to say is this....if those people who write software COMMERCIALLY, instead of the shareware or public domain way, would provide updates on as committed a schedule as Tony and Will, then there would be a LOT more sales made of everything! Only a very few manufacturers do this for our market. I want to thank Tony publically for his continued support of our machine, and I want all of you users out there to do the same. And send him a note of thanks also....you may be surprised by a personal letter from him to you!

Look for version 4.11 on the FLUG TIBBS this week!

=raf=



"WELL, WHAT DO YOU KNOW! I ALWAYS
WONDERED WHAT THAT KEY DID!"

PLEASE SEND ALL CORRESPONDENCE AND
EXCHANGE NEWSLETTERS TO THE CLUB AT:

The Forest Lane Users Group
P.O. Box 743005
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MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

A Forest Lane Users Group membership includes a monthly newsletter mailed to your home, full access to the FLUG TIBBS, access to the FLUG software library of public domain and fairware programs, and many other benefits. Annual membership is \$15. For more information Please contact the BBS or drop a card in the mail to the membership chairman.

MEMBER NEWSLETTER INPUT

Please send all newsletter input, articles, copies, pictures, files, or letters to the Editors to Oscar Smith/Roy Willis at the FLUG PO BOX. Disk files are appreciated and they can be uploaded to the BBS. All input must be received by no later than two weeks before meeting date in order to make the deadline.

FLUG MEETING

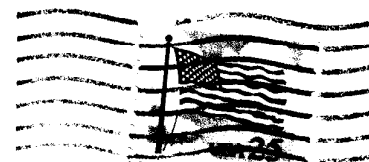
FLUG meetings are held on the First Sunday of every month at the main TI plant on Central Expressway and LBJ in North Dallas. To get to the plant, take LBJ east from Central Expy, take the first exit which will be Floyd Rd. Follow Floyd Rd. around to the stoplight. This will be Walnut, go through this light unto the next one and turn left into the entrance of TI. You will pass the Texins Activity Center on your right after you have turned off of Floyd Rd. After another 100 feet or so you will come to a stop sign, go straight ahead and you will see a covered walkway on your immediate right. A sign hanging off the end of the covered walkway will read Employment Center. Just park across the street from the covered walkway and follow the covered walk to the SC Cafeteria building. It also contains the TI Health center, the TI Employment center, and other. Take the door on the left, and follow the signs to the conference room in the back of the Cafeteria. The meeting starts promptly at 2 PM, so try and get there on time.

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