

THE FRONT RANGER

-VOLUME 7 NUMBER 5: FEBRUARY, 1990-

Supporting The TI-99 4/a

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Next Meeting 6:30pm
Thursday, Feb 15, 90
AT THE Rustic Hills Mall

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
Front Range 99er's
COMPUTER CLUB



THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

BY STEVE FUNKHOUSER

THIS IS A HAPPENING MONTH IN THE TI WORLD WITH THE FEST WEST GOING ON IN TUCSON. CLIFF SWANK, KEVIN KAPUS AND I ARE PLANNING TO MAKE THE TRIP TO FEST WEST. TUCSON IS A GREAT PLACE TO BE IN FEBRUARY; ADD TI PEOPLE AS SOME OF THE BEST PEOPLE TO BE WITH; AND IT WILL BE A WINNING COMBINATION FOR CERTAIN.

OUR OWN MONTHLY FEST WILL BRING US TOGETHER ON FEBRUARY 15, AT THE RUSTIC HILLS MALL. SAM DONATO WILL BE PRESENTING HIS PROGRAMMING EFFORTS IN THE FORM OF THE "WRITE A PROGRAM" PROGRAM DEMO. CLIFF SWANK WILL BE AROUND TO ANSWER AND REVIEW BBS TOPICS; AND I'LL HAVE THE TIPS PROGRAM UP AND RUNNING. THIS IS A CATCH UP MEETING TO NOT ONLY COMPLETE THE ABOVE TOPICS; BUT TO ALSO PERMIT TIME FOR ALL IN ATTENDANCE TO ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT ANYTHING AND ALL THINGS TI. PLEASE BE THERE; I'LL LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU.

I MUST APOLOGIZE FOR OUR RECENT EFFORTS TO BRING REPRINTS OF THE TIPS LIBRARY TO OUR MEMBERS. ~~SOME OF THE COPIES WEREN'T UP TO~~ SNUFF. MY ORIGINALS JUST WEREN'T DARK ENOUGH TO DO THE JOB NEEDED. ANYONE MAY RETURN DIFFICULT TO READ PAGES FOR IMPROVED PRINTS; JUST BRING THEM FOR REPLACEMENT.

THIS ISSUE REVEALS A FRONT PAGE FORMAT TO THIS NEWSLETTER THAT I AM GOING TO STICK WITH. IT WAS PRODUCED WITH PAGE PRO 99 BY ED JOHNSON AND CHRIS BOBBIT. PAGE PRO 99 IS A "MUST BUY" FOR ANY TI'ER WITH A NEED TO PRODUCE GRAPHICS WITH FONTS AND TEXT. IT OPERATES FAST; BOTH ON SCREEN AND AT THE PRINTER. ITS INGENIOUS USE OF THE TI'S LIMITED MEMORY SPACE; IS A TRIBUTE TO THE AUTHORS. THE SIMPLICITY OF THE SYSTEM MEANS THAT LITTLE TIME IS WASTED LEARNING ITS FEATURES. IT HAS BECOME AN IMPORTANT RESOURCE FOR ME; AND IT WILL BE FOR YOU TOO.

THAT'S ABOUT ALL FOR NOW. SEE YOU AT THE MEETING; AND THEN ON TO TUCSON!

Treasurer's Report

FOR THE PERIOD OF JANUARY 1 THRU JANUARY 31, 1990

CASH ON HAND, BEGINNING.....	\$2,064.83
CASH RECEIPTS.....	150.55
AVAILABLE.....	2,215.38
DISBURSED.....	(171.83)
ON HAND, END.....	2,043.55

SUBMITTED BY KEVIN KAPUS

~~~~~  
W-AGE/99 \* NEW-AGE/  
99 \* NEW-AGE/99 \* N  
EW-AGE/99 \* NEW-AGE  
/99 \* NEW-AGE/99 \*  
~~~~~

* by JACK SUGHRUE, Box 459, East Douglas, MA 01516 *

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* Why NEW-AGE/99? Well, it's been almost a year since my long-running IMPACT/99 columns were rudely interrupted by a car accident which kept me from my beloved * little computing machine.

So why NEW-AGE/99? After my brush with death last spring I initially felt I had been given another shot at Life (definitely with a capital "L") and wanted to reflect this New Age even with my computer. Secondly, "impact" sounded too much like a crash. Thirdly, I think my view from the TI sidelines for so long gave me the distinct perspective of seeing a New Age arrive for us. And, finally, the sharing and caring that was shown to me during my repair time by 99ers worldwide made me realize that my commitment wasn't to the little computer (that kept me occupied in thousands of wee hours) but to the people.

Even now, so long after The Event (always capitalized in my family), I continue to get cards and letters and disks and TI-related thingies from all over the world. This past week I got cards from England, Belgium, and Australia. And a few more from this country and Canada. To all those well-wishers everywhere who were so supportive during my long recovery, I can only say, "Thank you." You were all very instrumental in my rapid comeback. Even the doctors were amazed.

Regarding my operations, the most oft-asked question was, "Will all those metal plates in your head set off alarms in airports?" I have no idea. I haven't flown since. I had the stainless steel one and one of the titanium ones removed in a recent operation, but I still have seven left. Permanently.

And I am back to work on a slightly limited basis. And I DO drive. A new car. My other two-month-old new car was totally demolished when I hit the tree. And - YES! - I was VERY scared the first time I got back behind the wheel once I could see okay again. It had been so long. I'm still cautious, but I'm no longer frightened.

I had also been drifting toward large blimphood, but I lost lots of weight after the accident and have been able to keep it off. Crash diet. So there's another positive.

I really have a thousand TI people to thank, but I must particularly single out Charlie Good, John Willforth, Chris Bobbitt, Timothy Dermody, Tony McGovern, Jim Peterson, Jim Cox, Sister Pat Taylor, and so many patient newsletter editors for support above and beyond the call of duty. Having inadequately given such little thanks when so much more was due, I'll now move right into N-A #1.

Each month I plan to explore in these two pages some TI fairware and some commercialware and a bit of the goings-on.

The first going-on is Bill Gaskell's. I am sorry to learn of his FOUR-A/TALK swan song. For the year he wrote it, it was the most interesting column around. The variety and the history and the enthusiasm and the good writing made FOUR-A/TALK the boost we all needed. It was a very sustaining column that each month also introduced us to all the new goodies available to us (and there are many). The TI World Community will sorely miss your writings, Bill. Hurry up with the

skiing and golfing and get back to your computer.

In Bill's last article he talked about John Johnson's most recent BOOT program as of October 1989, good for Hard Drives, etc. For those with the "normal" system of a drive or two but not the techie wizardry, you can still benefit from the BOOT. It may not be the ONLY way to go, but it sure is one of the very best. Someone sent it to me during the time I wasn't able to compute, but when I got back to the keyboard recently I popped it in and had my flabber gasted. First it says, "MUG BOOT LOADING." That's the Miami Users Group (6755 Tamiami Canal Road, Miami, FL 33126).

Then comes the menu: 1 SHOW DIRECTORY; 2 DISPLAY A FILE; 3 RUN A PROGRAM; 4-9 Options 1-6; C TI XB.

#1 shows a directory of any disk (including RAMs) and permits marking of files for viewing, running, deleting. Marking auto-sets files when you return to Main Menu. A text file appears when #2 (DISPLAY) is pressed. An XB or E/A file runs automatically if #3 (RUN) is pressed.

When you press the spacebar another menu (with Options 7-15 and TI XB) is displayed. Press again and a third menu (with 16-24 and TI XB) is shown. This means you can type in anything on the options to VIEW or RUN including LOAD itself, which is handy if you have a bunch of LOAD programs (such as FUNNELWEB) that you want to operate off ANY drive. If you have a DSDD and two drives, for example, you could load onto this MUG BOOT disk all your favorite programs AND another whole disk of favorites on Drive 2. (And a zillion more.) Then you can put your top 24 on this menu and your other top 20 onto your FUNNELWEB menus and on and on.

With this program you could build the perfect environment for yourself, but that's only scratching the surface of this February '89 version I have.

Here are just a few of the single keypress things this will do for your minimum XB disk system: turn screen off; load disk directory; print directory; view text file; print text file; run XB or EA program; EASILY configure up to 24 (actually, unending number) files for autoloading; run gram/grom modules; delete files; cycle through and mark groms; toggle XB color interrupt routines off and on; do a CALL routine; change print device; get and display ROM header at >6000 (whatever that means); configure BOOT tracking; display version # and author; toggle instantly between all options; save all configurations; use additional active keypresses in sub menus; and so on.

Could you have dreamed that something so wonderful and so simple to operate could ever exist for our TI? Get the latest version from your user-group library or write to Miami. Don't forget a decent fairware donation.

In his final column Bill Gaskell was surprised by the ingenious FUNNELWEB built-in to change upper to lower case by holding CONTROL/period and running the cursor over the characters (words, sentences, etc.) to be speedily converted. I don't think he realized that Tony McGovern also did a reverse - lower to upper - by holding CONTROL/semi-colon. Tony told me he added this because he was not a good touch typist and found retyping from one case to the other too time consuming. The day after I got this version (4.0 and up), I was typing along without looking at the screen. When I looked up I had 20 lines or so of upper case Zip. With the cursor and Tony's ingenious keypress changer I was back to typing in seconds. Try it the next time you use FWB (speaking of which, have you tried the new 4.2? It's got some great LARGE changes.) NEW-AGE/99 will detail it all soon.

(If you use NEW-AGE/99 please put me on your exchange list.)

TI-BASE - From INSCEBOT
TUTORIAL 10.1.1 By Martin Smoley
NorthCoast 99'ers - June 17, 1989
Copyright 1989 By Martin A. Smoley

I am reserving the copyright on this material, but I will allow the copying of this material by anyone under the following conditions. (1) It must be copied in its entirety with no changes. (2) If it is retyped, credit must be given to myself and the NorthCoast 99ers, as above. (3) The last major condition is that there may not be any profit directly involved in the copying or transfer of this material. In other words, Clubs can use it in their newsletters and you can give a copy to your friend as long as its free.

This tutorial (I hope) will give you some ideas on how to use the DATE or, D-type fields. Not too long ago I was under the impression that you couldn't do much with a Date type field. Of course I knew you could sort a date field, and find records through the date field, but I didn't think past that point. Then I got into a situation where I needed to calculate the age of a ewe. That's right, I said a ewe, the mother of a lamb. I couldn't do a thing with D fields using MM, DD or YY, so I called Dennis for some help, and did I ever feel like a dummy. Dennis said you can extract a month by using MONTH, a day by using DAY and a year by using YEAR. "Ask the right question and you'll get the right answer (I thought)." Not from Dennis, from TI-Base. Now I'll try to explain it to you.

NOTE: In the CFs included in this article the lines with ~~bars~~ are actual CF or program lines and the lines starting with REC or 0000 are the product of the DISPLAY commands that immediately preceded them. If you are entering these CFs, enter only the lines that have line numbers, but do not enter the line numbers. The (nnn) means refer to a specific line number.

A date field is used to store a date in the form "MM/DD/YY". I'm sure that this is old news for most of you. This form can be used in a Db field, or in a local variable. An example would be LOCAL BORN D 8 (005). TIB then creates a local variable space 8 units in length under the name BORN and the designation D Type. D type enables TIB to perform Date operations on whatever data it finds stored in that field or variable. BORN is presently empty. REPLACE BORN WITH "02/12/43" (012) would store the date February 12, 1943 in BORN in it's proper form (MM/DD/YY). From this point there are many things that TIB can do with the data stored in BORN. If you enter LOCAL MO N 3 (007) and then REPLACE MO WITH MONTH(BORN) (015), TIB would extract 02 from BORN and place a copy of it in MO. The command DAY(BORN) would extract 12 and YEAR(BORN) would extract 43. If you created AGE N 3 and the current date "06/18/89" was in a date field named CURDT, REPLACE AGE WITH YEAR(CURDT) - YEAR(BORN) (020) would place 46 in AGE. Unfortunately it doesn't work in the other direction. REPLACE BORN WITH "45" does not work (as far as I can tell). If you enter REPLACE BORN WITH "45" (023), the 45 will be place in the far left portion of BORN, which is the month area. DISPLAY BORN would then produce (45), without the parenthesis. Concatenation (|) can be used to get the results you want as far as placing data into a date field (025). You should notice that the second "/" was eliminated (024) to allow for the right most space in AGE (004) which has a length of 3.

```
001 CLEAR
002 CLOSE ALL
003 CLEAR LOCAL
004 LOCAL AGE N 3
005 LOCAL BORN D 8
006 LOCAL CURDT D 8
007 LOCAL MO N 3
008 LOCAL DY N 3
009 LOCAL YR N 3
010 LOCAL TEST N 6
011 DISPLAY BORN,CURDT,AGE
```

REC	BORN	CURDT	AGE
0000			

```
012 REPLACE BORN WITH "02/12/43"
013 REPLACE CURDT WITH "06/18/89"
014 DISPLAY BORN,CURDT,AGE
```

REC	BORN	CURDT	AGE
0000	02/12/43	06/18/89	

```
015 REPLACE MO WITH MONTH(BORN)
016 REPLACE DY WITH DAY(BORN)
017 REPLACE YR WITH YEAR(BORN)
018 DISPLAY MO,DY,YR,AGE
```

REC	MO	DY	YR	AGE
0000	2	12	43	

```
019 REPLACE AGE WITH YEAR(CURDT);
020 - YEAR(BORN)
021 DISPLAY BORN,CURDT,AGE,TEST
```

REC	BORN	CURDT	AGE	TEST
0000	02/12/43	06/18/89	46	

```
022 REPLACE BORN WITH "45"
023 DISPLAY BORN,CURDT,AGE,TEST
```

REC	BORN	CURDT	AGE	TEST
0000	45	06/18/89	46	

```
024 REPLACE CURDT WITH "00/00" ; AGE
025 DISPLAY BORN,CURDT,AGE,TEST
```

REC	BORN	CURDT	AGE	TEST
0000	45	00/00	46	

```
026 REPLACE BORN WITH "06/31/44"
027 REPLACE TEST WITH DAY(BORN);
    * MONTH(BORN)
028 DISPLAY BORN,CURDT,AGE,TEST
```

REC	BORN	CURDT	AGE	TEST
0000	06/31/44	00/00	46	186

```
029 RETURN Copyright Martin A. Smoley
030 * 1989
031 * TDT3/C
```

TIMELINE 99

by Bill Gaskill

The International 99/4 User Group

The International 99/4 Users Group or IUG, was formed, actually incorporated, in September 1980 as the 99/4 Home Computer Users Group. The idea for the IUG was the product of Joe Nichols of Maryland and Charles LaFara of Oklahoma. As most of us know, it was LaFara who actually marketed the IUG and came across as the "president" of the group. Nichols was to be the programmer who would provide the start for the IUG's Software Exchange Library. Nichols died in November 1981 however, and apparently provided less than a dozen programs to the Exchange Library. It's probably coincidence, but the managing editor of Enthusiast 99, the IUG's official publication from May 1983 to May 1984, was a young lady named Dana Nichols, who may have been related. But that is total speculation on my part.

Although the term Users-Group is found in their name, the IUG was not an actual users group under the intended definition. It was more of a commercial venture than it was a non-profit, regular meetings holding, for the benefit of the member, Users Group. Despite that fact, as originally incorporated, the IUG charged no dues. That changed in 1982 however, when basic membership dues were offered at \$12 per year, and you had to be a member to purchase Software Exchange programs, even though the programs were supposedly in the public domain.

Commercial or not, during the early years the IUG did serve as an excellent source of products and information for the fledgling 99/4 community. At the time of the IUG's incorporation, there were less than 2,000 TI-99/4 owners, many no doubt, first time computer users. So help in any form was probably better than none at all. Through the IUG's newsletter, which was published every other month, Charles LaFara delivered fairly timely product news, reviews, an editorial or two and other information that generally proved to be interesting to the 99/4 hobbyist. Each newsletter averaged about 8 pages and now, in looking back, seems to have contained some of the best documentation of our computer's history that there is to be found anywhere.

The IUG's Software Exchange Library, which started out as I mentioned, with less than a dozen programs, ultimately grew to be one of the most extensive in existence at the time, containing some 2000 Basic, Extended Basic and Logo programs. The librarian for the IUG Exchange program was the late Dr. Guy Steffen-Romano of Amnion Helpline notoriety.

Under the original Software Exchange Program, a two-for-one exchange rate was offered or users could purchase a program for \$2.50 each. In February 1981 the exchange rate became four-to-one with program costs remaining at \$2.50. In May 1982, when annual membership dues were first levied, the cost per program rose to \$3.00 each. Submissions were required to be on cassette or disk,

but purchases of programs could be obtained in cassette, disk or hardcopy format.

Beginning on May 1, 1982, membership in the IUG was offered at \$12 per year for Regular status or \$50 per year for the President's Club status. The \$12 fee lasted until August 1983 when it went to \$16 per year. Regular membership guaranteed discounted prices on all TI products, the IUG newsletter, catalogs, call-in information and referral services, Software Exchange Library useage and new product bulletins.

President's Club membership gave the user all of the privileges afforded to Regular members, plus it added substantial discounts on 99/4 products. As an example, the Extended Basic module sold for \$99.95 at retail dealers back then. Regular IUG members could purchase it for \$80.00. President's Club members got it for \$71.65 though. LaFara had it figured out that if a member intended to purchase \$150 or more in hardware or software products during the year, the President's Club was the way to go.

As membership grew the IUG Newsletter was discontinued in favor of a full fledged magazine titled Enthusiast 99 (despite the fact that Gary Kaplan had been publishing 99er Magazine for some two years already). During its life, the IUG Newsletter was published twice in 1980 (V1/N1 and V1/N2), eight times in 1981 (V1/N3-V1/N8), six times in 1982 (V2/N1-V2/N6) and two times in 1983 (V3/N1 and V3/N2).

In its shorter though perhaps more glamorous life, Enthusiast 99 was able to attract authors the likes of John Phillips, Cheryl REGENA Whitelaw and Bill Gronos (of Hidden Powers of Disk Fixer fame) at one time or another. But the majority of the articles were written by LaFara or members of the IUG "staff". Enthusiast 99 does have the distinction of being the only publication (that I have ever found) to print a photo of the never-released Choplifter game module written for the 99/4A. It's on page 47 of the Sep 1983 issue. If you are a trivia buff like me, or a collector, you will want to know that Enthusiast 99 issues exist for May 1983 (V1N1), Jul 1983 (V1N2), Sep 1983 (V1N3), Nov 1983 (V1N4), Jan 1984 (V2N1), Mar 1984 (V2N2) and May/Jun 1984 (V2N3).

The IUG lasted from September 1980 until May 1985 when it folded under bankruptcy. At the height of its glory, the IUG claimed over 50,000 members around the world, in some 51 countries. According to Ron Albright, writing in "The Orphan Chronicles", the IUG was the victim of a loss of credibility in the TI Community for trying to defend an imaginary copyright over its library of public domain programs. Albright also alludes to the IUG's propensity to promote an image of self-importance and "insider" status with Texas Instruments (that apparently did not exist), which by inference might extend to Charles LaFara too. Perhaps the best evidence of this can be seen in the February 1983 IUG Newsletter, page 5, where the reader is treated to a photo of Charles LaFara lighting Bill Cosby's cigar. The photo has nothing to do with anything in the newsletter, it simply smacks of "power in association" or self-agrandisement,

reinforcing Albright's claims.

On the other side of the coin, one can never accuse Charles LaFara of being TI's lackey. After reading through the entire set of IUG Newsletters and the seven issues of Enthusiast 99, I found him to be quite opinionated about things that TI was doing in the 99/4 and 4A marketplace. As early as December 1980 LaFara was criticizing TI produced software that performed poorly such as their Mail List Manager. He was also probably the first of many to cry foul when TI forced the absurd "MunchMan Plan" on 99ers (Jan-May 1982), requiring that they purchase any four of the existing TI produced command modules, or any one of the software albums (the Value Packs) in order to get MunchMan. You couldn't buy it anywhere. If you wanted the new game, you had to play TI's game and go through an intricate proof of purchase routine and then mail off your order to TI. In February 1983 LaFara again blasted TI for the Plato series, screaming that the entire system was sub-standard, overpriced and would probably not be delivered on time anyway. He even went so far as to label TI's dependability on delivering products by the announced deadline a "joke".

My first and only contact with the IUG occurred in September 1984 when I sent them a check for \$14.95 to purchase a copy of Data Base 300 from their Master 99 Series. To my complete surprise, I actually received it, the last week of February, 1985. Not a bad turn around time, huh? Even though Data Base 300 turned out to be a bust, I thought that the Master 99 loader designed by LaFara, with its marquee-like moving and flashing graphics was worth the wait.

Whether one has positive, negative or no opinions about the IUG, it certainly carved out a place for itself in TI-99 history. Besides claiming over 50,000 members in its hey-day, the IUG also supposedly employed 24 people at one time and took in as much as \$2,000 a day in orders. That's not too bad for a cottage industry.

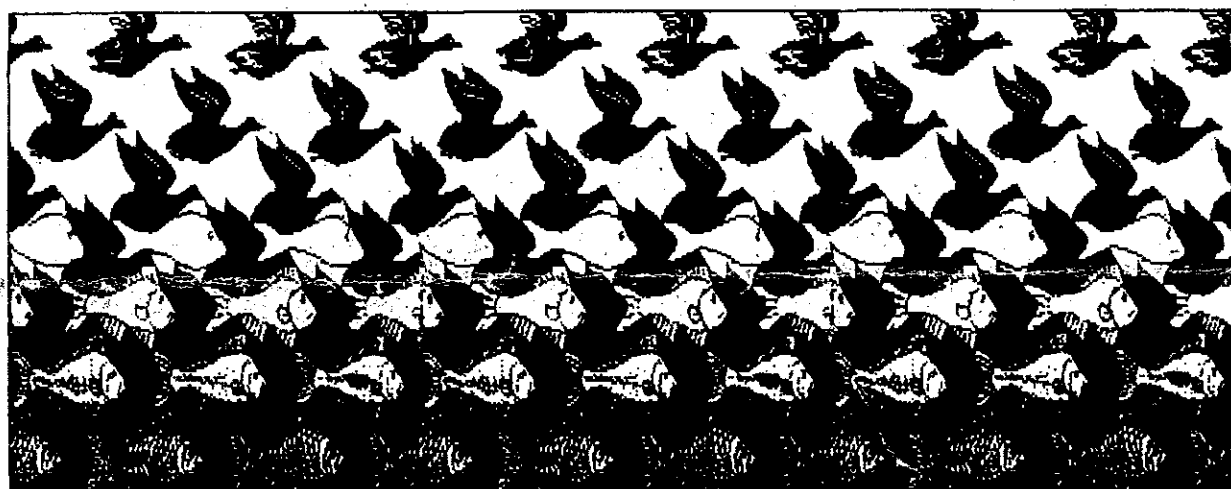
January 1, 1990

Stretching Your Graphic Horizons

BY STEVE FUNKHOUSER



TI-Artist Plus! (\$24.95 by Chris Faherty) continues to deliver the capabilities that capture my attention and stimulate my imagination. I discover new ways of presenting graphics with each session I spend with it. Today I am sharing a combination of software capabilities and a unique graphic known as BRDS2FSHS (Birds to Fishes from the drawing by Echer). The following example was created by printing the graphic three times across the page using the "Scrunch" option.



The second example has used the Vector option "A" to pinch the opposite ends of panel #1 and panel #2.



These examples demonstrate a key principle about graphics: think small. Full sized printing of these graphics reveal a coarser resolution reducing the appeal of the picture. The ability of TI-Artist Plus! to print three pictures across produces high density graphics by compression of space. That's all for now. Remember a picture of a thousand words is worth the first footstep.

USE THIS TO WRITE LETTERS

If you write a lot of letters, or even just a few and you have TI-Writer or one of the clones, the following file may help you. Simply type in the file as you see it listed here and then save it to disk. Any time you want to write a letter just load in the file and you'll be able to write nice neat and properly spaced letters every time.

You will need to customize this file with your address and make any other changes to conform to your style, but this is the suggested format. On the style shown here, we have also included footer and header commands which you might want to include if you are writing long letters or instructions that require more than one page. If you don't want them for your average letter, simply delete lines 0001 and 00038 that include the .HE and .FO.

Once you have customized your file and saved it, simply load it into the editor whenever you want to write a letter. On lines 0011 you need to over-write the correct date and on lines 0013, 0014, 0015, and 0016 you will put in the name and address of who you are writing to. Your greeting on line 0018 and your salutation on line 0026 can be in standard form or you can change it as you like. You can then write your letter adding lines or eliminating lines depending on the length. If your entire letter requires more than 58 lines it will automatically use another page.

Don't forget to save your letter after writing it. A handy file name would be the last name of the person your writting.

The format of the headings etc., are taken from the accepted standards used today. With a little experience "LETTERFILE" will find many uses.

```
0001 .HE .....Your Name %
0002 .LM 43;RM 72;FI;PL 58
0003 .SP 2
0004 Your Name Here
0005 Your Address
0006 Your City and State
0007 Your ZIP code
0008 .SP 2
0009 Your telephone number (optional)
0010 .SP 2
0011 Date xxxxx, 1990
0012 .SP 2;LM 8
0013 To Name
0014 To Address
0015 To City and State
0016 To Zip code
0017 .SP 2
0018 Greetings,
0019 .SP 2;IN +5
0020 Start your letter here-----
0021
0022
0023
0024 End your letter here-----
0025 .SP 2;LM 43
0026 Your salutation
0027 .SP 5
0028 Your Name
0029 .FO .....Your Name %
0030
```

AWARDS

opinion by

Bill Gaskill

In the six years that I have been a 99er I've come across alot of reading material, bought a few pieces of hardware and RUN hundreds, if not thousands, of programs through the old TMS9900 CPU. In the many TI-99 books, journals, magazines and newsletters that I have read along the way, I have seen some mundane articles, some really good articles, some great articles and then a few that are of stellar quality. The same can be said of the hardware and software that I own. Of course each of us develops an opinion about these things, and what follows are just my opinions.

It seems to me that those folks who take the time to provide the articles and other information for newsletters etcetera and who take the time to support the TI Community with products to make our computers more useful, deserve some recognition. As such, I have decided to create a series of AWARDS for those firms, groups and persons who deserve recognition for their efforts. Of course my opinions are just that, opinions, and they only apply to the hardware, information and software that I own or have come into contact with. To the rest of you who write great material for newsletters that I don't receive, and to those who have created hardware and/or software products that I haven't gotten around to purchasing yet, my hat is off to you and I apologize for not being able to include your material and products in this "editorial". To those whom I have lauded, please bask in the warmth of the praise. You deserve it. To those whom I seem to have criticized, just consider the source and shake it off. What do I know, anyway?

ARTICLE OF THE YEAR (1989) AWARD goes to Mike Maksimik of the Chicago TI Users Group for his TechTalk article in the January 1989 Chicago Times. Mike covers his PDOS software project at the tail end of this article, but the first half contains some of the best information captured in one place, anywhere, on the P-BOX cards that were planned and/or prototyped for the 99/4A but never materialized as products available to users. Fantastic documentation on an important part of TI-99 history.

BEST ALL-AROUND NEWSLETTER AWARD goes to the Mid-South 99ers. If there were only one newsletter that I could receive, this is the one that I would choose. Pound-for-pound, year after year, since 1982, the Mid-South Tidbits newsletter contains more "quality" information in a consistently and professionally presented format, than any other newsletter I have seen. Gary Cox and the others who contribute to this publication deserve a round of applause and a heartfelt thanks for all that he and they have done. It is the one that I look forward to receiving most each month.

BEST ARTICLE EVER AWARD goes to Anne Dhein for her series of TI-Graphics articles that covered using Transliterations to produce graphics through TI-Writer and with TI-Artist and that also covered the history of 99/4 and 4A graphics/artist type programs. While these

articles appeared in many newsletters via exchange programs, Anne's "Home" Group is the Chicago TI Users Group. The articles appear in the August-December 1987 issues of the Chicago Times. Thanks Anne!

BEST COMPLETED PROJECT AWARD goes to Nick Iacovelli for making the Hardware Projects Book offered by the Chicago TI Users Group a reality.

BEST COORDINATED EFFORT AWARD goes to Barry Traver for producing the Genial Traveler Diskazines. They may not be timely, but every one is worth the wait.

BEST DOCUMENTATION FOR A PIECE OF SOFTWARE AWARD goes to Chuck Davis, Kay Davis and Pamela Sourbier for the manual sold with ACORN 99.

BEST EDITORIALS AWARD goes to Terrie Masters of the LA 99ers. Though Terrie throws in an occasional barb or two in her monthly columns, she puts a lot of good information out and has been a strong and vocal supporter of the TI Community from back in the days when Don Vieth was producing the National 99er Newsletter.

BEST EFFORT AWARD in producing a newsletter under adverse circumstances is shared by Joe Nuvolini, Kevin Kapus and Cliff Swank of the Front Range 99ers in Colorado Springs. How they "kept them coming" over the last three years was sometimes a wonder, but to their credit, they did. Never say die is their motto, I guess.

BEST FAIRWARE PRODUCT AWARD is split between Bill Warren for PR-Base and Charles Earl for TELCO. Two truly superior pieces of software that really should have been commercial releases in my opinion.

BEST NEW HARDWARE PRODUCT AWARD goes to Myarc for the Hard and Floppy Disk Controller Card.

BEST ONE-MAN SHOW AWARD goes to Ollie Hebert for all that he has done for the SMAUG 99ers in Alabama.

BEST USER NOTES/TIPS ARTICLE AWARD goes to the Southern California Computer Group for their Hints, Tips and Answers column that appears as a semi-regular feature.

BIGGEST COMMERCIAL SOFTWARE SUCCESS AWARD (for a third-party product) goes to Chris Faherty of Insebot Inc., for creating TI-Artist. There are probably more copies of that one program in the TI Community than any other.

BIGGEST DISAPPOINTMENT AWARD goes to Broderbund Software for their decision not to produce Choplifter and David's Midnight Magic for the 99/4A.

LONGEST RUNNING TUTORIALS AWARD goes to Earl Raguse for his TI Forth articles in the LA Topics. I think there are over 16 of them now and still coming. Running a close second is Lutz Winkler for his series in The Computer Voice newsletter of the SCCG in San Diego.

LONGEST RUNNING USER GROUP goes to the TIHUG guys and gals in Houston, who were among the first User Groups to form, that are still in existence today. The Chicago TI Users Group comes in a close second.

MOST CONFUSING ARTICLE AWARD goes to Nick Iacovelli of the Chicago TI Users Group for almost any article that he wrote. I'm sorry, Nick. I know that sounds like a shot, but boy did I struggle through your material. You and I don't operate on the same thought plane.

MOST CONFUSING DOCUMENTATION FOR A PIECE OF SOFTWARE AWARD goes to me, for the manual sold with Personal Auditor.

MOST CREATIVE ARTICLE NAMES AWARD goes to Steve Mehr, who belongs to more groups than I have space to list, but who writes for the LA Topics newsletter, for his SNOW? BBBRRRRRRR! and AAARRRGGGGHHH!!! titles in past LA group newsletters.

MOST CREATIVE CONTRIBUTOR AWARD to a newsletter goes to Chick DeMarti of the LA 99ers. Chick is a long-time supporter of the TI Community, dating back to the early 80's when he and George Steffen seemed to write half the LA-South Bay 99ers newsletter.

MOST FAITH IN THE TI COMMUNITY AWARD goes to Laura Burns of MICROpendium for quitting a secure "government" job to publish MICROpendium full time.

MOST FANATICAL 99/4A TRIVIA BUFF AWARD goes to me for having a one-track mind when it comes to digging up generally useless facts about the 99/4A and the TI Community.

MOST GUTS IN A PROGRAM COORDINATOR AWARD goes to Steve Mehr of the LA 99ers for having the courage, loyalty and conviction to bring Craig Miller to a Users Group meeting in LA and to advertise the fact in MICROpendium where Harry Brashear was sure to see it.

MOST GUTS IN A VENDOR AWARD goes to Jerry Price of Tex-Comp for investing a million or more dollars in TI-99/4A products after the bailout by TI.

MOST HUMEROUS ARTICLE AWARD goes to Gene Bohot for his "Tips To Remember" article in the Pomona Valley Computer Group newsletter.

MOST IMPROVED NEWSLETTER AWARD goes to Bob Demeter, editor of the Chicago Times. Bob has done a lot to bring the Chicago newsletter back on track after some problems realized during a tremendous growth period that the group went through. Thanks, Bob!!

MOST INNOVATIVE PRODUCT AWARD goes to Dave Rose for his Character Sets and Graphics Design series.

MOST NEEDED PRODUCT AWARD goes to Dennis Faherty of Inscobot Inc., for TI-Base. What more can you say about the premier data management tool in existence in our community? Superb!!!

MOST NEEDED TUTORIAL AWARD goes to Ken Gilliland for his TPA tutorials in the Mar-Apr '89 issues of the LA Topics. The Printers Apprentice is probably a great program, but I never have figured it out.

MOST PRODUCTIVE BOOK AWARD goes to Christopher Flynn for his "Extended Basic Home Applications" book.

MOST PROFESSIONAL APPEARANCE AWARD in a newsletter goes to BJ Mathis of

the Southwest 99ers. While their newsletter is usually pretty short, about 7-8 pages each month, it is consistently produced like it came from the print shop. It is obvious to me that BJ goes to alot of effort and she also takes a great deal of pride in the end product that she produces.

MOST PROLIFIC WRITER AWARD goes to Jim Peterson, the TigerCub, for 60 or more Tips From TigerCub articles he has written over the years along with several other articles on XB Subprogramming etc. There are several in the Runner-Up class in this category, namely Dave Wakely of the Chicago TI Users Group for his many Disassembly and Spad Adventure articles, Gary Cox of the Mid-South 99ers, who has been a contributing member since his early teen years, Chick DeMarti and the late George Steffen of the LA 99ers, Martin Smoley of the NorthCoast 99ers in the Cleveland area and Joe Nuvolini of the Front Range 99ers in Colorado Springs.

MOST USEFUL BOOK AWARD goes to Cheryl Whitelaw for her "Programmer's Reference Guide".

MOST VERBOSE (the Charles Dickens) AWARD goes to Don Jones of the Chicago TI Users Group. How he can take so many words to convey the thoughts and information that he does, is truly a wonder. Don, I honestly hope to meet you in person one day. You are truly an articulate and intelligent individual with a mastery of the English language beyond the norm. Do you get paid by the word?

ONLY FULL-TIME VENDOR AWARD goes to Chris Bobbitt of Asgard Software. How he can make a living only by supporting the TI Community is a marvel.

POOREST SUPPORT AFTER THE SALE AWARD goes to Myarc for the weeks it takes them to process a repair. Sure glad I bought a backup HFDC, or I'd still have no hard disk.

STRONGEST COMMERCIAL SOFTWARE SUPPORT AWARD goes to Craig Miller for the many superior products that he produced in support of this community.

STRONGEST FAIRWARE ADVOCATE AWARD goes to John Taylor who gave us Checkbook and Budget Manager, Alphanum Delight, Sprite Editor and a host of other excellent fairware offerings.

THICKEST NEWSLETTER AWARD goes to the Chicago TI Users Group for the most consistently voluminous newsletter.

Well folks, guess I've done enough damage for one article. Easy on the letter bombs please. My wife works for the Postal Service and I wouldn't want her to get blown up by a letter that was intended for me. See ya at Fest-West. I will be wearing a bullet-proof vest.



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FR99CCPL122

FR99CC PROGRAM LIBRARY
DISK OF THE MONTH



#1001 (MY RATING (6)) "VCR DATABASE" **Freeware**. This is just what it says it is a VCR Tape Database program written by Bob Pomictier, NJ. I think this is a good program and with inputs from users and someone with some A/L programing knowledge the author could make this a excellent program for the fairware market. Ease of use- (very good) Docs.- (very good) Performance- (good) XB (SELFLOAD)

FR99CC PROGRAM LIBRARY

No.	Program Name	Type	Lng	Filename	Dsk	SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS
0798	TETRIS	GAME	X/B	TETRIS*	122	(SELFLOAD)
0999	ARGROIDS	GAME	A/L	ARGROIDS*	122	(LOAD & RUN) ARGROIDS
1000	BUZZARD BAIT	GAME	A/L	BUZZARDS*	122	(RUN PROG FILE) BUZZARD1
1001	VCR DATABASE	UTIL	X/B	VCR*	122	(SELFLOAD)

* ARCHIVED USING ARCHIVED III Ver. 3.02 DATED 8/16/88

ALSO ASK ABOUT BRUCE'S "MAD" DISK OF OLD LIBRARY PROGRAMS THIS MONTH FEATURING SOME GOOD "UTIL" PROGRAMS.

NOTE #1: This is the last month to get the games mad disk from 2 months ago. (I only offer them for 3 months. Then it's back into the deep dark library they go.)

NOTE #2 Do to major changes in tax forms from the tax programs in our library. I had to cancel last months mad "tax" disk.

NOTE #3: Last months disk of the month Disk #2 (FR99CCPL121) will be on sale again we did not have time to see the demo by Sam Donato this disk has his program on it. (see Jan 90 N/L for programs and Sam's article "WRITE A PROGRAM" [page 5 & 6])

NOTE #4: Last month I wrote that we will offer T.I.P.S. 2 disk per month over the next several months until we get it all out. Side 1 of the first disk has the docs and side 2 has the main program to run T.I.P.S. and a few utility files. The second disk is some graphics to go with the program. ALL THE REST OF THE DISK TO COME ARE FULL OF GRAPHICS. Well if you were at the meeting you know I changed things. If you were not I am getting TIPS out as fast as I can. I have a sign up sheet for S Sided/S Density and one for D sided/S Density. On these sheets every month I will let you know what disks are available. You can order as many as you can afford at a time. I will have the sheets at all the meetings. (If you are one of our mail orders let me know what type of system you have and I will send a copy of the sheet with what is available with your order)

REMEMBER TO PAY AUTHORS FOR "FAIRWARE" PROGRAMS
IT'S THE "FAIR" THING TO DO



FRONT RANGER





FR99CCPL122

FR99CC PROGRAM LIBRARY
DISK OF THE MONTH



Program Review by **BRUCE M. ALMEIDA**

MY RATING SYSTEM: (1) NO GOOD - (10) EXCELLENT

As of last month I started under the program explanation section an additional break down of my rating system. I felt that just an overall 1 to 10 rating was not only unfair to you the user but sometimes to the authors. I felt that I would use such descriptions as (Action [is there always something going on], Speed [NOT HOW FAST THE TI IS but the speed of, say your man], Graphics [how good looking, too big, too small], Docs. [does the program have them if the program is not user friendly], Ease of use [is the program easy to use, follow, or do you have to keep docs. at your side at all times], Performance [does the program do what it was made to do or is it weak], and Difficulty [used mostly in games, is it a winner every time you play or is it a challenge] I will not use each one for every program and I may add or take away from this list as I feel necessary. After all this is just my opinion and I will try to rate all programs as fair as I can. I hope that you understand that I am just trying to let our members know how useful a program could be to them.

REMEMBER YOU PAY A COPY COST OF \$2.00 PER DISK (& \$.65 Postage if necessary). This does not pay AUTHORS.

Program Explanations

Disk #1 (FR99CCPL122) COST \$2.00

These programs were downloaded by the Telecom SIG

#0998 (MY RATING (10+)) "TETRIS V1.3" **FAIRWARE**. by Alexander Hulpke from West Germany This is just like the arcade game. I was very impressed by the way it played the tune of "Parsley Sage Rosemary & Thyme" as you play the game with no decrease in the action or speed. Action-(EXCELLENT) Speed-(EXCELLENT) Graphics-(EXCELLENT) Difficulty-(EXCELLENT) X/B (SELFLOAD) DOCS. IN GERMAN ONLY

#0999 (MY RATING (9+)) "ARGROIDS" This is a game where you fly a ship and kill aliens before they get you. Action-(EXCELLENT) Speed-(very good) Graphics-(EXCELLENT) Difficulty-(EXCELLENT) A/L (LOAD & RUN) (JOYSTICK)

#1000 (MY RATING (7)) "BUZZARD BAIT" **FAIRWARE** This is a "PAC-MAN" type game. Where you stay away from buzzards. I had a little trouble getting my man to turn when I needed him to. Action-(very good) Speed-(good) Graphics-(small, good) Difficulty-(very good) A/L (RUN PROGRAM FILE) (JOYSTICK)



FRONT RANGER



FRONT FANGE 99ers COMPUTER CLUB

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