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NOVEMBER 1985

Next meeting December 7th
At the Hurst Public Library
9 am till 11 am

The reviews, evaluations and opinions contained in
articles in this newsletter are the authors' own
and do not reflect the views of the NET 99er KCUG.

**Northeast
Tarrant
Home Computer
Users' Group**

Devoted to the

TI-99/4A

President's Page

I want to take this opportunity to thank Gerry Myers, Leroy Thompson and Tom Hall for accepting my invitation to be on the nominating committee. We need to look forward to January and the election of new officers. Any ideas will be appreciated.

For those unable to attend the December meeting we will accept \$5.00 checks in the mail until the Friday before the Dec. 7th meeting. Checks received in the mail by Saturday morning will be included in the Christmas drawing for a full TI SYSTEM.

Congratulations to Jim Yingst for winning a MULTIPLAN. He's a winner already with a new daughter in his house.

A fine idea presented by Charles Bathman brought a good response from many of our members. He thought that we could help new members by being available on a one to one basis for a closer look at what is being done by the older members. A quick response from:

Chuck Mansfield
John Creviston Jr.
John Lambert
Samuel Lee
Jim Stewart
Sam Weller

Please call one in your area to see if a time is available.

My thanks to Gerry Myers, Russell Blanton and Ken Dominiec for their time and efforts for the Nov. program. Also, a thanks to James Crosson for picking up six TI WRITERS and one MULTIPLAN for a very good price. We had our last item used at the Nov. meeting.

Ken Dominiec is our new Central Librarian. Gerry Barker will be our guest speaker at the Dec. 7th meeting. He will give us a closer look at the Grolier Encyclopedia on STARTEXT.

Till next time,
Jo

NORTHEAST TARRANT
HOME COMPUTER USER'S GROUP
Minutes, Nov. 9, 1985

President Jo Lambert called the meeting to order and asked for approval of the Minutes of the Oct. meeting. The minutes were approved as printed in the newsletter.

Leroy Thompson gave a report on the Chicago Computer Faire. He reported what was known about the Myarc computer.

Jo reported on letter from Steve Davis Publishing Co. about specials he has fixed up for TI. She also mentioned Cor-Comp Chapter 11 bankruptcy. Had a drawing for a Multiplan. The NET 99er was listed in the Fort Worth Star-Telegram in the Women's Club Section.

Paul Urbanus was welcomed as a visitor. He was a partner in writing Parsec.

A nomination committee was appointed by Jo Lambert consisting of Gerry Myers, Leroy Thompson and Tom Hall.

The meeting for Dec. has been changed to Dec. 7th, 1985 9:00 AM

John Lambert introduced Ken Dominiec as the new Central Librarian.

Several people offered to help new people learn about their equipment. Ken Dominiec demonstrated the disk version of Editor/Assembler. Gerry Myers and Russell Blanton gave a demonstration on the Adventure Games and on the Adventure Editor by Tex-Comp.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rosie Steele

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TIMELESS TECHNICAL TIPS

DECEMBER 85

by LeRoy Thompson

On a recent business trip to Alabama, I had the opportunity to meet (face-to-face) Danny Michaels and John Moody of the Shoals 99ers. We were a little short on time, but the visit was pleasant anyway. You will recall that Danny is the Assembly Language wizard who wrote NEATLIST and a screen dump. Both of these programs are distributed by Freeware and are excellent. Danny said that he entered into Freeware to meet new TI-friends. He feels that he has accomplished that very well. Danny writes for his own amusement and pleasure and as such would never take on any kind of contracted work with a deadline. Overall the visit was quite pleasant.

Well, the TI Faire in Chicago has come and gone. I still can't order my new Myarc computer yet. The new machine was shown and by all reports is everything we want. It is scheduled to be shown at the January CES and just *MAYBE* will be demonstrated to a New Jersey users' group in February. Let's all hope that the product makes it to market while the market still exists.

The reports from both the Chicago and New Jersey areas is that P-boxes are selling for high dollars now that Myarc has guaranteed their future by making the P-box a part of the new machine's expansion plans. I heard of complete systems selling in the \$800 to \$1000 region.

As promised last month, I scanned the recent catalogs in search of Christmas wants for those of us in the TI family. There is probably more now than when TI was actively involved in the manufacture of home computers. Most of the new products are software, but let's talk about hardware first. There are DSDD disk controller cards available from both Myarc and CorComp. These both allow you to expand your disk storage immensely. The Myarc

512K/128K/32K memory card is also interesting in that it provides for a Ramdisk and print spooler. The two Myarc cards will likely be useful with the new machine. That's something to think about. The other hardware product that caught my son's eye was something called a JOYPAD (\$40). This connects to the joystick port thru an adapter and allows the gameplayer to use their whole body via foot pressure to control the game. This could make such things as Munch Man a whole new game because bodies don't move nearly as fast as hands. (No I haven't decided if he will get one yet).

In the software area the following programs caught by biased eye:

Padlock Plus - requires password for access to TI Writer files - \$30

from Dragonslayer (Spell Checker fame)

Educational adventure series from Sungem - \$10 each

Telling Time
Contraction Coaster
Battle of Antonym Hill
Spelling Spacewars
Olympian Reading

The descriptions sound like this company has a good idea toward making learning fun. I plan to try some. I have been told that the same announcement can be made again at the next meeting: Computer Liquidators, Inc. will again be liquidating TI software and hardware(?) at the Holiday Inn NW in Dallas on the 7th and 8th of December. This might be a chance to pick up a nice Christmas gift for the kids (or yourself). I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone the very happiest of Holiday Seasons. Remember, if you are lucky enough to receive new hardware or software for Christmas and need help, call your user group. We can probably help you.

TRIPLE TECH
A Review by Bill Sullivan

Opening the package from CorComp presented my first surprize. This P.E.B. card has no case of any sort. CorComp cases aren't very impressive anyway!

A carefull examination of this shell-less PCB is easy, and one quickly notices two push button switches on the rear extension above the ribbon cable connector. "What might they be for?", I asked myself. However, the speech synthesizer connector has caught my attention, and I promptly grab the Operations Manual that was included. Scanning the first page, I spot the title "SPEECH SYNTHESIZER BOARD INSTALLATION", just a little below half way down. Following these instructions, I successfully join the two PCBs.

Having already gone throught the instalation of this card dozens of times in my head, I very quickly perform the "real thing" until...the ribbon cable from this PCB won't plug into my RS232 "I" connector, nor will my RS232 printer cable plug into the connector

provided. Back to the Operations Manual!

On the first page at the top appears the following:

CORCOMP TRIPLE TECH CARD

INTRODUCTION

The CorComp Triple Tech Card provides the user with three capabilities:

1. A connector for attaching the TI Speech Synthesizer * board.
2. A 64K parallel Printer Buffer.
3. A real time Clock/Calendar.

All the advertisements I have seen stated that this card was "virtually compatible with any printer". I do realize that the majority of home computer users are equipped with parallel printers, but "virtually" means to me that one will have a difficult time finding a printer that won't work with this card.

This means, of course, that I did not evaluate the printer buffer functions, since I own a serial printer, but from reading the documentation I can state that even you folks with parallel printers will be dissatisfied with the way some of the features are implemented. Such as, having to press those buttons on the rear to activate the "Copy" or "Clear Buffer" functions.

Some of you will have a major ordeal just reaching behind the PEB, but if you are not able to walk behind it, so you can see to press the correct button, think of the "pitfalls". It won't be so bad if you wanted to clear the buffer, but you get an extra copy instead. Your own imagination can fill in the rest.

On the other hand I don't know of any "Commands", Call "Sub-program", transliterate or otherwise, that won't have short-comings or pitfalls. I had anticipated software control for these functions, but now it looks like the best possible solution, may be, just to remote the switches to a more accessible point, and then clearly mark them.

I am happy to report that my speech synthesizer operates exactly as it did before, and the battery operated Clock/Calendar works great, even though there is an error in the documentation that says, "d = Day of week [1 through 7]". This should be, "d = Day of week [0 through 6]". I verified this fact with CorComp, right after the Basic program I wrote to change this number to the named day of the week, crashed on the 7th day. Outside of that, this manual is well written and easily understood.

I have arranged to exchange my serial printer for a like model parallel printer, with an associate of mine. After that, I will probably be much happier with my purchase, as the printer buffer was my main motive for the purchase.

NOTE: In fairness to CorComp, it must be stated that all the published advertisements were arranged by their distributors, and not by CorComp.

THE GREAT NET 99er
HOME COMPUTER USERS' GROUP HOLIDAY SEASON RAFFLE

Once upon a time, there was a good _____ who said, "There are a lot of folks in the NET 99ers who would like to expand their system but really don't have the money to spare. Since I'm changing systems, I think I'll give them a chance at getting my hardly used system." With those words, he shipped his whole system off to Charlie Bathman who had told him, "BOY, HAVE I GOT A DEAL FOR YOU?". Thus began the great RAFFLE.

If you think that you could WASTE \$5.00 on something like; a beer, cigarettes, bowling, a movie, a record, gambling, a baby sitter, a book, a drink, your kids, a pizza, Mac Donalds, a magazine, or a Christmas Gift, here's the perfect solution. We have the following TI System that we'll give to the lucky winner:

TI CONSOLE
TI PERIPHERAL EXPANSION BOX with:
RS232 CARD
32K MEMORY EXPANSION CARD
TI SS/SD DISK DRIVE
TI DISK CONTROLLER CARD
TI 10" COLOR MONITOR
TRS 80 CASSETTE RECORDER and CABLE
NAVARRONE CARTRIDGE EXPANDER
ONE PAIR OF JOYSTICKS
TI EXTENDED BASIC
TI WRITER
TI/MICROSOFT MULTIPLAN

THE FOLLOWING TI CARTRIDGES:

PARSEC - MUNCHMAN - TOMBSTONE CITY - TI INVADERS -
HOUSEHOLD BUDGET MANAGEMENT - TUNNELS OF DOOM

THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL SOFTWARE

TI MAILING LIST - NAME-IT - TEACH YOURSELF BASIC
ALL ASSOCIATED MANUALS AND INSTRUCTION BOOKS

Starting with our September meeting, those of you that wish to make a \$5.00 donation to the NET 99er H.C.U.G., should do so in a small envelope (we'll supply them at the next four meetings) in which you enclose either a five dollar bill, five one dollar bills, a five dollar check or any form of United States legal currency amounting to five dollars, print your full name, address and telephone number on the front of the envelope, seal it well and give it to any of the club's officers ON or BEFORE our December meeting. During the December meeting, we will draw ONE NAME. You need NOT be present to win but you must be a current, dues paid member. The lucky winner will get the whole Ball of Wax.

Face it folks! Where else can you get odds like this. Invest \$5.00, with a possible 15,000% rate of return with the odds against you only 200:1.

Like I said, "BOY DO I HAVE A DEAL FOR YOU!".

ANOTHER LOOK AT FREEWARE

By Leroy Thompson

While on recent business trip to Alabama, I had the pleasure of meeting [face-to-face] Danny Michaels and John Moody. Danny is the author of NEATLIST and an Assembly Language Screen Dump. Both of these programs are distributed via Freeware.

Considering the recent comments that I have seen on Freeware everywhere, I thought that I would ask Danny a few questions about his experiences. He gave me a whole new perspective on the situation.

Danny said that his main purpose in distributing the programs that he had written via Freeware was to meet people and gain new friends. He feels that he has succeeded quite well. I agree with him. He showed me a two-inch thick stack of correspondence dealing with his two programs. In this stack, he had sent out 188 copies of NEATLIST and 273 copies of Screen Dump. He had dealt in two ways. If the person didn't want to supply a disk, Danny asked for \$5 to cover disk, mailer, postage, etc. He collected \$707 in this way. As pure clear payment for the two programs, he collected \$622. The really interesting thing is that he had another similar sized stack that he had not counted up yet. One could expect similar things from that stack.

A bit more about Danny: He told me that he had been offered several programming jobs that even included offers on the new Myarc machine. He declined them all--he said that he programs for FUN and could not work with a deadline. That is a wonderful attitude. I feel somewhat the same way, it's just that I have never received any offers to turn down. (Maybe that's because I'm not that good.)

I just felt that the other side of the story should be told.

TRADERS' PAGE

New TI-WRITER \$15.00
Mike Bowen 571-4956 or
Lee Boddie 732-0858

GOOD NEWS