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NH99'ers User Group

New Hampshire 99'ers User Group
PO Box 5991, Manchester, NH 03108

Newsletter

March 1989
Vol. 7, No. 3

CLUB NEWS

by Paul Bendeck, President

Did you notice anything different about the newsletter? Starting with this month's issue, the club newsletter will have slightly changed format. I thought this might be a good way of getting your attention to let you know that the NH99'ers User Group is really very much alive and well, despite the lack of newsletters in recent months. For those of you who were wondering what happened, our editor had some personal problems recently and was not able to put the newsletter together. To make matters worse, I was away on business for the past 4 months and couldn't offer much assistance. To get things back on track, I have taken over as editor for the time being. Anyone interested in an opportunity in electronic publishing?

Turnout at the February 20th meeting was fairly light due to the holiday but that didn't dampen the activities. The first order of business was to change the way we currently handle Micropendium magazines. In order to be more cost effective, the club decided to offer Micropendium magazines to club members on a 6 month subscription basis. The price remains the same, \$1.00 per issue, but now you must pay for 6 months in advance, just like a subscription. You also must be present at the meetings to collect your magazines; the club will not mail them to you. If your present subscription is about to run out, or you just want to take advantage of the 50% savings, now is the time add your name to the club subscription list.

Some of you (mostly those who do not come to the meetings) may not be aware that our club exchanges newsletters with many other clubs throughout the US and Canada. We receive over 20 different newsletters from these other clubs every month. The newsletters are filled with all sorts of interesting articles, reviews, helpful hints, and more. The best news is that all of this information is available to the members of our club absolutely free. Elliot Hardy manages our newsletter library which is available for review at every meeting. Club members may check out copies of the newsletters to take home and read. Here is a short list of some of the newsletters we receive each month:

- LA 99er Computer Group
- The ROM Newsletter
- TRACE Newsletter
- CIN-DAY News
- M.U.N.C.H. Newsletter
- NUTMEG TI-99ers Newsletter
- Great Lakes Computer Group
- TICO Topics
- T.I.R.U.G. Newsletter
- 99'er ONLINE Newsletter

BOSTON COMPUTER SOCIETY TI FAYUH

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The TI Fayuh is fast approaching. At the last meeting the club voted to participate in the event by selling software to raise money for the club. A list of best selling programs was compiled during the meeting and volunteers offered to make the necessary copies. We also plan to sell some of the left over items from last year's event plus back issues of Micropendiums. The March meeting will focus on planning and organizing for the Fayuh. Don't forget that we need people to help work at the club table on the day of the fair. Here are some additional details:

Date: Saturday, April 1, 1989

Place: Ramada Inn, Woburn, MA (Just off I-95)

Hours: 10 AM to 5:00 PM

Admission: \$4 for adults, \$1 for children under 12

The slight increase in the price of admission is due to the new location. (Hotels are more expensive than schools.) The show will be held in the ballroom and there will be two breakout rooms for speakers. There will be various vendors and user groups from around the area and the country present.

DEMONSTRATIONS

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Richard Bailey brought an interesting assortment of new software to demonstrate at the meeting. For games he showed us a very graphic oriented program called GROG, made by the same people who did the infamous cartoon program WOODSTOCK. If you have children, this program will keep them busy for many hours. Next, Richard gave a review/demo of 4 new disks from a computer group in Holland. One disk contained a program to dump LOGO procedures files to a printer. One of the disks had a collection of programs to allow you to capture any screen to a file and then display these "captured" screen files back on the screen either individually or in a sequence like a slide show. Another useful program Richard showed was a keyboard test program that in addition to testing the keys on your keyboard, also gave you the hex and ascii code for each key pressed. These and many more programs are all available in the club library. Remember, if you would like to order something from the club program library, give Richard a call and he will either bring it to the next meeting or mail it to you.

Following the demos, Richard started a discussion about GENIE, the bbs service. Activity about TI on GENIE is still very high and there are lots of interesting programs to download. The best part is the cost, only \$5 per hour up to 1200 baud. GROG was one of the programs that Richard recently downloaded from GENIE, to give you an idea of what's available. If you don't yet subscribe to a bbs service such as GENIE, it's not too late to join.

NEW DISK DRIVES!

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Some time was devoted to hardware issues at the last meeting. Phil Davis brought in a new disk drive that he wanted to test to see if it was compatible with the TI-99/4A. We plugged it into the club PE box and verified that it did work, but we did not have a DS/DD disk controller to verify operation at higher densities. Richard Bailey brought in 2 new TEAC SS/SD half-height disk drives and we tested them also. Since the club has needed some new disk drives to replace our broken drive for a long time now, we voted to buy the 2 TEAC drives from Richard. The price (after discount) was only \$70 for the pair. So now the club will have a PE box with 2 half-height SS/SD drives that really work. It should all be put together in time for the next meeting, and the fair. Thank you to Richard for making the disk drives available to the club.

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

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The next club meeting is scheduled for Monday March 20 starting at 6:30 PM. Meetings are held the third Monday of each month at the Science Enrichment Encounter (SEE) Center, 324 Commercial Street, Manchester, NH. Below is a list of dates for upcoming meetings.

April 17
May 15
June 19
July 17
August 21
September 18
October 16
November 20
December 18

It's not too early to start thinking about nominations. Elections are coming up in June. This is my second term as president and I think it is time to pass the job over to someone else. We also need a newsletter editor. Just start thinking about it for now.

REVIEW OF PANASONIC
KX-P10801 MODEL II

Richard J. Bailey
68A Church Street
Gonic, N.H. 03867
MH99ER USER GROUP

← NOTE

MODEL HAS BEEN
REPLACED BY

KX-P11801

As with Mark Twain, reports of my death have been exaggerated. I still own a TI-99 but have 3 expanded systems and can't justify keeping more than one. (Anyone need another system-hint, hint). I decided that the Epson MX-80 I had been using was too slow and while it had given me good service it was time for a new printer.

I chose the Panasonic for a few simple reasons. First, there are 50-100 of these printers where I work and that will be what I'll be using there. Second, it appeared to be a good fairly fast printer that was Epson compatible meaning everything I have written for the MX-80 will work on the KX-10801. I ordered the printer from LYCO computer because they would ship U.P.S. C.O.D. and the price was \$159.95.

Thanks to a foul-up by LYCO I was sent two printers and U.P.S. also mixed the orders so my wife, Candy, had to call LYCO to try to straighten things out. They ended up sending me a spare ribbon as a way of setting things straight so I can't complain too much.

"But how does it work?", you may ask. Well, it prints about 150 cps in draft. STD, NLQ, and COMPRESSED can be selected at the flip of a switch on the front panel. There is a 1K buffer on the parallel port which is nice and you can easily do single sheets as well as tractor. The ribbon is easy to install but smaller than an Epson MX-80 ribbon. For those of you with two different systems, you can select an IBM mode with all the special characters that IBM uses by changing the position of one dip switch.

Now for the bottom line-print quality. This article was printed on the KX-10801 using my standard Epson set-up codes and there were no problems. If you're looking for a low cost, versatile printer maybe this is what you're looking for.

This is the "standard" print on the Panasonic KX-10801 model II.

This is the "NLQ" print style on the 10801.

Again, with double strike emphasized.

double width NLQ.

COMPRESSED as selected from the switch on the Panasonic.

subscript/compressed.

And finally, graphics!



PRETTY PLEASE, PINCH MY DEAR

AUNT SALLY RUDELY!

by Jim Peterson

My apologies to dear old Sal. That mnemonic device is usually given as just "My Dear Aunt Sally", but I expanded it a bit. It is intended to remind you of the sequence in which your computer solves an equation, which is -

(P)arentheses
(P)owers (exponentiation)
(P)refixes (plus and minus)
(M)ultiplication
(D)ivision
(A)ddition
(S)ubtraction
(R)elational operations

So what? Well, if one of your program lines isn't giving you the expected results, it may well be that you forgot to pinch Sally properly!

The computer goes through the line from left to right 5 times (I don't know if it really does, but that is the easiest way to explain it!) The first time through, it looks for a left hand parenthesis. If it finds one, it stops at the first right hand parenthesis. If it finds one but not the other, it CRASHES! When it finds a right parenthesis, it backs up leftward until it comes to the closest left hand parenthesis. It solves everything between those two parentheses, step by step in accordance with the following priorities, and then erases those two. Then it goes through the same routine again until it finds no more parentheses.

Need a "for instance"?

OK -

$X = ((10 \div 2) - 6) + (8 / 4)$
 $X = ((20) - 6) + (8 / 4)$
 $X = (20 - 6) + (8 / 4)$
 $X = (14) + (8 / 4)$
 $X = 14 + (8 / 4)$
 $X = 14 + (2)$
 $X = 14 + 2$
 $X = 16$

Next it goes through the equation looking for the caret sign. That is the little ^ that tells it to multiply the preceding number by itself as many times as the following number. Example -
 4^2 means 4 times 4
 6^3 means 6 times 6 times 6

Then, the prefixes. That just means that, for instance, if removing the parentheses from $-(-6)$ has left you with $--6$, it becomes a $+6$, of course. I suppose that ABS and SGN are also worked here.

Now, multiplication and division. These are both done in one pass through because it doesn't make any difference which is done first. $10 \div 2 / 4$ is the same as $2 / 4$.

Next, addition and subtraction, also in one pass because $10 + 4 - 2$ is the same as $4 - 2 + 10$.

Finally, the relational operations, which had best be the subject of a separate article. And finally the string concatenations, but let's keep old Sal out of those.

Note that everything between a pair of parentheses is worked as a separate equation, step by step in the above sequence, before the parentheses are erased.

So, why should you need to worry about all this? Well -

$10 \div 4 - 2 = 38$
 $10 \div (4 - 2) = 20$
 $10 \div 4^3 = 6400$
 $(10 \div 4)^3 = 64000$
 $((10 \div 4)^3 = \dots \text{SYNTAX}$

ERROR!

Makes a difference, doesn't it?

The important things to remember are -

If you want to add two numbers together before you multiply or divide their sum, put them in parentheses $(2+3) \div 4$.

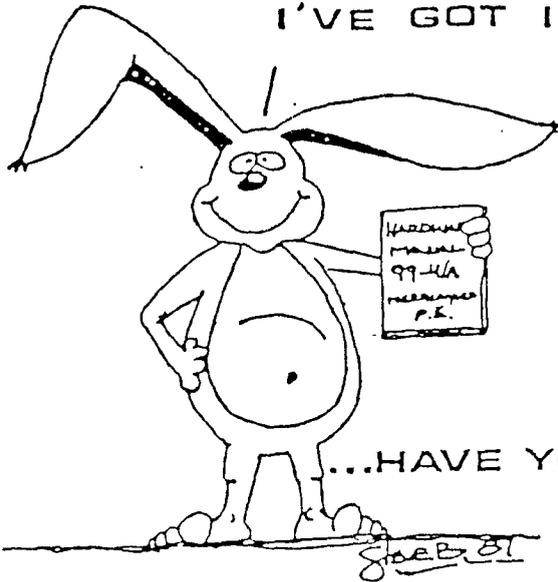
If you want to subtract one number from another before you multiply or divide the result, put them in parentheses $(10-4) / 2$.

If you want to add, subtract, multiply or divide numbers before you increase them by any power, put them in parentheses $(10 \div 4 + 8)^3$.

If you keep Sally in mind, you will have fewer bugs in your programs!



I'VE GOT IT!..



...HAVE YOU?

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FOR THE
TI 99 / 4A

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