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Mass Users of the Ninety nine and Computer Hobbyists

September 1986 Monthly Newsletter Version 5.9



MUNCH MEETING MINUTES UP AUGUST 17, 1786

THE AUGUST MEETING GOT UNDER WAY WITH THE SHOWING OF A VIDEO TAPE OF CRAIG MILLER DEMONSTRATING HIS GRAM KRACKER BY MILLER GRAPHICS. THE VIDEO TAPE DEMO WAS CUT SHORT TO CONDUCT THE BUSINESS PART OF THE MEETING BUT CONTINUED ON AFTERWORD ALONG WITH A LIVE DEMO BY PETER HODDIE. THE ATTENDANCE WAS QUITE LOW DO TO THE VACATIONS (I HOPE). THE ITEM RAFFLED WAS WON BY NORMAN ABARE.

BRUCE WILLARD STARTED THIS MONTH'S BUSINESS MEETING OFF ON SCHEDULE WITH THE APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES AS WRITTEN IN THE NEWSLETTER AND THE TREASURY REPORT GIVEN BY JIM COX AS FOLLOWS:

EXPENSES FOR AUGUST
LIBRARY EXPENSES----- 5.00
BANK SERVICE CHARGES-- 5.50
MONITOR RENTAL-----25.00
NEWSLETTER POSTAGE----22.00
NEWSLETTER PRINTING---50.00

CHECK BOOK BALANCE
TOTAL----525.45

I MIGHT ADD THAT WE SHOULD CONSIDER OUR CLUB EXPENSES CAREFULLY! IF WE PAY \$25.00 EACH MEETING, THATS \$300.00 PER YEAR WHICH IN TURN EQUALS A TV SET. THIS MAY BE NEEDLESS SPENDING. HAS THERE BEEN ANY THOUGHT TO THE CLUB OWNING A MEDIUM SIZED MONITOR TO BRING TO THE MEETINGS? CONSIDER ANOTHER ALTERNATIVE THAT YOU CAN SAVE THE CLUB SOME MONEY BY OFFERING YOUR OWN TV ONE NIGHT OUT OF THE MONTH FOR RENT.

AL CECCHINI IS LOOKING FOR SOME ITEMS THAT BELONG TO THE LIBRARY THAT HAVE ALL BUT VANISHED. SOME OF THE ITEMS MISSING ARE A PROGRAM CALLED "PAINT AND PRINT" BY NAVARONE AND A BOOKLET PUBLISHED BY THE BOSTON COMPUTER SOCIETY CALLED "TI-WRITER TIPS AND TRICKS". WE HAVEN'T BEEN KEEPING THAT CLOSE AN EYE ON THE MATERIALS BECAUSE WE DON'T EXPECT ANY THIEVERY FROM OUR USER GROUP. YOU CAN BE SURE NOW THAT WE ARE GOING TO BE WATCHING THAT TABLE MORE CAREFULLY.

THE LONG AWAITED BULLETIN BOARD IS HERE... WE ARE ON LINE FOR YOUR USE. THE HOURS OF OPERATION WILL AT FIRST BE RESTRICTED TO WEEKDAYS FROM 6:00PM TO 8:00AM AND 5:00PM FRIDAY TO 8:00AM MONDAY MORNING. ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT AND A DIFFERENT LOCATION WILL BE ASSIGNED IN NOVEMBER. THE NUMBER TO CALL IN THE WORCESTER AREA IS:

WORCESTER BBS 393-3768
NORTHBORD CALLING AREA

A NOMINATING COMMITTEE WAS SELECTED CONSISTING OF JACK SUGHRUE, COLIN ATHERTON AND AL CECCHINI TO COME UP WITH A LIST OF OFFICERS (PRES., VICE PRES., SEC., TREAS.) FOR THE CLUB'S ELECTION IN OCTOBER.

PETER HODDIE WAS MADE AN HONORARY MEMBER OF THE MUNCH USER GROUP AND RECEIVED A STANDING OVATION FROM ALL OF US FOR HIS INFORMATIVE AND HELPFUL CONTRIBUTION TO THE ENTIRE TI COMMUNITY. HE STRIVES ABOVE AND BEYOND ALL OF OUR EXPECTATIONS. WE ARE VERY GLAD THAT HE SHARES HIS TRULY GENIUS WISDOM.

THE NEW ENGLAND 99 UNITED FAIR APRIL 4, 1987

THE SECOND ANNUAL NEW ENGLAND FAIR IS UNDER WAY! AN INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT IS BEING SENT TO ALL SOFTWARE DEVELOPERS, MANUFACTURERS, DEALERS, AND TI USER GROUPS IN THE NORTHEAST. PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS AND CONSIDER ATTENDING ONE OF THE LEADING TI FAIRS IN THE COUNTRY. LAST YEAR THIS EVENT ATTRACTED MORE THAN 600 PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER. GUEST SPEAKERS LAST YEAR INCLUDED BARRY TRAVER OF GENIAL TRAVELER, LOU PHILLIPS OF MYARC, PAUL CHARLTON, AUTHOR OF FAST-TERM, JIM HORN AND BLAINE CRANDELL OF THE SOURCE, AND MORE. THIS YEAR PROMISES TO BE EQUALLY IMPRESSIVE, IF NOT BETTER. THERE WERE 10 DEALERS AND 9 PARTICIPATING USER GROUPS FROM ALL OVER NEW ENGLAND. THE AFFILIATION OF THE SIX NEW ENGLAND USER GROUPS INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING:

BCS T199/4A USER GROUP MUNCH
NORTH EASTERN 99ERS COMPUTER CLUB MAGNETIC
GREATER BROCKTON USER GROUP. CLUB 99

THE STEADY INTRODUCTION OF NEW HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE HAS KEPT ENTHUSIASM AND SUPPORT VERY MUCH ALIVE. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT THE MUNCH EDITOR OR WRITE TO ONE OF THE RESPECTIVE USER GROUPS MENTIONED.

THERE WERE SOME DISKS THAT WERE SOLD A FEW MONTHS AGO WHICH WERE IN PLASTIC BAGS OF TEN. EACH BAG SOLD FOR SEVEN DOLLARS. ONE DOLLAR WENT TO THE CLUB FOR EACH SALE AND THE OTHER 6 FOR MY COSTS. I LEARNED RECENTLY THAT SOME OF THE DISKS IN THE PACKS WERE "HARD SECTORED". IF YOU HAVE ANY OF THESE DISKS THEY WILL NOT WORK ON YOUR TI SYSTEM. YOU CAN TELL A HARD SECTORED DISK BY LOOKING AT THE TIMING HOLE. IF YOU SEE NOT ONE HOLE IN THE DISK MEDIA, BUT SEVERAL, ITS A HARD SECTORED DISK. IF YOU RECEIVED ONE OF THESE FROM THE GROUP'S MEETING, PLEASE BRING THE BAD ONE BACK AND I WILL REPLACE IT WITH TWO OTHERS.

YOU MAY SEND IT TO ME FOR REPLACEMENT IF YOU CAN'T MAKE IT TO THE MEETING BY MAILING TO:

VIDEOVISION P.D. BOX 183 GRAFTON, MA 01519

I AM SORRY FOR ANY INCONVENIENCE IT MAY HAVE CAUSED YOU, AND I HOPE THAT YOU WILL CONTINUE YOUR BUSINESS WITH ME IN THE FUTURE.

CODERN WYMAN GECRETARY

PLEASE READ THIS!

Curtis Alan Provanc###
N#w Hampshir# 99#r's Us#r Group
(Jun# '86)

I hav# had my comput#r almost four y#ars now, and it works v#ry w#ll #xc#pt for on# k#y. I suppos# I shouldn't complain; th#r# ar# 47 oth#r k#ys I may us#. B#sid#s, what diff#r#nc# can on# k#y mak#?

After giving it some thought, I realized that the keyboard on my trusty TI is similar to our club. There are numerous members in the club; some are more 'visible' than others. Some members participate to a great extent; some won't participate (or can't) much at all. I certainly understand those individuals who, due to other commitments, can't participate more fully. I also understand those individuals who do not participate because they feel they can't make a difference. Let me assure you! Your participation does make a difference! You could be the one 'key' who would really make this club excell. Perhaps you could review a piece of hardware or software at a meeting? We can always use an article - if it's important to you, it's important to at least half our readers! How about donating a module or book to the club so everyone can use it? The possibilities are not endless, but they certainly are many and diverse.

If there is a moral to this story, lat it be that all members are 'key' members.

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Newsletter items may be sent or given to any staff member or sent to: MUNCH PO Box 7193

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Worc. Ma. 01605

RAMBLINGS by JIM COX

Complaints about Home Computer Journal?

If you are like me, you are not too happy with Home Computer Journal's offer to fulfill the remaining time on the defunct Home Computer Magazine's subscriptions. Their offer came to about one HCJ for each year's subscription due on HCM. If you called them they told you that Emerald Valley Publications was defunct and they are not liable for anything, end of conversation.

A number of complaints were made to the Amnion Hotline in San Francisco, a consumer advocacy group similar to WBZ's Call for Action. Amnion found that Emerald Valley Publications was dissolved and a new company, Computer Technology Publishing (sic.), was formed with all the same people running it. The Oregon District Attorney has received enough complaints that an investigation has been started. Reportedly some people have received refunds. To strengthen the case against HCJ they need to hear from "damaged parties" or they will be helpless. Anyone who feels cheated by HCJ is strongly urged to contact:

District Attorney, Consumer Relations 400 Lane County Courthouse Eugene, Oregon 503-687-4261

Please enter my subscription to the M.U.N.C.H.

newsletter,	enclose	ed is \$1	10.00			
Please send	me	bumper	stickers	at	\$1.75	eac]
NAME					_	
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ADDRESS STATE ZIP

TEXTWARE, SOFTWARE, and ELSEWHERE

99er Happenings

by Jack Sughrue

THE PROPHETS AND PROFITS OF DOOM!

The two books considered in this monologue are THE LAST WHOLE TI99/4A BOOK: Programs and Possibilities (by Paul Garrison, 1984, Wiley Press, a division of John Wiley and Sons Inc., 605 Third Ave., NY, NY, 10158; \$12.95) and THE LAST WORD ON THE TI-99/4A (by Linda M. and Allen R. Schreiber, 1984, TAB Books Inc., Blue Pidge Summit, PA, 17214; \$11.50). They are as different as night and day. Or at least as evening and afternoon.

They are both in the 9x7-inch range and are printed in paperback on reasonalbly cheap paper. Not newsprint, but greyish stock. The Schreiber programs are computer printouts, which are usually more accurate but harder to read. In this case the type is considerably larger for the actual program listings than the Garrison typeset listings. Neither is ring-bound, so they don't lie flat while you try to type in the programs. Both have very clear and logical tables of contents, but only the Garrison book provides appendices with the quick reference stuff (ASCII codes, speech words, glossary, resources).

There is something I want to say about these two books that just is not getting through to my left brain this morning. I think I'll stop, get a cup of coffee, go out on the deck to watch the nuthatches and chickadees and sparrows at the feeder, and see if it all comes through.

Ah, nothing like dawn and coffee to clear the muddle from the brain.

A squirrel gave me the clue. This is a particular brand of pig-squirrel. He had constantly devoured every sunflower seed I had been putting in the feeder all spring. Elaine, my wife, was getting frustrated daily by this creature: cute but unlovable. We tried moving the feeder, tried the rounded metal squirrel foils (Ha!), tried everything. But The Pig (as he is affectionately known in our house) managed to climb or leap onto the feeder no matter where we put it in our little yard.

A few weeks ago my daughter Suzi and I were playing horseshoes. She accidently threw one that hit a branch almost above her. Later that day I took a horshoe and some thin, nylon cord, tied the cord to the shoe and hurled it over a high branch which jutted alone into an empty area of our side yard, not too far from the deck. And tied the feeder on. For days The Pig would come around, angrily chattering and beating that tail in frustration.

Then he did the unexpected. He got on a higher branch on an adjoining spruce and leaped/fell over 20 feet onto the metal squirrel foil protecting the feeder. It must have hurt a bit when he hit, as he belly-flopped onto the thing with a very loud thud. After about 10 near wins, The Pig finally hung by one paw to the cord without falling. And worked his way to the sunflower seeds below before I shooed him away. But an attempt had succeeded, and I knew I would have no peace and the birds would have no food unless I could thwart the little bugger before he had another success. (Pavlov came in handy. Repeated failure is what The Pig needed.)

I smeared the rounded foil with petroleum jelly. And watched. During the next four days and at least twenty attempts, The Pig leaped, hit, and shot off into the air for another 10 feet. It became longer between attempts, as he spent more and more time chattering and scouting for other possibilities.

Now he has disappeared from our yard, and the birds have all returned, and life is beautiful once again.

All of which brings me back to the idea of computering and word-processing (and any creative thing) and possibilities. Problem-solving is what it is all about. Problem-solving by being open to the unexpected and using the unconventional method. Some times the tried-and-true is really just the tired. It's important to build on what you know, but it is equally important to take the step beyond. To risk.

Risk. That's the difference between creative and dull. And creativity is always coupled with a strong sense of humor. (Imagination doesn't exist without humor.)

And there lies the real differenes between these books. The Schreiber book is devoid of humor; the Sarrison book is charged with it. The Schreiber book is careful, exact, textbookish; the Garrison book is eclectic and electric and reads as if he were talking to you. The Schreibers talk at you and explain and explain and explain. Each of their programs accompanies a flowchart (not the other way around). Very much ado is made about very little. Garrison, meanwhile, figures you have some basic intelligence, maybe some BASIC intelligence, and makes very little fuss about some profound computer thinking. He's so reasonable!

Take the titles: they really tell you more than the authors probably intended.

Garrison: THE LAST WHOLE T199/4A BOOK: Programs and Possibilities. Schreibers: THE LAST WORD ON THE TI-99/4A.

I got the distinct feeling after reading through both books that the Sarrison book had been in the process of being written long before TI withdrew from the home computer market and that the Schreiber book was written after in order to make the last textware dollar in the "dying" TI marketplace. Linda Schreiber's Atari books are certainly better than this collaboration, which has certainly proved NOT to be the last word on the TI.

The Schreibers obviously know a lot about computers and how they work. Sarrison does, too. But Garrison knows a lot about how the TI works in ways that only a person who has owned, operated, and loved this machine can.

I think if I had my first encounter with the TI through The last Word I would probably own another machine (or no computer at all). Its 246 pages are filled with wasted space (mostly flowcharts). In Possibilities (I prefer this last word of Garrison's subtitle as the reference name in this article.) there is no wasted space (and no flowcharts). The type is smaller and the 460 pages somewhat larger than last Word.

They both provide a basic introduction to computers and the specifics of the II. Both provide line-by-line analyses of each program. However, there are three times as many programs in Possibilities, which also provides tutorials and programs or files for Logo, TI Writer, Personal Record Keeping, Speech Synthesizer, and more.

I've had the books for some time now and have learned many things from both of them. Right now the Last Word is collecting dust. Possibilities is full of dog-eared pages and losing Megabuck tickets (perfect write-on book marks). I have gone back to Possibilities many times; not just to type in programs, but to reread sections or to look for good examples of specific applications.

If you are striving for a complete TI library (as I am), I would recommend getting both books. If you are looking for real 99er value for your money, invest in Garrison's excellent book.

And, despite the doom prophesy of titles which say The Last Of..., the 99 is far from dead. The textware has diminished to a trickle, but the software and peripherals and hardware seem to be approaching deluge level. Maybe the textware trickle will begin to swell during this downpour.



"This won't look good on my report. Let's just say it never happened."

SPECIAL USERS' GROUP OFFER FROM COMPUTER SHOPPER

Computer Shopper, reviewed last month by Jack, is offering group members a one year subscription at 50% off cover price. You get 12 issues for \$15.00 and if you are not satisfied they will refund for all unmailed issues. What is even better is that Computer Shopper will give M.U.N.C.H. \$2.00 for each subscription sent in by the group. If you are interested, send your check for \$15.00 made out to M.U.N.C.H. to our post office box or give it to Jim Cox at the next meeting. Subscriptions will be sent in to Computer on the Friday after the August and September meetings.

WHAT KIND OF A MEMBER ARE YOU

Are you an active member the kind that would be missed Or are you just contented that your name is on a list.

Do you attend the meetings and mingle with the flock Or do you stay at home and criticize and knock.

Do you take an active part

to help the work along
Or are you just satisfied
to be the kind that just belongs.

Do you ever go to visit a member that is sick

Or leave the work to just a few and talk about the clique.

There's quite a program scheduled that I'm sure you heard about And will appreciate it if you will come and help us out.

So come to the meetings often and help with hand and heart. Don't just be a member but take an active part.

So roll up your sleeves and strike the gong You will be convinced it will not take long to think this over member, You know right from wrong.

Are you an active member or do you just belong?

Author Unknown

This article was spotted in the July 1986 newsletter of the Lehigh 99'er Computer Group, from Allentown, PA.

DCOPY by John W. Stover

Since the demise of TI in the home computer market, there have been more and more excellent programs being written and released in the user supported or freeware concept. The latest in this list is a program by the name of DCOPY. Now I know a few of you are saying what do we need with another copy program. Have no fear, Dcopy is not primarily a copy program, although its name implies that it is. This sector copy works with the highly compatible, or should I say highly incompatible MYARC disk controller. This is the end of its copy feature and where the real use of this astounding program begins.

(

Before we go any further let me warn you to READ THE DIRECTIONS. This program is capable of destroying a disk.

The main application of this program is to archive programs, files or a combination of files and programs into one orderly file. Along with taking these files or programs and making one file out of it, it also can take one of these files and extract all the original files out again and without any damage to text or programs. Those of you familiar with the IBM will notice this type of file scrunching from programs such as ARC or LUE. Although this program is nowhere as sophisticated as ARC or LUE, you must also realize these programs have been around for several years and have gone through numerous revisions to get where they are.

Many of you might be saying, what do I need with a program such as that? First, and most important, if you frequent BBS's, you know what a pain it can be to download a program that requires several programs and documentation files to run. This program allows the SysOp (System Operator) to put all these files in one and you can just download one file. Extremely handy with BBS's that have a set number of downloads you can do in a session. I have also discovered this program useful for grouping together several programs that are similar and keeping them in a file for future use or just to archive them.

Basically this program has as many uses as your imagination can come up with. The author of DCOPY is Howie Rosenberg and he definately deserves the ten or fifteen dollars he askes for a contribution.

DCOPY is available in the Public Domain Library or on Caltex or The Eagle BBS's.

7:00 - 8:00 Open Demonstrations

New Member Registration
Software Exchange (members only)
Special Interest Group meetings
Basic Programming -- as required
Assembly Language -- by Dan Rogers
Kids Corner -- with (to be announced)
Other part of Gram Kracker videotape
RAVE 99 TI Compatible Keyboard demo

8:00 - 8:20 Raffle
Business Meeting:
Approval of Minutes
Treasurers Report
Committee Reports
Old Business
New Business
Announcements

8:20 - 9:30 CONTINUATION of:

Special Interest Group Meetings and Open Demonstrations and Discussion

Plan for October meeting
Jack Sughrue will demo his upgraded
Funlwriter
Continuation of other SIG's

LIBRARY NOTICE

Flease return all borrowed materials to the MUNCH library at each meeting. This will give other members a chance to enjoy our collection of "text-ware" as much as you have !!!

THANK YOU !!!

Currently missing from the library are Paint and Print and Peter Hoddie's TI Writer Tips & Tricks. These are important materials. Please check to see if you have them.

WANTED: Upgrades on 1984 TI Tax Plan put out by Aardvark Software (now owned by McGraw Hill). Write to Al Cecchini at the MUNCH Group address.

Looking for used 300 Baud Modem, acoustic coupler or direct connect. Contact Brad Clark at 617-886-2188.

Looking for a used RS232 card for the Peripheral Expansion Box. Contact Martha Compolito at 617-753-4938.

ITEMS FOR SALE

Epson MX80 ribbons \$4 each see Bruce Willard

The club has diskettes for sale for \$7 a 10 pack from which the club gets \$1.

NOTICES OF UPCOMING MEETINGS

North Eastern 99'ers Computer Club will be holding its 2nd Annual Computer Workshop on Sat. Oct. 11, 1986 at Jenks Jr. High School in Pawtucket RI. Further details available from our club secretary.

Ninth Northeast Computer Show will be held Oct. 30, 31 and Nov. 1 at the Northeast Trade Center, Commonwealth Pier in Boston.

Chicago TI99 show will be held on Nov. first.

"...RAFFLE...RAFFLE..."

The raffle for the month of September will consist of a choice of three items including a keyboard, a cartridge game and a book on computers.

There will be two winners, the first will have a choice of the three items.

The second winner will have the choice of the remaining two.

The raffle is open to all who attend. The drawing will be held just prior to the business meeting. Remember: ***** YOU MUST BE PRESENT TO WIN *****

*****MUNCH OFFICERS AND NUMBERS (all in 617 area)

President	Bruce Willard	852-3250	
Vice Fresident	Norman Abare	297-2100	
Secretary	Wm. Corson Wyman	839-5116	
Treasurer	Jim Cox	869-2704	
Adv Prog. Chair	Dan Rogers	248-5502	
Club Reviewer	Jack Sughrue	476-7630	
Library	Al & Lisa Cecchini		
Software Library	Don Mason	754-6630	

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It's September and time to go back to school already. Since we won't be making so many trips to the beach on weekends, we can now concentrate on helping the children with their homework. Many of our children will be exposed to computers for the first time in school this year. And now, more than ever, it's so very important for us to support their new computing efforts. We can assist them by listening to their questions about the new computer in school and why it's different from ours. Then we can explain how similar it is.

For those who will be expanding their knowledge into programming, there are the special interest groups at the MUNCH meetings to clear up all those unanswered questions. Even though your child is using another type of computer at school, we have members who can explain the differences in a very logical manner. If you do have questions regarding the programming of another computer, please bring that computer's programming manual with you to the meeting. This will help to speed up the return of your answer.

Just as an aside, I was working word processors on three computers one day. It wasn't difficult. As long as you paid attention you had no problems. It is when your concentration is broken that you get into trouble. During the day I was working with the DEC WPS Plus and WANS word processors. Then I came home to work on my TI-Writer. It wasn't too bad until the barrage of questions and requests came in. Then I started mixing commands and searching for keys that didn't exist on my TI. Fortunately, I save my data every ten lines or so. If I hadn't, I would have lost considerable information. The point I am trying to make is that anyone can work with different computers and program on different computers without any appreciable trouble.

Fifteen people, representing MUNCH, BCS, Club 99, and North Eastern 99'ers, attended the tour at OMNI Resources. What a great tour! OMNI has expanded to at least four times its size since the last tour I had a few years ago. The tour took about two hours and covered everything from the media coming in on rolls, to the finished product being shipped out. OMNI also does mass copying for software manufacturers, and can, upon request, add copy protection. The minimum order is one hundred copies. Prices appear quite reasonable.

This month the Nominating Committee will present the nominees to the Group. At the time of the presentation you may nominate someone who is not on their list. In October we will have the election of officers from that list.

That's all the news for now. See all of you at the September meeting.

Bruce Willard, Pres.



Below is a sample (a tiny sample) program from the Garrison book. But look at the possibilities each time you RUN it and change the variables.

100 GDSUB 180 110 CALL CLEAR 120 CALL SCREEN(S) 130 CALL COLOR(CS, F6, B6) 140 CALL HCHAR (A, B, C, D) 150 CALL VCHAR(E,F,G,H) 160 INPUT "PRESS >ENTER(":E\$ 170 GOTO 100 180 INPUT "HORIZONTAL ROW? ":A 190 INPUT "HORIZONTAL COL.? ": B 200 INPUT "ASCII CHAR. CODE? ":C 210 INPUT "REPEAT HOW OFTEN?":D 220 INPUT "VERTICAL ROW? ":E 230 INPUT "VERTICAL COL.? ":F 240 INPUT "ASCII CHAR. CODE" ":6 250 INPUT "REPEAT HOW OFTEN?":H 260 INPUT "SCREEN COLOR? ":S 270 INPUT "CHARACTER SET? ": CS 280 INPUT "FOREGROUND COLOR?":FG 290 INPUT "BACKGROUND COLOR?": BG

300 RETURN



"Just think of it as a test to see if you're irreplaceable."

M. U. N. C. H.

P.O. Box 7193

560 LINCOLN STREET

WORCESTER, MA. 01605

First Class

Sept. Meeting will be on Sept. at University of Massachusetts (Come to the VISITORS entrance Medical (16, 1986