Pres. Darrell Kankel Fh.487-2361 V.F. Tommy Thompson Fh.946-6356 Sec'y.John Owen Fh.554-2844 Treas.Fhil VanNordstrand 326-1916



MAR/AFR '88

"RETURN TO FLIGHT" -FALL '88-

## SPACE CENTER

1988 MEETING DATES, APR 17. MAY 17. JUNE 21, JULY 19. AUG 16, SEPT 20 OCT 18. NOV 15. DEC 20 ( 3rd Tuesday each sonth )

ALNEW!

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Send a check for \$12 made out to P.C. Van Nordstrand to:

Phil Van Nordstrand 430 Shadow Creek Dr. Seabrook, TX. 77586

NAME:		
ITY:	STATE: ZIP:	
OME PHONE:	WORK PHONE	_

This newsletter is a monthly publication of The Johnson Space Center TI 99/5A Users Group. The JUB meets at 7:30 of the 3rd Tuesday of each month at the Silruth Recreation Center at NASA-JEC. Visitors are always welcome.

Permission to copy articles is hereby granted, provided that source is disclosed and credition is given to the author.

This newsletter and the articles contained herein do not necessarily represent the opinions of the group, the editor or any person other than the author.

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MIAMI CY (J CLASBY) RR 4 Box 156 WABASH, IN 46992

\* The election of officers was postponed until the April meeting so there is still a chance for you to volunteer and/or campaign! The nominations as shown in the Feb. newsletter are:

PRESIDENT: Darrel Kankell
VICE-PRES.: Tommy Thompson
TREASURER: Phil Van Nordstrand

SECRETARY : John Owen

(Newsletter Librarian & Editor: John Owen)

- \* The following items are planned for the April 19 meeting (in addition to the election of officers):

  1. John Burt and Dennis Dahm will show how to set up Funnelweb 4.0 menus to run different types of programs;

  2. Ken Truman has been asked to show us more about c99.

  3. Phil Van Nordstrand will describe and/or demonstrate some of the new software programs that he has acquired from the HUG library.
- \* John Owen and Phil Van are scheduled to demonstrate the capabilities of the UNITED 99/4 DATABASE at the Houston Users Group (HUG) meeting on Sunday April 10. By the way, this is a very active and well organized group and will welcome you either as a guest or as a new member at their meetings (usually the 1st Sunday of each month). Phil Van, Mike Matula and Richard Lumpkin are members of both HUG and JUG. (Richard is the HUG Newsletter Editor). Phil has an up-to-date copy of the HUG Library Catalog if anyone would like to puruse it. Unlike the JUG Disk Library, HUG lists each program separately along with a short description. (Adv.: It is free to new members).
- \* The March meeting included a demonstration of the Funnelweb DISKPATCH program to read and change disk sector information. Also shown and copies made available was a disk received from Innovative Programming that included several interesting programs:
- \* Good sources for <u>TI CONSQLES</u> and other equipment are the local flea markets and occasionally garage sales. Al Wells reports that the asking price at one flea market recently was \$25 for the consoles but some bargaining brought the price down to \$15. Al bought a practically new TI99/4 CONSQLE for John Owen for \$15.00!!! See Al Wells at the April 19 ( 3RD TUESDAY ) meeting for details.
- \* Three of the JUG members have ordered the MYARC Hard/Floppy Controller to go with the hard disk drives and power supplies previously purchased. We are waiting impatiently for Mike Matula to make delivery!! The March MICROpendium had two articles on the subject which are worth reading. We may need some help making cables, especially since each of us may want a different configuration of disk drives 1/2 height vs. full height, HD inside the PEB vs. external, etc., etc. Jim Wray (our 1987 JUG President) has offered to help anyone that gets a hard disk set it up and learn how to operate it. Thanks Jim!!

REMEMBER - NEXT MEETING 3" TUES - APL 19

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#### CHICAGO TIMES Newsletter -by John Owen

This month we are highlighting the Chicago TI Users Group's newsletter by reprinting selected articles from the "Chicago Times". This is another great TI99/4 newsletter that is available to all TI99/4 users for the cost of membership. (The last time I checked, they had over 700 members). Also included is access to their great library. For info on membership cost (and library) write to: Chicago TI Users Group

P.O. Box 578341

Chicago IL 60657 or call their Hotline 312-657-1093

To get quick info, see Bob Sweet at the next JUG meeting as he is a member of the Chicago U.G. and has all the details and Library Catalog. Dues last year were \$21 to join (included BB access, library catalog and subscription; and \$15 renewel (non-attending member).

Several members of JUG (<u>Tommy Thompson</u>, <u>Bob Sweet</u>, <u>John Bullock</u> and <u>Charley Finn</u>) have volunteered to encode some of the 1987 issues of the Chicago Times for the UNITEd 99/4 DATA BASE (UNDB). If any of the other members want to help with this project, call me or see me at the meeting. It will give you a chance to read a great newsletter!

We hope DAVE WAKELY does not mind us duplicating his effort. We have read in the CHICAGO TIMES that DAVE is "getting ready" to INDEX thier newsletter. We hope to be of assistance to him. DAVE writes some great articles (see enclosure on C-DOS).

## SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS for ENCODING NEWSLETTER "SECTIONS" in the UNITED 99/4 DATABASE (UNDB) by JOHN OWEN

Some newsletters like the Chicago Times and the LA99er Topics have regular sections in each issue written by the same author (i.e., "The Disassembly" by Dave Wakely in the Chicago Times and "TnT" by Terry Masters and Tom Freeman in the LA 99er Topics). These groups are interested in being able to identify and retrieve each series separately.

In order to "index" each of these sections, please use the "SECTION"(formerly called UGO) on the UNDB Data form (Screen) to show the newsletter section. The name of the author of the article indexed or the name of the section author will appear in the "AUTHOR" block. Since the "SECTION" block is limited to 10 characters, abbreviations may be necessary. Sometime in the future we will publish a list of the abbreviations chosen for the LA99er & Chi. Times in the UNDB-START disk.

Suggested examples are "DISASSEM." for the "Disassembly" section of the Chicago Times, (2) "LIBRARY" for the "Library" section of the Chicago Times, and (3), "DODD DESK" for "From the Desk of Mike Dodd" section of the LA99er Topics. Where necessary, we will edit the previously coded screens of those two newsletters to make them consistant.

#### UNDE NEWS -AFRIL 1988 by John Owen, JUG. TX

THE UNITED 99/4 Data Base now consists of 5 disks:

- UNDB-INFO: Contains general information in D/V80 format. Also has the Rediskit disk copier program.
- 2. UNDB-START: Contains instructions for UNDB coding plus the PRBase HELP information plus a number of screens from UNDB/1 to give a novice a feel for the coding. Copy the 10 header sectors to an initialized disk and start your own data entry!
- 3. UNDB/1 -Contains 300+ data screens.
- 4. UNDB/2 -Contains 341 data screens.
- 5. UNDB/3 -Contains 341 data screens.

New Starter Kits (UNDB-INFO & UNDB-START) have been mailed recently to 13 Users Groups as follows:

- 1. Erie 99'er User Group; Erie, PA. (Ross Caruana-Newsletter Editor
- 2. Bluegrass 99 Computer Society; Lexington KY. (Ed Powell-Sec'y)
- 3. Cedar Valley 99'er U.G.; Cedar Rapids, IA. (Gary Bishop/Jim Green)
- 4. Cin-Day User Group, Cincinnati/Dayton, OH (Jim Susco-Newsletter Editor)
- Home Computer U.G. of Orange Co., CA. (Earl Raguse)
- Lehigh 99'er Computer Group, Allentown, PA (John Geisinger)
- 7. Miami Co. Area 99-4A H.C.U.G.; Peru, IN. (Jerry Clasby-Librarian)
- 8. Ozark 79er Users Group; Springfield, MO (Mary Phillips)
- 9. QB-99'ers (Queensboro Comm. College); Bayside, NY. (Andy Becker)
- 10 The Fort's User Group(?); Fort Wayne, IN. (Tom Carson)
- 11 Tidewater User Group; Norfolk, VA (Kenneth M. Woodcock)
- 12 Suncoast 99er TI U.G.; Tampa, FL.
- (Roy Moglia) 13 A TI-99/4A user from Bevera, Italy. (Ennio Medici)

We are also going to send a Starter Kit to Australia (Hunter Valley group) They put out a good newsletter that we would like to have included in our data base.

THAND CARRED TO AUSTRALIA by GEOFF (JEFF) SHIPTON ON 4/9/88

MEMBER OF H.V. UG | 8 TEESDALE CRECENT | GEOFF WSITED |

[PH 08 293-6485] | PLYMOUTH PARK 5838 | GOTTA AUSTRALIA | HIS VISIT. | MID |

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There are about 11 other groups that we know are presently encoding their 1987 newsletters. These include the following:

1. Bayou 99 Users Group; Lake Charles, LA. (John Singleton)

Chicago Users' Group; Chicago, IL. (JUG assisting)

- \* 3. Front Ranger 99er Computer Club: Littleton, CO. (Bill Gaskill)
- + 4. Houston Users Group; Houston, TX.
   (Kim Peterson-Newsletter Editor)
- \* 5. L.A. 99ers: Los Angelos Area, CA. (Alan Whiteman/Jan Williams)
- \* 6. Jackson County 99ers, Blue Springs, MO. (Doug Gootee)
  - 7. Northcoast 99ers: Cleveland Area, OH. (Dick Alden-Librarian)
  - 8. Ryte Data: Haliburton, Ontario (Bruce Ryan)
  - 9. Southwest 99ers; Tuscon, AZ. (Ed McCullough)
  - 10 Tigercub Software; Columbus, OH. (Jim Peterson)
  - 11 West Penn 79ers; Jeanette, PA. (Chuck Strink)

Input data disks for their 1987 newsletters have been received from 7 user groups and have been included in the first three UNDB data disks.

- \* 1. <u>Cleveland Areaa; Cleveland, OH.</u> (Deanna Sheridan)
- \* 2. <u>Johnson Space Center Users Group; League City, TX.</u> (John Owen/Phil Van Nordstrand)
- \* 3. Paris 99/4A Users Group; Paris, TX. (Jerry Keisler)
- \* 4. Pittsburg Users Group; Pittsburg, PA. (Audrey Bucher)
- \* 5. So. Calif. Computer Society; San Diego, CA. San Diego TI-SIG; San Diego, CA. (Woody Wilson)
- \* 6. Southern Nevada Users Group; Las Vegas, NV. (Cindy Mitchell/Robert Bieber-Treas.)
- \* 7. West Jax 99ers: Orange Park, FL. (Rick Felzien)

\*NOTE: The asterisk in front of the name indicates that organization has been sent all of the five UNDB disks. Their library should be a good source for the disks for individuals wishing to use the data base. JUG does not have the facility or manpower to distribute disks directly to the entire TI community.

As you can see, the UNDB project is growing and we are receiving reguests for Starter Kits every week. If your User Group wants to be a part of the "world-wide" effort to index (with narrative) all the "good stuff" that has been published in your newsletters in 1987 (and other years), send \$1. now for a Starter Kit. (5)

We expect to publish data disks 4 & 5 in May & June, 1986, depending on how soon we receive inputs from those user groups that are participating.

THE "UNDB" IS GROWING!!! WHEN ALL 25 UG'S THAT ARE NOW INCODING THIER 1987 NEWSLETTER SEND US THIER INPUTS. THE "UNDB" WILL HAVE ABOUT 3 MCRE DISKS. NOW IS THE TIME TO BECOME A PART OF THIS "UNITING 99/4 DATA BASE" EFFORT!! DON'T LET YOUR USERS GROUP MISS OUT ON THIS "UNIQUE" OPPORTUNITY TO GET ACCESS TO A DATA BASE THAT WILL EVENTUALLY HAVE "EVERYTHING YOU WANT TO LOOK UP AND FIND" FOR THE TI99/4 COMMPUTER. FIND SOMEONE IN YOUR USERS GROUP THAT WANTS TO LEARN ABOUT DATA BASES AND ASK THEM TO SEND JUG \$1.00 FOR A "UNDB STARTER KIT"!!! THE ONLY WAY TO LEARN IS BY DOING. EVERONE THAT HAS A COMPUTER NEEDS TO LEARN HOW TO USE A DATA BASE. THE "UNDB" STARTER KIT MAKES LEARNING PR-BASE EASY!!! THE "STARTER KIT "( 2 DISK; FOR \$1.00 ) IS A STEAL!!! (WE WILL HAVE TO CHARGE \$2.00 AT A LATER DATE IN ORDER TO BREAK EVEN—ACT NOW!!)

Fren.

## BLUEGRASS 99 COMPUTER SOCIETY. INC -APL'88

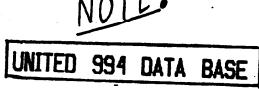
### DM1000 VERSION 4 0

At the April meeting Bill Settles will demonstrate Disk Manager 1000 version 4. U. DM1000 is one of the most widely used disk managers for the TI-99/4A computer. This program has gone through several versions, each an improvement with additional features. The program is fairware and will be available at the meeting on disk. Contributions to the authors should be addressed to:

BRUCE CARON / RALPH ROMANS OTTAWA TI-99/4 USERS GROUP P.O. BOX 2144 STATION D OTTAWA ONTARIO CAMADA KIP SW3

## ASSEMBLY AND SUPERCART

The April meeting will also feature Lee Wilkerson with a demonstration of an assembly language program and the use of an Editor Assembler Supercartridge. Lee has spent many hours mapping the console memory and in analysis of various assembly routines. This will be an opportunity to explore some of the inner workings of the TI, even if you do not understand Assembly language.



€ ..

The United 99/4 Data Base (UMDB) is an effort originated by the Johnson Space Center User Group to catalog newsletters of TI users groups. The information in the newsletters is first entered using PR-BASE v2.0. Once cataloged, the files may be used to INDEX (selective), GLOBAL (search), FIND (search), USE (search), OPTIONS (select), or CONTROL (printer codes). Information may also be printed in five different report formats. User groups wishing to join the UMDB can receive a United 99/4 Data Base Starter Kit by sending \$1.00 to:

JUG TI-99 USERS GROUP JOHN OMEN 2321 CORYELL ST. LEAGUE CITY, TX 77573

The BLUEGRASS 99 COMPUTER SOCIETY has received the starter kit, and if you are interested in helping with the indexing of the BYTEMONGER, please contact Wes Richardson.

NOTE: DOUG GOTES IS (
THE #1 EXPERT ON James D. Gootee

CONVERTING ANY DATA

BASE/FILE TO PR-BASE

1800 NW 4th Street Terrace Court Blue Springs, Missouri . 64015

March 26, 1988

John Owen c/o JSC Users Group 2321 Coryell Street League City, Texas 77573

Dear John:

In Phil's letter (January 29) the comment was made that you hoped that I hadn't given up hope of hearing from you. The same feeling exists for me...I hope you haven't given up on us!! The Jackson County 99ers are working on the 86 and 87 volumes of our newsletter. I have personally encoded January through April of 87. Our January meeting was only sparsely attended, so it wasn't until last month that I was able to demonstrate the system to the membership of the group.

I passed out diskettes at the meeting that already had the database definition recorded, and asked each person present to encode two months worth of newsletters. I plan to condense the information down into a single diskette for each year. That way you can more easily combine it into the larger database.

Our group has decided that this system will also work well for our library of programs. I believe that you have hit on just the method for seeing what is available for the TI machine. I should have the 1987 diskette completed for you by mid-April. The group meets tomorrow (Palm Sunday) and I should get all of the information then for the 87 editions.

One of our members is also the President of the Mid-America 99 Users Group. Arnie Simpson would like to get some information about your program so that his group can also participate. The address is:

Mid-America 99 Users Group 8726 Marty Lane Overland Park, KS 66212 c/o Arnie Simpson, President D NE WILL SEND D ARNIE A STARTER KIT. John

If there is anything else I can help you with, or if you just want to call me, my work number is: (816) 251-4844 and my home number is (816) 228-9368.

l am excited about the project you have undertaken. It is definitely something that the Ti world needs!

(\* PAIL VAN NORDSTRAND) (7) Singerely yourg,

PR-BASE (UNDB)

"TIPS FOR BEGINNERS"
-BY FRANK N. ZIC

Here we go together-NO.10. Much controversy surrounds the merits of the PRBASE program written by William Warren. Part of the dilemma stems from problems found when trying to load the program or print out the data. I have concluded that-most of these problems don't exist when using an unaltered copy of the original program, provided you follow the instructions. But, still you say, I as Having trouble with it. Hell, it seems that there are a number of altered copies floating around that are not correct or complete. So let's first of all begin with the most recent Ver 2.0. This program allows for use of double sided disks. It should contain files named PRBUTL/BAS and PRBUTL/BOC. On the modified morking copy that I have, I added a Call Key program that is a loader for the Utility program. The load program was found in the Dec 1986 issue of BYTE-LIME.

Now let's start separating the apples from the oranges. First, let's give due credit to Hr. Harron for his acvel approach to a long standing and difficult problem, that of authoring a really good Bata Base program. He has indeed done this and core. The program is functional, versatile and fast/written in assembly language). It is written in a very unique manner that places all the header files in just the first ten sectors, thus leaving the rest of the sectors open for our data storage. Beta disks developed in this manner can not be read using the Bisk Hanager cartridge, so mark then carefully. Then too, the sorting ability of the program is outstanding, recognizing both upper and lower case characters.

By purpose in writting this article is, to give some hints on how we can all better lead and use this program. So, first print out and read the SOCS(PRIMSE and Stilities) included on the disk, several times and you're ready to experiment with, perhaps the best Beta Base program written for the TI computer. An important new proposal has just been announced that would seen to add great importance to the value of the PROMSE program. A proup called the Johnson Space Conter Spars Grann in Texas have alses to start a nationwide now article reference publication. They would catalog four from nous letter articles thus providing as with a quick reference to previously written articles. With this listing, you could find inforaction on just about any subject, just so long as it was published in a participating ther's group newsletter. They will start with listings for January 1987. Both our POS and MEST Peen 99'ers will be included in the first 30 erouse represented. Arm't we lucky to have forward thinking officers in both our user,'s clubs? The Texas group has already sent out a sample disk of instructions along with a printed exhibit of how they would like the inferention prepared. They are asking that everyone that paticipates

should use the PRBASE as the standard. I must at this point give credit to Jerry Petrulak for his help in making a working copy of the program available to the officers of our clubs.

Continuing, first use the Create portion of the program to ant up your desired format, it offers plenty of flexibility provided you stay within the parameters set forth in the documentation. Once you have made up the format desired, this section is not needed again until you went to make up a different format for your next project. A printed copy of your arrangement is made by using FCTN-6. Note here that the hard copy will be shown twice. The first print out will have numbered Rous and Columns. The second will have the same numbered designations and also a (+) in all the non-used areas. This clever layout will help you should you want to mostly this same format, or for a variation of it in your next layest. It should also be noted that any fancy border that you designed will appear with Actority in place of the fancy berder you created. The data section allows you to insert all your important records, in areas called fields (32 mex). While is this mode you can edit to your hearts content, using up to a maximum of 255 characters. So that this article is not too long, I'll give some short hints: (1) Name all Beta dists PROMOE(important); (2) Calling up the initial data file is done by inserting the No.1 after DEK and replacing the (.) with a (?). Subsequent files are called up by simply depressing the enter key; (3) Using a Super Estanded Desic cartridge doesn't lood the Utility program mince the space bar is used to by-pass the nernel load feature on a disk; (4) There is as continuous grace or gave function (FCTH S or 3). Release and press the keys for each neve desired. In this cese, this restriction, looks like a good limiting condition; (5) To lood the Utility portion of the disk, when the main computer title across first cases on with No.1 Besic and No.2 Extended Besic, hald down the space bar <u>before</u> preceing No.2 and continue holding it down until you see the Utility screen come up. Check the listings presented for the functions they can provides (6) All program loadings are in 13s (7) The letter II is used to bring up the HELP screen, CHIMME SERMARY. Then selecting a Command Sytiam, press the desired key twice. The first press selects and the second press executes the commend. Sive the program a try, it is very good. If there is any interest expressed, I could have a class on using the PROME program. Let us know.

Well, I guess I've covered about as such as I should at one time. So once again let me give congratulations to Millian Marron for his fine work that should grow in stature as it is used sore and better understood. Matil next time say the good 4's be with you. NOTES FROM WOODY'S DESK

I had a wonderful time at the Las Vegas XPO. I brought back so many programs that I still have not had the time to learn them all. Ray Kazmer presented me with a disk that really impresses me... 2693 sectors of programs compressed and archived so that it catalogs as 1439 sectors used! The new Archiver Vn. 2.4 is excellent. I have to make myself a note to send in the fairware payment...

In November 1987 we published a conversion program for converting TI-Artist instances to a DV/80 format so that they could be used in TI-WRITER. One fault I find with the program is that it does not signal you when it is finished. I like to be doing something besides looking at a unchanging screen for many minutes. So here is my solution: Change the last line of the program (the line with "END") as follows:

650 FOR X=1 TO 10 :: FOR L=0 TO 30 STEP 2 :: CALL SOUND( -50,700,L,2100,L,4200,L) :: NEXT L :: NEXT X :: END

Now when the program finishes, it will ring a bell 10 times. You can change the X=1 to 10 to any value that you want. Just be sure the volume on your TV or monitor is turned up so you can hear it.

Those of you with the Super X Basic could simplify this by using the chime feature of the module. This method, however, will work for anyone.

JOHN MOYTA CALLED MY attention to a feature of PRBASE that can cause you a slight problem if it is overlooked. When preparing your report formats, be sure to use the SPACEBAR to step from one position to another. The caret symbols must be typed over or erased by means of the spacebar. Do not just use the FCTN S or FCTN D keys to move from one position to the next. If the required spaces do not appear between the items in your header, the report will not print properly.

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AS THIS ISSUE OF THE NEWSLETTER was being written, two disks with material about "The United 99/4 Data Base" came from John Owen of the Johnson Space Center Users Group. We, of the TISIG (and the SCCG; are participating in the project of indexing all of our newsletters and including them in the Data Base.

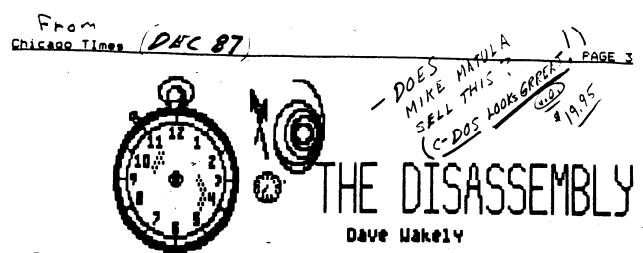
The new disks are named "UNDB-INFO" and "UNDB-START". Due to the tight publication schedule of this issue of our own newsletter, we will be unable to give a full report on the contents of these two disks. I have had time to scan the disks and find that they contain a lot of useful information that will be of value in preparing future indices for submission to the JUG.TX group. In addition, some of the information will be most helpful to anyone using PR-BASE.

There are now three single-sided disks full of data (more than 1000 screens). These disks will be placed in our group library when received. I would like to see each member with copies of ALL of the issued disks. Further, JUG is asking for assistance in indexing various publications, such as MICROpendium, Smart Programmer, TIPS, Short Programs, Computer Shopper, Home Computer, Ryte Data, etc. Volunteers for this project will be most welcome. Get the disks from the group library and go to it! (Let your User Group officers know about your participation.)

Let me put in a few remarks of my own at this point. First, to participate in this project you must have a disk drive. Second, while you can initialize a disk for PR-BASE using a regular disk manager you can NOT read the disk with such a manager. You MUST use the program named "PR-BASE VER. 2.0". ALWAYS label your disks "PR-BASE" so that it you accidentally try to catalog it with a disk manager. You won't think it is a Diank disk. The program "REDISKIT" WILL work and makes fine copies of PR-BASE disks. In fact, it you copy with "REDISKIT", you do not have to worry about initializing the copy disk since "REDISKIT" does that for you. Third, always keep a write protect tab on your master disk. It is so terribly easy to wipe out any disk and PR-BASE is no exception!

Roland Anderson and I found out the hard way that it pays to keep a back-up copy of the DATA disk that you are currently using. I wiped out a master disk!

There is one thing about this project that I feel should be emphasized. DO SEND YOUR fairware contribution to William Warren. You can obtain PRBASE Version 2.0 (which is the issue that is to be used, NOT 2.01) from our library or your friends, but that does not relieve you of the responsibility of paying for it. I fear that too often some people think that the act of obtaining a disk from a group library obviates the necessity of reimbursing the authors of the fairware programs on the disk. If you USE it, PAY for it.



Endings Beginnings; DOSing; Other Things:

To us, December marks more than just the end of the calendar year. For Chicago II-99/4A users it also means that the Faire is over and the elections have been held. 1987 will be the year of <a href="Mank Ellermann">Mank Ellermann</a> as President of our group, and we will all continue to somehow survive orphanhood for another year. The meetings will go on, the library will expand, and your computer will continue to do the things you ask it to do, and parhaps even some things you didn't expect it was capable of doing.

NEXT: Although it is usually in this column that it is possible to learn what will transpire at the next meeting, I currently have no direct access to this information. One of my more recent responsibilities with the group which I managed to shed was a place on the the committee which schedules the events at the meetings. Someone else can take the heat for awhile. Mopefully that information is contained somewhere in these pages.

BE A DOS BOSS: Every year it seems that I find at least one program at the Faire which impresses me as making some sort of significant contribution to the world of II computing. It is hardly my judgement which renders the program significant, but more often something which others have also found important. This year I want to the Faire looking for "MA DOS", a program from Ryte Data which was reviewed in MICROpendium in June of this year.

What had intriguiged me about this program was its promise of direct control at the system level of some important functions. Those of you who have used an IBM or compatible are probably familiar with the concept of an operating system. What this means is that when the computer is booted up under DOS it goes to a system prompt and then waits for some action from the operator. It is from here that many useful functions such as initializing a disk or copying files can be done. The Basic language can be loaded and applications run in Basic, or programs written in Assashing or other languages can be run directly if they were written in a form which DOS recognizes.

IT users, of course, here traditionally had only the Start-up many to choose from. If no cartridges have been installed, then the only choice may be IT Basic (this used to be universally true, but the advent of various cards, GRAM, GRAM KRACKER, RAM disk, etc. has changed that). Where a prompt did occur was in TI Basic or Extended Basic, where there are certain functions which could be done or Basic programs run which could do them: But there were many other functions which simply could not be done in Basic.

When II Assembly language came along, there were more system-like functions which could be performed, such as initializing a disk, etc.,

without the need for a cartridge. Up to now, the Funlwriter environent has probably been the most used program for these system-level operations.

My first surprise on arriving at the Ryte Data table at the Faire was that there was no "4/A DOS". What they had was "COMMAND DOS". I guess they either feared copywrite infringement threats from II, or figured that this name made a better pun (COMMANDOS, get it?). The original list price was \$19.95, although you may be able to find it for less. For what it does, it's a bargain.

COMMAND DOS requires a Super Cart or other device which has RAM at >6000. This allows it to operate without disturbing the usual environment of the computer, and for <u>C DOS</u> to be reentrant under many conditions (meaning you can get back to it without having to reload it). There is a loader provided to get it into memory, and if the device is battery-backed, it will also stay there between sessions on the computer. Once loaded, the name "COMMAND DOS" shows up on the Start-up menu.

It seems clear that COMMAND DOS was designed to appear similar to the MS-DOS of the IBM world. The user is presented with a prompt and a cursor which permits entering a variety of commands. Roughly speaking, these can be divided into "internal" and "external" commands.

Internal commands are those which are resident to C DOS and which execute immediately. Some of them are: DIR (gives a directory of disks; TYPE (will print a DIS/VAR or DIS/FIXED file of any record length to the screen); PRINT (will print such files to the printer); COPY; DELETE; CLS (Basic's CALL CLEAR), etc. Some were pleasant surprises. For example, REF, which lists all entries in the REF/DEF table; and SETPRINT, which allows changing the name to be used by the print command. This is especially handy if you have a serial printer, since the default is PIO.

External commands will execute after the appropriate code is loaded in from disk. Some of these arm: CHKDSK (will check the sectors on a disk for errors); DISKCOPY (sector back up of a disk); FORMAT (several formats are available depending on hardware); and EDIT40, which loads in the II Writer editor. Even better, when you leave II Writer you are returned to C DOS.

The division into internal and external commands is also exactly what goes on in MS-DOS. There are many more functions I haven't mentioned, and these alone would make C DOS worthwhile, but C DOS also does batch files.

For the uninitiated, a <u>batch file is a "list" of commands</u>, usually built with a text editor, which execute one after the other, sutomatically. Some MS-DOS users have dozens of batch files which perform a variety of functions. Now II users can have them too.

The "syntax" of batch files and the related commands are covered in about two pages in the manual (more on THAT later), and there are some significant differences from IBM batch files. For example, C DOS has no labels and no gotos, but does have an ONKEY, which permits a single key input into a batch file, permitting branching. Also, more than one command can appear on a line, and batch files can call other batch files, and can even reload themselves! About five minutes after reading what was available and looking at the sample batch file included, I was able to come up with the following as an exercise:

```
CLS
ECXO OFF
SETPRINT RS232/1.BA=2400.DA=8
UER
REM
REM II Sustam Menu
REM 1) Current Printer Info
REM 2) DIR DSK1.
REM 3) DIR DSK2.
REM 4) Kelp Info
REM 5) Return to DOS
REM
ONKEY 1,2,3,4,5
REM
P? WAIT BATCH TEST-BAT
DIR DSK1. WAIT BATCH TEST-BAT
DIR DSK2. WAIT BATCH TEST-BAT
MORE ON HELP WAIT BATCH TEST-BAT
ECHO ON
```

And that code produces the following screen (and executes the following functions):

Command DOS Version 1.0 (C) 1987 Month Schmidt

#### II System Menu

- 1) Current Printer Info
- 2) DIR DSK1.
- 3) DIR DSK2.
- 4) Help info
- 5) Return to DOS

To complete the comparison with MS-DOS, this file, if named "AUTO-BAT" will execute on choosing  $\underline{\text{COWMND DOS}}$  from the main menu, much as an AUTOEXEC.BAT file does from an MS-DOS boot.

There are other limitations and problems with COMMAND DOS, not the least of which is the manual. Ryte Data comes up with some interesting programs, but can't apparently produce a decent manual for any of them. For example, the first page of my COMMAND DOS manual is missing the first two letters at the beginning of each line because of sloppy folding of the paper (which is why those two columns show up on the far right of my page 12). The text looks as though it were produced on a far-less-than-letter-quality dot matrix printer, and the amount of information is sparse. On the positive side, I have found no errors in what information is there, and I have only had to use the manual as a reference for seldom used functions on a few occasions.

All in all, the positives far outweigh the negatives, at least for me. A good counterargument can be made that this is just what some computers, such as the icon-based Macintosh, are trying to get away from. Still, if you are an IBM user, using DOS should be second nature, and the appearance of a highly similar way of interacting with a computer makes the "learning curve" for this program fairly short. (12)

In the current issue of PC magazine, one of their columnists defines the term "neatness", when applied to computer programs, as arising from the initial response of users to seeing it. As when you first boot up a program and say, "May, that's neat!" Under this definition, COMMAND DOS is neat, not to mention useful. As with their BASIC compiler, I hope we see an even better Version 2 Real Soon Now. In the meantime, this will do nicely.

SubrouTines: I'm all out of Other Things and material for this month, but note that the Spadventures have once again gotten off the ground somewhere else in this issue...

Chicago Times

#### 

PAGE 31

SS' WAL

FROM THE KANKAKEE USERS GROUP

REACHING FOR IT 0 0 0 From the North Shore 0 0 0 0 a By:- Paul

#### 4 STAR PRINT-HEAD REPAIR!-

One of the attractive features 4 of the Star Micronics Seaini series 4 printers (and also mane of the later 4 possible) is the "user replaceable" 4 print-head. As it turns out, there 4 are a couple of drambacks to this. One is the price of the print-head, 4 the last one of which I brught was, 4 in 1783, 856. The other is pretty serious, and that is the unavailate billty of replacement heads. Mhen 4 my 15% head went out, I requested a replacement from three local suppliment, and serious, and one on the mainland, and 11 4 menths later, I have yet to see one. Being in the position of needing to 4 use my printer, and at the same time 4 having to mait for the ordered part, (which at the time I figured would be at worst a week), I decided to 4 attempt a temporary patch-up. That 4 temporary fix has lasted till now 4 shows every indication of being as 4 good as now. And since the head on 4 my 10% just developed the same probable. I have gone shead, and repaired 4 in the same way, and I figured that the solution would be of use to eth-

The problem that has essured in a sy print-heads, is that the guide, a for the impact-matrix pins (that asks the "on-bits") comes loose. This guide is small (in the emp piece of red glass or corundum (ruby) that is inset flush with the front of the print-head body. The symptoms when a this happens are that the characters a printed lose their sharpness, and/or the head tends to drag the ribbon on a the paper, making a gray saudge on the paper wherever the head travels, a no-matter how you set the head for a paper thickness.

A However the gin-quide is held in a place at manufacture, it can be re- factoned in place by gluing it. It also a bit of care to do this, be- a cause no glue must be allowed to get a into the pin slot. I have found the easiest way to deal with the head is a to completely recove it from the

or proporor or dropor or or or or or or or

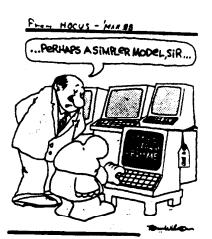
printer. Bet coefertable at a work A table, and with tweezers, a needle (or pin) and some paper towel, lift A the pin—guide out of the head. Now A wipe the guide clean of ink A dwart. It may be necessary to clear the A pin slot with the corner of a piece A of paper. Then, with the needle, a carefully clean out the recess in A the head (where the guide goes) to A get out all the inky ribbon—lint, I taking care to get the corners all I clear and taking special care MOT A TO BOO AMY OF THE PINS.

New, SENTLY place the pin-quide over the recess, precisely lining up the pin-slot with the row of impact pins. With a finger-tip press lightly downward, and wiggle the guide until the pins slip into the slot. (The quide will sort of rect on the pins until they line up and then it will "fall" into place in its recess.) The guide is seated proparly when its front is flush with the rest of the head and all of the pins are just flush with it. (The pins must not be recessed or pretrude.)

Now dip the needle in some glue and apply it to the crack around the extisde edge of the guide. <I used a plantic glue, like the kind used for acides, but openy should also work. <Crary glue is too fluid and say get on the pine. > Be sure the glue is fluid enough to go into the crack between the guide and the head, but do not allow it to get in the slot area. Let the glue dry, is re-apply until the crack is filled completely after drying. It is OK if the glue builds up a riege, as long as it doesn't get on the pins.

After thoroughly drying, use a SHARP knife with a gentle sawing action to slice the excess glue off of the face of the print-head. Be sure that the front surface is flat and flush with the impact-pins. Then reinstall the print-head in head carriage, and the printer is ready to go back on line.

LORORORORORORORORÓROROROROROROR



# library shelf

Bob Deneter

Jingle Bells, Batman smells, Robin laid an egg. Hey there, how was your Christmas, Holiday or whatever? Mine was GREAT!!! I got myself everything I wanted. Yes, everything is great. Snow in the air, mistletoe, and holly. Ah yes, Holly, sweet Holly. I was 23 when I first met Holly. But wait, I'm getting carried away here. Put me down!!!

Let's get serious. But only for a moment. First off, let me publicly congratulate Hank Ellermann, (Dandy?) Don Jones, Len Rovner and Marcy Brun on their landslide victories. Their respective positions are President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary. I know they will all do a great job. They all have such concern and love for our group.

Again on a serious note, let me make a correction. Last month I made some statements about changes in library orders. On a very realistic basis, it will be very tight trying to get volunteers to fill orders within 2 weeks. Besides our full time jobs, all 4 of us either have another part time job or go to school. Large mail order houses that employ full time people state 4-6 or 6-8 weeks for delivery. It is not fair to expect anything more from a volunteer. Please allow us an average of 6 weeks to fill your orders. It is only fair to our volunteers that work so hard and would like to enjoy their families from time to time. I know my wife wears black constantly. I'm on the computer an average of 48 hours a week. As long as she can be a widow without any real burials, it's alright by me. I love this machine and I love collecting programs.

Another apology is needed. At the Dec. meeting I reported that as of Nov. 21 I had mailed out the last of the library back orders. On Dec. 12 I found this was not true. I found about 7 orders from late Oct. that had not been processed. I want to publicly apologize to Bill Haras. Hr. Wetherill, John Thomson, Maltar Mard, Scorge Lett, and Jeff Rudolph. Somehow your orders were overlooked. Actually they were put in a bag by my wife cause I left them on the dining room table too long. Now that I have my new filing cabinet, I file everything right away. So, that shouldn't happen any more. Please accept my apology. Your orders are beings processed straight away.

Hey, has anyone seen disk 101? I have. And for \$4.00 you can too. We have a real nice collection of programs on it. One of the nicest ones is the ALIGN program. Using this program and an alignment disk you can check the head alignment of your drives. You can also use the program to check the speed of your drives or just run them while using a disk cleaner. Also included on the disk is the TI vs series. TI vs Atari, Apple and Commodore. Natch the TI logo take on all comers in SORRY ATARI, APPLE JAM and CRUMNY COMMIE. TI proves once again it's 81. I found an ELIZA program that was modified by Mike Maksimik. It's on there. You'll also find another nice WEEL OF FORTUME game. It's very nicely done. It has it's own PUZZLE file which you can modify. 2 other programs included are SHOOT OUT IN SPACE (SOS) and INOPTS by Barry Roome. XBOPTS can be modified to load any of your E/A option 5 (program image) files from Extended Besic. Like I said, the disk is full of really nice programs.

After the Dec. meeting, a ton of raving women led by Joe Podszywokom stormed the library table looking for our SENUTILS. Please let me explain that this is the Geneve Util program. I will call it by a new name, GEN/UTIL. It is in the 9640 Support library and not part of a private library. That should make your wife feel better, Bill.

OK, that squared away, how about a disk 102? If you mant it I can do it. I have a few

nice games here. Most ofthem are from the Mid-South 99er User Group. How's your math? 23 MATCHES will challenge you real good. You have 23 matches standing. Play against the computer and try subtracting matches. Whoever gets left with 1 match looses. game called BALLOON. Try to puncture the falling balloons before they fall thru the hole. The higher your score the smaller the balloons get. I liked this one. ever wanted to pilot a blimp? Well, here's your chance. BLIMP let's you fly around some skyscrapers trying to rescue people. Watch out for flying witches? And the buildings. It's really difficult to land in just the right spot. A real challenge. Very nicely done. BLIMP is on disk 102. Here's another WHEEL OF FORTUNE game. This one will let you run pre-made puzzles or have someone not playing make them up. Puzzles can be made for any of 9 catagories. TRIVIA anyone? This one is really pretty neat. It has all sorts of odd questions that challenge the mind. Danny Cox, you did a great job on this one. As stated earlier, most of these programs came from the Mid-South 99ers. Here are 2 more nice programs. MSUG-LABEL and MSUG-LIBRN. The label pgm. prints out a label that says PROPERTY OF in Emphasized mode. It then prints out your name, address, city, state, zip and phone number. It also asks for a 10 character disk name. You can alter the name and address info at line 42 I believe. HSUG-LIBRN will catalog up to 750 filenames. It then sorts them out and prints them 3 across the page. Information includes Filename, Diskname, File length and File type. No, I'm not done yet. There's 1 more program on the disk. WOODSTOCK is a Christmas present from Ray Kazmer. I did not have a copy if it before the Dec. meeting. This is by far one of the most ingenious pieces of work I have even seen. MOODSTOCK is to graphics what BERT ERNIE is to speech. Poor die Woodstock is up to his eyes in trouble again. Snoopy and Charlie Brown has gone off to Grandma's house for Christmas. But good ole Snoopy remembered to leave Woodstock a Christmas present. What happens to Woodstock while trying to retrieve his gift should never happen to anyone. You simply must see this program to believe it. It is truely

Some of the programs on disks 101 and 102 are fairware and some are not. I'm sure you will make a donation to these authors to keep them enthusiastic about writing programs for our machine. Here is a short list of authors that have programs on disks 101 and 102. Stephen Hollis wrote 23 MATCHES and BALLOON. Boug Hollis wrote BLIMP. Gerald Smith wrote MSUG-LABEL and MSUG-LIBRN. One MHEEL OF FORTUME game was written by E.B. and James Johnson. The other is by Andrew and Chris Kirmse. The TI vs programs are by Mnameka Egwuekwe. SHOOT OUT IN SPACE is by Tom Long. TRIVIA is by Danny Cox and MODOSTOCK is by the great Ray Kazmer.

I have in my possession, a flippy from Ray Kazmer. It contains several really nice programs. I haven't had a chance to go through all of them. Next month I'll be sure to review them for you. They should make 2 great additions to our growing library. I do remember his TEX-RANGER and FORESTFIRE programs. FORESTFIRE is a modified version of a program written by John Behnke. Ray also sent us his updated version of CANNONBALL

I got around to reading the docs to PICAGSO this munth. I've played with it very little. But, from what I see, it's a very well done program. Metter of fact, it's great. You can change brush sizes, texture, draw circles, boxes, lines and rays. You can even add text to you creations. Also, PICAGSO will let you use your II Artist pictures. Use the entire picture or overlay it on your creation. It has windows you can move around and a zoom mode. You can leave the drawing mode to catalog a drive or dump your picture to a printer. I will play with PICAGSO a little more and report back next month. Till then you can still get it from the Fairware library for \$2.00.

Paul Charlton has been playing (working) with his 9640. He's given the Geneve world a BIF program. We can now use graphic pictures created by the Amiga and Atari. All' of these beautiful pictures can be run on the 9640. You can even load them into My-Art. Some of the pictures are 512 pixels by 256 pixels and 256 colors. Some look lifelike. I am placing 3 new disks into the 9640 Support library. BIF2 will include version 2 of

Paul Charlton's GIF program. It is fairware. Also included on the disk will be a complete set of docs and 3 pictures. The second disk GIF/PIX1 will contain GIF pictures as will GIF/PIX2. Here is the picture list.

GIF/PIX1 will have TIGER, ODIE, MARRY, BUGS BUNNY, and AMIGA FUN. GIF/PIX2 will have GORILLA, PRETTY, MAZDA, and PIPE. All these pictures are great. Tiger, Gorilla and Pretty are among the best. Tiger is 255 sectors. Pretty is 137 sectors and Gorilla is 105. The detailing is really something.

Well I'm gonna scoot on outa here. I'll let you get back to your holiday time festivities. It's the new year now. Lets start things off right. HUG your TI tonight. HAPPY NEW YEAR everybody!!!! See you at the meeting. That's if I make it back from

P.S. Don't forget the Fairware and 9640 Support library listing is now on disk. All the current software as of Dec. 5th. is listed. Just ask your friendly librarian for the fairware list. Still only \$1.00.

## PAUL FARSTR

software December 1987-This month I am going to review two software packages which will aid your efforts in creating good Basic and Extended Basic programs. One of these is Fairwere (TI-KEYS) and the other is a commercial offering (EZ-KEYS). Both of these programs work in memory space not normally used by the computer so that you can create programs with both of systems sitting there to assist you.

TI-KEYS first; This is available from our Fairware Library or you can order it from Wes Johnston, 404 Furman Lane, Ladson, SC 29406. Wes is a high school student who is asking for only \$10.00 if you like the program and intend to use it. TI-KEYS allows the user to define 36 keys (A-Z and 0-9) along with the control key they will display up to 31 characters of text or code. A menu, activated by pressing control - will give you 5 options; (1)EDIT Keys; (2)SAVE Keys; (3)LOAD Keys; (4)TURN OFF KEYS, and; (5) RETURN TO BASIC. Entering the EDIT option you will be asked which key you wish to change. Upon pressing one of the keys (without the control kmy) you will see its present value and be allowed to modify its meaning. After you have modified the keys to fit your needs, a control - will return you to the menu and you can save this particular set of keu strokes to disk. As you can see this will allow you set up different sets of macro's (that's what they are after all) and call them up as needed. Perhaps one set can be your Basic or Extended Basic commands and another can be a set of redefined characters for a new alphabet set or

The disk comes with a nice (all be it short) set of documentation and the COMPLETE source code. This code is 13 pages long when printed out and contains liberal comment statements (something that I heartily recommend for all programs that will be read by someone other than the author) so even an assembly idiot like myself can helf understand what the code means. I recommend that the programmers in the Users Group should take a look at this package for some good innovative programming (I will have some information about programming later in this column.

(16)

The other program I am going to tell you about is EZ-KEYS by Harry Wilhelm (ASGARD Software, P.O. Box 10306, Rockville, MD 20850) with a suggested list price of (I believe) \$19.95. Like TI-KEYS, EZ-KEYS will "program" your keys with a set of "macros" to make your programming life easier. Unlike the former program EZ-KEYS will let you program up to 55 kays (all of the Control key presses plus the Function key presses of O/YQHJKL; BNM, and .. These macros may be stored, just as in II-KEYS and called up as they are needed with two differences. The first is that the macros may be up to 668 characters in length and contain all the "normal" function key presses, plus the arrow keys and the ENTER key. The second is that these macros can contain embedded macros, which call upon other macros. These macros are constructed with a Macro Editor which is called up by pressing Function S. At this point the screen will clear and any macros already defined will be shown. In order to edit (or create) a macro just press the appropriate control or function key press and the screen will clear. The macro you are defining will appear in the upper left corner with the definition appearing if a macro already exists. You then type in the macro just as you would like to use it in your program. As an example of just what you can do with a macro the program contains a macro that loads a disk directory program (complete with line numbers), runs the program to catalog the disk of your choice, and then goes back and erases the progam it just wrote and ran. This macro is a good example of just what can be done using EZ-KEYS for your programming As a point of information it is posible to create those macros using TI-Writer or FunnelWeb although the Macro Editor is easier. manufacturing your macros on your word processor you will have to run the "POKER" program on the EZ-KEYS disk in order to convert these to proper macro format. Obviously, it is possible to create a series of customized macros for your different programming needs and use these as required. The documentation is quite explicit as to how your customized programs are created and the user should have no problems following them.

EZ-KEYS has several utilities which alone make it worth your serious consideration. The one I like the most is CALL LINK("AUTO".x) where x is a number between 0 and 18. The AUTO utility will, every x minutes % value of x=0 turns this function off) saves off your program to (alternately) DSK1.BACKUP1 and DSK1.BACKUP2. This could save your life (sanity7, temper7) in case of a sudden look-up of your commole or a loss of power to the unit. Right, you're sitting there telling me "Heck Paul, I save off my program every 5 or 6 lines as a matter of course!" Sure you do, just like I do all of my programming in mechina language because assembly is too easy to bother with. The other utilities can do such things as turning EZ-KEYS off and on, a CALL LINK("COLORS" a,b,c,d,e,f) which sets all of your foreground and background colors for programming. Hacro Editor, and the special colors used in macro definitions, and CALL LINK("HILITE") which reverses the colors of the numbers and the srithmetic operators. This can be useful in debugging a new or existing program and finding out where you tuped in 0 and instead meant 0. In conclusion EZ-KEYS is a powerful programming tool worth your investment if you do a lot of programming (or want to) or just if you are worried about a power failure losing a lot of your keystrokes into that great

Many of you out there subscibe to the GENIAL TRAVELER the diskazine published by Barry Traver. This excellent "publication" comes packed with both sides of a flippie full of neat programs and other information files. This is where the ARCHIVER program first made its appearance and other great programs as well. Many of you have been waiting for the (\*\*SEE AL WALLS\*)

appearance of Volume 2 Issue 1 of the GENIAL TRAVELER and may have also noticed that Barry Traver and his son John Calvin were not in appearance at the Chicago Fairs. The reason for both of these is that Barry has had a detached rating and had to go in for laser surgery. The following is part of a message that Barry Traver left for me on Compuserve last night;

I'm also sorry that I missed Chicago (I heard it was a great fair — as usual!), but I hope that I'll be back to more normal activity again in time for the next one.

Could you do a favor for me? Could you see to it that an announcement is put in the Chicago TImes to this effect?:
Due to Barry Traver's having had emergency eye surgery for a detached retina at the end of October, publication of Volume 2, Number 1 of the Genial TRAVelER has been delayed, as well as the associated John Calvin Traver project. Reports are that the surgery was assentially successful, although his reading and computing activity by doctor's orders have been limited while healing takes place. When eyesight permits, both GT and JCT will resume normal publication, although a refund may be had instead by any subscriber who would prefer not to wait. Current price for the JCT project, incidentally, is \$24.00 for the six flippy disks, rather than \$18.00 as reported in a previous issue. Barry sends thanks to those who have remembered him with cards, phone calls, and prayers.

Those of you who have been getting the GENIAL TRAVELER know what a great buy it is and speaking for me I intend to wait for the next issue to come out. Places where you can get great programs are not easy to come by and should be cherished. Barry's magazine is a great bargain you can't afford to miss.

Now, I mentioned that I had something to say about programming so here it goes; We need some good Basic and Extended Basic programs to share amongst the II family that exists in these pages. I issue an invitation (challenge?) to send me programs that you have written. If they're short enough I'll take hardcopy but I would prefer either cassette tapes or floppy disks. All good ones will be printed and discussed within these pages, and I will assemble a disk (and cassette) that I will put into the Users Group Library. I can't promise any big prizes for good programs but between the regular library and the >300 disks I have in my own collection I'm sure that the Group can pay you back for your eforts in supplying us with good programs. They can be of any type games, utility, or whatever just as long as they are written ENTIRELY in Basic or Extended Basic. Now get out there, get one of the programs I just reviewed to help you, and start sending me those programs at; P. Farber and Associates, 7619 Uirginia Court, Willowbrook IL 60514 USA. Till then, see you next sonth.

VIDIO

## FAIRE TAPES ARE EEREI

The 5th Annual TI Faire Video Tapes are now available for \$30 for 2 Tape set.

Send check for \$39 USC to Chicago Users Group, PO Box 57834 Chicago 60657



The new year; An ounce of prevention; The last meeting; Contest time; The crystal ball; Other Things:

It is when the holidays are over and the driveway has turned to ice and going outside for anything elicits a phobic reaction that home computing gets its greatest boost. This is the time of year when people spend the most amount of time at their 99/4As. Some will be learning a new software package, perhaps something they purchased at the Faire or received for Christmas. Others will be teaching their children how to use an educational program. Still others will be programming something for their own use or to share with others via their group library. Some may even be polishing up an entry for the group programming contest. And some will be wielding a soldering iron to attempt the latest hardware modification.

This is also a good time of year to take stock of your system and attend to its needs. This certainly includes maintenance. Older TI consoles (and aren't they all old by now?) are prone to chronic problems such as lock ups when cartridges are inserted. Besides giving the GROM port connector a thorough cleaning (both upper and lower connections), when the console is apart it is a grod time to examine the insides for chips that may have partially walked themselves out of their sockets, and to examine solder joints. I have heard repeated cases of people who regularly clean the connectors, but still experience cartridge based lock ups. Many of these machines are suffering from cracked solder joints where the cartridge port interfaces with the main board. Someone could have a fairly lucrative side business fixing minor problems such as this for a reasonable fee. I know of no one in this area who is doing so, although I have heard of other TI User Groups where this is done by someone in the group.

The side port connector is also a source of problems for some, as are various cables to peripherals. For example, a few years ago I prevailed on a friend who is handy with a soldering iron to build me a cable for the side port connector so I could move the firehose plug out of the way. After several years of bending and jostling, apparently one of the pins came loose and was making intermittant contact. The result was occasional lock up which I couldn't trace. I once even took a continuity meter to the cable and it checked out okay. Only after checking everything else and then finally rechecking that cable did the problem turn up. One psychological result of this, however, is that I began to dred turning on the II, fearing a frustrating session of lock-ups. It would not have been terribly difficult to decide to hang up the II for good.

The cleaning advice that Al Stump gave one Faire back is well taken. A malfunctioning console is also a temptation not to use the machine at all, and threatens us with the loss of a member. The 99/4A and its peripherals

are actually quite well constructed compared to other units of the time. For example, Commodore 64 machines are famous for repeated failures, including a tendency to short out via static electricity from the user. I have never heard of this about an intact (console unopened) 99/4A. Perhaps the group owes it to itself to see that some type of reliable repair service is available to members. Being "on our own" certainly doesn't mean we are helpless.

I THOUGHT THAT WAS YOUR JOB!: It turns out there was a reason why there was no announcement about the last meeting in the newsletter. That was because no one knew what the beck we were doing. In a previous column I once explained the process of how the meeting presentations are arranged, and how that process occasionally goes awry. This was one of those times. It turns out that a planned printer demo had to be cancelled, and we were able to wing it fairly well and demo several things. The meeting was well-chaired by new group President Hank Ellermann. Among other things, it was announced that there will be five SIGs (Special Interest Groups) operating. They are: Pascal (Mike Maksimic); Beginners (Rich Klein); 9640 (Don Jones); II-Artist (Maybe Buzz Krantz); and Business (Len Rovner). Not all of the datails have been worked out. Watch the newsletter for specific announcements.

Bob Demeter rather belatedly (because there wasn't time to get it into the library) showed off a Christmas program that was a marvel of Extended BASIC graphics programming. The program is called "Woodstock" and concerns that "Peanuts" character's attempts to get a Christmas present from the top of Snoopy's doghouse over to his nest in the midst of a snowstorm. Suffice it to say that describing it dossn't do it justice. I believe I heard that it is on disk #102 in the library. Bob then followed this with a demo of the Geneve, specifically some loading options available with a RAM disk. In the midst of this Bob brought up the interesting finding that the Geneve has a 128K EPROM which so far apparently has nothing in it except that Swan logo which comes up when the machine is turned on. He stated that Myarc seems to have plans to eventually put the operating system in this EPROM. In the meantime, as some wise guy in the audience pointed out, Myarc is giving us the bird.

Rich Klein then followed with a demo of using the combination of a GRAM Kracker with a Horizon RAM disk and some of the unusual things which can be accomplished with this combo. It should be noted that Rich built his RD from a kit and reports that it took something like 960 solder joints to complete. Talk about steady hands.

After the demos Hank chaired a short Q and A session which quickly got to some of the problems the group BBS is having. It turns out there was a problem with the Practical Peripherals 2400 baud modem we recently added to the BBS. The company tells us that they managed to build it with a zenier diode in backwards, and this has now been corrected in our unit. If you have this modem, check with the company. Sounds like they should have had Rich Klain build it. Others apparently have problems because they are using a DAK "Smart Duck" modem. Some early versions of this modem also may have something wrong with them, while later ones work fine.

If you have been on the board recently then you are aware that it is recommended that you use <u>Archiver Version 2.3</u> for up and downloading. Several people commented that there are no does for this program on the board, and the process was explained. It turns out that once 2.3 is downloaded it needs to be first uncompressed, and then unpacked using

(20)

Version 2.11 of Archiver. The program loads from E/A option 5, or from XB with a Program Image loader. It sounds to me like if you are starting from scratch that you will need to download both Versions. I only hope that Version 2.11 isn't itself archived!

## SOFTWARE REVIEWS: Paul Farber - From CHICAGO TIMES (TRIO-PRINT WIZARD) JAN 88

January 1988-This month I would like to tell you about some products produced by TRIO+ Software (P.O. Box 115, Liscomb Iowa 50148 515-496-5455). Some of you may already know TRIO+ from their ARI CONVERT and DISK ENVELOPER I programs which convert TI Artist Instances (or Pictures that you have converted into Instances) into a transliteration file that will let you insert these Instances into your TI-Writer documents and produce custom envelopes containing a catalogue of your disk respectively.

At the Faire I purchased a copy of their offering entitled "PRINT WIZARD," a TI product that promised many of the same features as PR®NTSH®P does for the IBM. Those of you who aren't familar with either of these products don't realize what you have been missing. This lets you print out greating cards (properly done so that the inside and outside will be both upright after folding), posters, banners, and letterheads. Well, I took the program home and fired it up and, up to a point, it seemed to work fine. Unfortunetely, the part of the program that didn't work was the print routine. After some fooling around with program (Okay, I used DM-1000 to remove the Extended Basic Protection) I discovered the problem. Although written for the Epson printer it is using a later developed printer code that allows for 80 dots per inch. Most of the older Epson printers don't possess this code and can only access ESC K (60 dots per inch) or ESC L (120 dots per inch). The result of this is that (after changing the print code in the program) your printout comes out either 6 inches wide (a little small for a greating card after folding) or 12 inches wide (even tougher when your printer is using 8-1/2" wide paper).

BUT, TRIO+ is one of those rare companies who not only listen to customers comments but, when they see a problem with one of their products FIXES it. As you may have realized from one of Carole Goldsteins' comments a month or two ago, I was not the only one with the printer problem. Carole and I had both talked to Barb Berg TRIO+'s chief programmer and WITHIN 10 DAYS I had two new disks in my hot little hands. One of them with the corrected Print Wizard programs and the other with the corrected graphics and font files that TRIO+ had to fix. The new Print Wizard program works fine and does everything that it promises to; greating cards, benners, letterheads, posters, plus the ability to convert fonts and instances from TI Artist format into Print Wizard format. This later ability will let you take all of those fonts and instances that you may have stored on disk and make up some pretty neat looking products. The program auto-loads under Extended Basic and is

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completely menu driven and easy to use. Several fonts are provided on the data disk ranging in size from small to large plus about two dozen graphics. Depending upon the size of the graphic and its' orientation Print Wizard gives you the option of small, medium, or large printout and (if you select a small or medium sized option) the posssibilty of placing the graphic several places on the printout.

Only one small problem with the program is the speed of the final printout itself. I'd almost swear that I could do the printing by hand and it would be just as fast. If someone out there is an ace programmer in Assembly and wants to take the time it would be deeply appreciated. I am sure that if you have some ideas for speeding up the printout your contacting Barb Berg, at the above address, would be a benefit to the II community. Although slow the final printout is worth the wait and you will have some pretty nice printouts to send to your friends or post up in order to sell something. One change that I would like to see made to the program is the ability to save off the information from a card, banner, etc. for reuse in the future.

Two other TRIO+ Softwars products that I want to mention before ending the column for the month are their ART DATA disks. There are two SSSD disks in each set packed with slides, fonts, and instances for your TI Artist pictures. Garfield, Odie, and a whole set of 3D slides that you can use to spruce up your pictures. Remember that if you have, or get, TRIO+ ARTCONVERT program you can also use these disks to enhance your TI writer printouts with perhaps a nice logo for your stationary. So, till next month, remember to invest a few of your SS for some good software and patronize those vendors who support your TI computer. And some aspecial thanks to TRIO+ Software for a company who listens to their customers.

#### "SOFTWARE ACQUISITION MANAGER"

THERE IS A LOT OF <u>NEW T199/4 SOFTWARF</u> BEING PUBLISHED BUT WE (JUG) ARE NOT GETTING IT IN OUR LIBRARY!!! WE HAVE THE CATALOGS FOR SEVERAL USERS GROUPS THAT WE CAN ORDER FROM. WE HAVE ACCESS TO SEVERAL BULLITIN BOARDS (FOR DOWN LOADING).

WE NEED SOMEONE TO TAKE THE JOB OF "SOFTWARE ACQUISITION MANAGER" FOR JUG. A LITTLE EFFORT WILL HAVE GREAT REWARDS!!! THIS PERSON WILL MAKE A LIST OF ALL THE "WANTS" OF JUG MEMBERS. COLLECT MONEY \$\$\$ AS NEEDED TO ACQUIRE THE NEW SOFTWARE.WRITE UP ANNOUNCEMENTS OF NEW SOFTWARE ARRIVALS AND HELP DISTRIBUTE THE NEW SOFTWARE TO JUG MEMBERS. I AM SURE THIS "SOFTWARE ACQUSITION MANAGER" COULD GET A LOT OF HELP ( AND \$\$\$'s ) FROM ALL MEMBERS OF JUG. ALL HE HAS TO DO IS MANAGE THE EFFORT.

#### PLEASE VOLUNTEER FOR THIS JOB!!!

LOOK THRU MICROpendium. THIS NEWSLETTER, THE CATALOGS ( AVAILABLE AT THE MEETINGS) AND LIST THE SOFTWARE YOU WANT WITH THE SOURCE. PLEASES BRING THIS LIST (YOUR LIST) TO THE MEETING. I AM SURE SOMEONE WILL TAKE THE JOB OF MANAGING THE ACQUISITION OF THIS NEW SOFTWARE.

WE MUST TAKE ACTION TO GET NEW SOFTWARE AS IT IS RELEASED!! IT WILL NOT JUST SHOW UP AT OUR MEETINGS!! WE MUST EXPEND SOME ENERGY TO MAKE THIS HAPPEN!!!

THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING. YOU WILL BE THE GREATEST BENEFICIARY!!!

WE WILL ALL HELP YOU. THIS WILL REGUIRE ASKING OTHERS TO WRITE LETTERS, SOME PHONE CALLS AND FOLLOW UP ON ACTION ITEMS -BUT THE REWARDS (TO YOU) WILL BE GREAT!!! (22)