Upcoming Meetings:

October 17th, 1989
November 21st
December 12th
January 16th, 1990
February 27th
March 20th
April 24th
May 15thth
All meetings to be held at the Dumont HS Faculty lounge at 7:30 PM on each date.

YEP! We're back at the high school meeting ground and meeting time limits are as long as you'd like them to be. Let's hope we make good use of the time extended us.

Please keep these dates on your personal calendars.

Suggested agenda for October:

a) POLITICS: club reorganization for coming year, new officers, bylaws, committee assignments, etc.

b) DEBATE: merging with other UGs, set up an IBM SIG, set up a TIBBS, etc.

c) LIBRARY: Reestablish our club library and custodian. Order Fairware and Pubdom from other libraries for a member's curiosity and keep a listing for ALL members to see at meetings.

d) NEWSLETTER: this editor does not feel competent to deal with the business of gathering news by himself. He needs MORE cooperation among the club members in getting news of events, meetings, fairs, etc. Distance is a severe handicap. Members with modems have not been providing bulletins and messages the NL editor as they should. It's OUR NL, and OUR club's existence at stake! Many other NLs are going into a two month publication phase, and already a few have come to be quarterlies. This editor also finds much of the contents are merely repetitive of each other in publishing news of new releases in software and hardware, tutorials of programs many of us do not have, or use!, and programming hints that very few of us do anymore. It is extremely difficult for this editor to find a common mean to satisfy everyone in this journal but he does his best! You know it! What have WE done lately to improve

it? It's your decision.

Regretfully, the next NL will be my last until this editor will be graced with YOUR input more often, with articles and BBS downloads on disk.

There are lots of things to discuss among us, and the members, though diminishing in number, have to face the club's future. An organization like ours is as strong as it wants to be. There are clubs with fewer members who are doing very well and others who just can't get their act together regardless of size. Where there's a will, there's a way!

Meeting Notes:

August 17: No communication on meeting contents forwarded to this editor as yet. From landline communication I heard that there was some difficulty in getting some demos to work, along with equipment difficulties.

September 19th:
Came to order at 7:15pmn with an attendance of 10 members. Walt Macieski started the meeting by mentioning that we can list our club in the *Computer Shopper*.
Bill Staedeli has reserved the meeting room at Dumont H.S. until May, 1990. Our treasurer reported a balance of $154.08.
We adjourned at 7:50 to examine demos by Frank Lees of the programs *TWIST* and *MAC-LABELS*. Twist was written by our Roger Harrison in early 1984. It takes the letters on the screen and flips them around. Roger said that it was a E/A homework assignment in Ralph Kopperman's E/A SIG class. *MAC-LABELS* enabled one to select from several style labels using fonts for the borders.
For our next meeting Bill Staedeli will demonstrate using the 40-column mode in TIW to print in 80 columns.

ED NOTE: You CAN print columns of ANY length as long as your printer has that capacity!

RANDOM Notes:

Did you know that many IBM users have not organized UGs? Why? For one thing there are many BBS's out there set up by individuals and businesses. Besides that, modem use is prolific among individuals. Only a few of the latter are hooked up to networks like Source, Compuserve, etc., only because they can download from members in businesses who can write off expenses for tax purposes. Most of us TI'ers are only hobbyists, and very few of us use

our machines for business purposes. Besides, there are many publications out there for Big Blue/clone users for to get the latest info on program updates, Fairware listings, hardware product listings, reviews, etc.

What does this tell me, and you? Yep, it's time for us to recognize the writing "on the wall." We can't beat 'em, so I joined them, without giving up on this micro.

This is still my 'Fun' machine. I'm not giving up the many years of its devoted service and I still use it for this NL, among many other things.

John Bonito recently sent me a download of a complaint by Joe Nuvolino, prez of of a Colorado TIUG, about the management of *Star* printers. He registered his complaint on BBS's all over the country in protest. I can sympathize with him if his complaint of a malfunctioning NX-1000 printer. I have not had his problem, however, and another BBS user volunteered to champion his use of the same printer. My review of the printer, more than a year ago, indicated that the ribbons do wear out fast and can hardly print out 100 pages of text with the same ink quality from first to last. I doubt others can! The ribbons in the NX-1000 have about ONLY 20+ ft length, and ARE relatively expensive, $6.95/ea compared to the SG-10 which could be any length available on a common typewriter spool for as little as $.95/ea.

I solved my problem by reinking my own, though, at times, a bit messy. John B cautions me re using stamp pad ink and says that it can clog my pins. All I can say is that neither printers have clogged pins because the ink I use is glycol (a lubricant used in automotive anti-freeze) based, a mild lubricant in itself, rich in pigmentation, and dispersible with a few drops of alcohol. The brand I use is Sanford's ROLL ON. On some bottles the roller is too tight to apply on the ribbon surface so I remove it and use an eye dropper after carefully opening the ribbon's casing, and without squeezing the dropper just dab the exposed ribbon edges two or three times, each time with a dose of ink, then a dose of alcohol to aid dispersal. Let it set for a couple of weeks in an old sealed coffee can while I use another ribbon, new or reinked.

When installing a reinked ribbon I run the printer in "test" mode several times to make sure it's free of excess ink. And off to work I go...!

Thanks for your concern of caution, John, but I don't feel the print head is

in danger from this technique and this kind of ink.

While in Canada some time ago Bill Sponchia of the Ottawa UG gave me a copy of his FAIRWARE DBASE. To my dismay I found that it didn't load. I remembered that he demo'ed it and copied it with his MYARC card. I had to load it by calling up with the OLD DSK1.QBASIC/V1 command and resave it. It seems the MYARC system SAVEs with a slightly different header. But if that were the case, why was the SORT program ready to run on the RUN DSK1.SORT? A mystery to me! Meanwhile, now that you have a RUNnable program now, you can give me a review, HF and JB! OK? Sorry I didn't test it BEFORE sharing copies.

Thanks to Frank for giving us the indexes (indices?) of *MICROPENDIUM* (MICROPENDIA?) For those of us who don't subscribe, it's time! We can miss out on a lot or REAL info! Also, the ASGARD quarterly has much to offer.

I would like to hear from anyone who purchased some of the FAIRWARE and PUBdom offerings from Jim Peterson or the LA UG listings. Why are you keeping it a secret? This bugs me, your editor, about inertia on the part of certain people who benefit from club membership but fail to give input of their own.

In a recent article on TI fairs in the *Computer Shopper* the author didn't understand the meaning of the TICOFF acronym. Well, in case our own members forgot, it's the TI Computer Owners Fun Fair, or Festival! Another is coming up next spring. Yep, organized by the old regulars, Art Byers, Bob Guellnitz, et al. The last one was well attended with people storming the gates early and most staying all day. More info later!

Gotta say this! Those of us with IBMs or clones earnestly wanting to get into some DTP (desktop pub) with some good quality output you can invest minimally via mail order for as little as $60 or $70 a full fledged (ideal for small budgets) *FONTASY 3*. It supports almost all printers on the market. It takes text from all WP files made with formatting commands of *FONTASY* in them. These commands are similar to TIWs formatting and character commands like .CE etc. There are many to do tricks with and as many as 28 fontstyles included with the program. There are plenty of 'helps' to guide you on the way in the form of a textfile you can call up with any wordprocessor to show

you how by printing the file with a WP to see how it's done. Printouts are fast for a graphics oriented program, fastest I've ever seen! Much like PICASSO but with a professional look! File manipulation is a breeze. 640K recommended. For laser printers IM a must! All these months I could have done this NL with *FONTASY*! Sure it would've made it look nicer, but I'd have to sacrifice news space to do it. So, I'll continue with the TI's brains and squeeze as much as I can out of it.

On printers: JB mentioned he may upgrade to the PANASONIC 1124, a 24 pin LQ printer. Ribbons list for $12. Output is tremendous! You can fit an 11 inch sheet sideways in its carriage, too! I saw the output of a 1524, a 15" carriage, a year ago and was impressed by the many fonts it has built in. I'm tempted to step up, too. The latest lowest price for the 1124 quote I found was at a store in NYC advertising every Tuesdays in the NY Times for $279. See, wasn't that what I paid for my Star SG 10 five years ago? As for ribbons, I'd buy two to spare and use my reinking techniques. Both machines have single sheet and tractor feeds, and both IBM AND Epson compatibilities. For graphics, circles are smoother, diags, too, due to a greater dots per inch density. It's the nearest and cheapest substitute for a laser printer for about 1/4th the cost, and no worries about purchasing specially processed paper and toners, and other special chemicals, much less the space they demand.

OOPS! Forgot to say it! The NX-1000 seems to forget the .LM command after a centering .CE command. It, the .LM command must be reentered after centering. This can only be avoided by formatting your work to disk before printing. Why waste disk space?

Ms. Phyllis Rothstein of Suffern, NY, a new member, I believe, and will need a little assistance in finding the Fall, Winter, and Spring meeting site. Someone out there give her a hand? I don't have her Phone # but her address is 32 Meyer Drive. Look it up! Yes, Phyllis, you MUST get at least two half height 5 1/4" for your expansion box to make your system more capable of handling the software available for the present day TI owner. See below!

Computer 'fairs' in the New Jersey and New York Metro area are prolific. Check listings in *Computer Shopper*. They are good places to upgrade to

multiple disk drives, stationery, disks, etc. If you have a bad drive there may be a techie booth to help you, too. Great bargains are out there. Remember what we first paid for them? As far as things dedicated to TI, like RAMdisks, DD or QD disk controllers, MYARC, etc., you'll have to wait for TICOFF which will feature a lot of TI goodies.

ASGARD's *PRESS* is STILL NOT available. I guess there were still some bugs to iron out though it was successfully demo'ed at Chicago last Fall. I hear Craig Miller (of MILLER's Graphics fame) was at a recent LA meeting demoing a DTP. Was it for the TI?

Our last *TI-dings* featured a two part 'article' by Art Byers of the CN 99ers on how the TI, as well as other computers, can handle data base files and records. It sure broadened my understanding! I wish E/A programming were this easy to learn. It's still a mystery to me and, I believe, to everyone else at NewJUG/N. Our most knowledgeable have left the club many moons ago. Maybe learning E/A isn't important anymore due to the introduction of the 'c' compiler which is more simple, or programming is becoming a faded passion? Well, there's still XBASIC, the real workhorse of a TI hobbyist. Getting back to Art Byers- he is a master at XB programming, and the TI! Nice to have him around. Viva!

I would like to have a survey made among club members at their next meeting to find out the following:
Who subscribes to:
MICROPENDIUM, Barry Traver's *DISKAZINE*, the *ASGARD JOURNAL*, and if anyone ordered ANY of Jim Peterson's programming tool disks, programs, etc. Also, as I mentioned earlier, who purchased materials (fairware and pubdom) from Jim P.'s and the LA libraries. Plus, what other software mentioned in the NL during the past year like TI-BASE, FIRSTBASE, etc. Any hardware finds? etc. I'd like to hear from anyone about it and share the news with others in these columns. This is what I mean about a 'helping hand.' for this NL. Though only a phone call away, the distance makes it an impractical expense for many. How about just a note from time to time? I'm HUNGRY for news! ELSE GOODBYE!
                    <EOF>

2

File Handling on the 99/4A
Sorting on the disk.
By Art Byers, CW -99'ers

Well, I guess I kind of jumped ahead of folks in my last small series of articles on file management called "One gallon into a one Quart Jar". I mentioned that it is possible to sort right on the disk itself without giving an example of how that is done.

Now there was method to that not only because I explained that a disk sort of records is very very slow (because each disk access is a hundred times slower than access to an array of information in RAM) and the continual tremendous number of disk accesses for reading and writing generates a lot of wear on your drives, but also because the purpose of the article was to show how to sort large numbers of records WITHOUT an "on disk" sort. BUT -- There were those who said that I had really started in the middle, not at the beginning, so here goes!

We are talking about sorting on FLOPPY disks, not RAM Disks or Hard or Fixed disks. Of course such sorts on a RAM disk would be almost the same speed as RAM sorts. Sorting on a hard disk would be less efficient than on a RAM disk, but still quite fast, though the wear and tear factor would be present on a fixed disk sort. A word of caution: ALWAYS work from a backup copy disk when doing an on disk sort. Because they can take hours, anything going wrong such as a drive, computer, or power failure will mean you've made bit and byte soup out of your file.

For the purpose of this tutorial, we will be using a small number, only two dozen, of records. I'm sure you don't want to wait several hours while a truly large file is rearranged on disk. Those of you fortunate enough to receive this article on disk will find the programs present under the name shown in the first line of each.

The first program creates a demonstration file to be sorted on disk. Each record has two fields and we can sort by either field, if we so chose. Key in both, with care, saving onto a fresh disk and we can proceed.

```
100 REM SAVE DSK1.CREATEFILE
110 OPEN #1:"DSK1.DATA1",Rel
ELATIVE,INTERNAL,OUTPUT ! Op
```
en a random access file
```
120 NUMRECORDS=24
130 FOR LOOP=1 TO NUMRECORDS
:: READ A$,N ! Read data
140 PRINT #1:A$,N :: NEXT LO
OP ! Print data to disk file
150 CLOSE #1 :: END
160 DATA ROSE,7,MARIGOLD,22,
BEGONIA,19,ZINNIA,1
170 DATA ASTER,8,VIOLET,2,BA
BY'S BREATH,21,PEONIE,24
180 DATA TULIP,3,CROCUS,4,DA
Y LILLY,12,DAFFODIL,23
190 DATA COLUMBINE,10,DAISY,
6,CORN FLOWER,9,CARNATION,18
200 DATA GLADIOLA,15,HYDRANG
IA,17,PANSY,11,VIOLA,5
210 DATA ASPHODEL,14,GERANIU
M,20,MORNING GLORY,13,PETUNIA
,16
```

In the next program, lines 230 and 240 read in records off disk and lines 260 and 270 write the information back out to disk. Each access to disk is counted by a subroutine and displayed on screen.

```
100 REM SAVE DSK1.ONDISKSORT
110 CALL CLEAR :: NUMRECORDS
=24 :: CALL SCREEN(4):: NUMA
CCESS=0 ! Initialize
120 OPEN #1:"PIO" ! Open fil
e to printer
130 OPEN #2:"DSK1.DATA1",REL
ATIVE,INTERNAL,UPDATE ! Open
data file to be sorted
140 PRINT #1:"FILE BEFORE BE
ING SORTED":  :
150 GOSUB 350 ! Sub to print
hard copy.
160 REM Sort file using shel
l-Metzer sort algorithm
170 M=NUMRECORDS :: M=M
180 M=INT(M/2):: DISPLAY AT(
23,1):M ! When number in the
lower left of screen reaches
zero, sort is complete
190 IF M=0 THEN 320
200 K=N-M :: J=1
210 I=J
220 L=I+M
230 INPUT #2,REC I-1:FL1$,NU
M1 :: GOSUB 410 ! Sub 410 pr
ints number of disk accesses
to the screen.
240 INPUT#2,REC L-1:FL2$,NUM
2 :: GOSUB 410
250 IF NUM1<NUM2 THEN 300 !
To sort on string field chan
ge this line to read IF FL1$
<FL2$ THEN 300
260 PRINT #2,REC I-1:FL2$,NU
M2 :: GOSUB 410
270 PRINT #2,REC L-1:FL1$,NU
M1 :: GOSUB 410
280 I=I-M
290 IF I>=1 THEN 220
300 J=J+1
310 IF J<=K THEN 210 ELSE 18
0
320 PRINT #1:  : :"FILE AFTER
SORTING": : :: GOSUB 350
330 CLOSE #1 :: CLOSE #2 ::
END
340 REM Subroutine to print
on printer
350 RESTORE #2 :: FOR LOOP=1
TO NUMRECORDS
360 INPUT #2:F$,N
370 PRINT #1:F$,N
380 NEXT LOOP
390 RETURN
400 REM Sub to count disk ac
cesses
410 NUMACCESS=NUMACCESS+1
420 DISPLAY AT(10,1):"DISK A
CCESS NUMBER ":NUMACCESS
430 RETURN
```

First run CREATEFILE. Now, having created our data file on disk, you can run ONDISKSORT and watch the results. I have chosen the Shell-Metzer sort because it has been used in several of my previous articles and, therefore, gives you a sort with which you should be familiar. Remember that for small numbers of items to be sorted, the complicated sorts such as Quick-Sort and S-M are not much better than the simpler sorts such as the Brute Force or Bubble. It is only on sorting large amounts of data that the more sophisticated sorts leave the others in the dust.

ONDISKSORT, will display the number of disk accesses, and print out hard copy of the file: First, as it is before sorting and second, as it is after sorting.

You may be surprised to see just how many disk accesses are needed to sort this small file and how long it takes because of those accesses. Also as an experiment, having sorted the file by number field, then change line #250 as reccomended in the tail remark and run the program again sorting by the string field. There is another surprise awaiting you!

With a <<sigh>> I hope I have proven my point that sorts on disk are to be avoided.
*************Eof************************

NEW PRODUCTS FOR OUR T.I. 99/4A and 9640.................................

<u>THE ADVENTURE REFERENCE GUIDE</u> by Mickey Schmitt
    The Adventure Reference Guide is the "bible" of TI adventure gaming.
This remarkable reference is the product of nearly a year of planning,
research and writing. This is a large book that lists the almost 200 ad-
ventures available for the 99/4A, rates them within their categories,
lists the equipment needed to run them, reviews the most significant
programs, and even provides lists where they can be obtained. Did you
know that most 99/4A adventures can be had for next to nothing? This book
will show you where to get them and how. 108 pages. $14.95 plus $2.00 S/H
write: ASGARD, P.O. Box 10306, Rockville, MD 20850 Phone: (703) 255-3085

The <u>TI ADVENTURE COMPENDIUM</u> Disk Set is a set of Fairware and public
    domain adventures (some requiring Game Modules) available on 10-SSSD
disks for $19.95, 5-DSSD disks for $15.95 or 3-DSDD disks for $11.95.
These are available from either:
        WESTERN NEW YORK 99ers   M.U.N.C.H.
        % Harry T. Brashear   % Jack Sughrue
        2753 Main Street   Box 459
        Newfane, NY 14108   East Douglas, MA 01516
I counted 79 adventures listed in this compendium.

<u>GIANT ARTIST POSTERS</u> (G.A.P.) by NAMELOC SOFTWARE
    Paul Coleman has a new program written in "C" that is a support prog-
ram for T.I. -ARTIST. You can take a full T.I.-ARTIST screen and print
it out as a poster in any size from 10"x14" to over 5'x8' ('=feet). You
can even print two full screens side by side for an even bigger poster.
Load or create a picture using T.I.-ARTIST that takes up a full screen.
Then save it as an instance . G.A.P. will load and print it out in banner
fashion in a wide choice of sizes. Requires T.I.-ARTIST V2.0, disk,32K,
and an EPSON compatible printer. (and lots of ribbons). Cost $10. plus
$1.50 S/H and available from NAMELOC SOFTWARE, 3971 S.E. Lincoln,
Portland, OR   97214

<u>THE GEOMETER'S APPRENTICE</u> by McCann Software
    Mike McCann has produced a 3-D C.A.D. color, light and magic show for
the T.I. 99/4A and GENEVE (9640). You can create screens of Lambert shaded
objects. The 99/4A can be used to create motion sequences in bit-map mode.
The 9640 will be strained to it's limits in all available memory use and
color use in 512x212 mode. Objects may be scaled, translated and rotated
in 3-D and once created moved from one drawing to another. Both the 99/4A
and the 9640 versions are menu driven with the added bonus of the 3-D
slides language on the 4A. T.G.A. produces external files compatible with
The Printers Apprentice and will print using "Cpixel" user defined pixel
shapes in portrait or landscape modes on popular dot matrix printers.
Required for T.I. 99/4A: 32K mem., Disk,and XBasic/Ed.Assembler.
Required for Geneve (9640): at least MDOS version 1.01, V.99 GPL and E/A.
Printers: 100% Epson, Gemini 10X, Star NX, IBM, Panasonic 1091, and T.I.
Send check or M.O. for $39.95 to: McCANN SOFTWARE, P.O. Box 34160, Omaha,
NE   68134

<u>PAGE PRO 99</u> by ASGARD SOFTWARE
    A remarkable program that lets you compose a 66 line page full of text,
graphics and lines quickly and easily. It's a "what-you-see-is-what-you-
get" program with the ability to paste in pictures and type text. Up to
28 pictures of any size or shape anywhere on the page. Type text in any
number of large and small and upper or lower case fonts and draw lines
anywhere needed'.You can type up,down,left or right with full editing.
You can window around the page using TI-WRITER keys, and load or save as
text file. You can even load a text file and paste it on the page. There
are many more options and features. For TI 99/4A and Geneve. $24.95 plus
$.75 S/H. ASGARD SOFTWARE, P.O. Box 10306, Rockville, MD 20850

ANNOUNCING! NEW AND IMPROVED SOFTWARE AND HARDWARE!

Remind Me! by John Johnson. Graphical calender with pop-up windows for daily
($15.00) entry of schedules and appointments. Quick searches and complete
report prinTIng control. Also interfaces with all clock cards as
an opTIon(not required). E/A, TIW, XB, or Myarc 9640.

TRIAD by Wayne Smith. Full-featured 1)Terminal emulator, 2)Disk manager,
($20.00) and 40 column text editor in a single program. TRIAD stays memory
resident and uses a 13k buffer. E/A, TIW, XB, or Myarc 9640.

AV-Index by Don and Aaron West. Creates videotape and audio cassette labels,
($15.00) box inserts, and library indexes. XB or Myarc 9640.

PC-Transfer by Mike Dodd. Transfers text files from TI to IBM disks in four
(25.00) formats. Allows for external rouTInes to import/export MacPaint
pictures, delimited dBASE III database files, Lotus 1-2-3 ASCII
saves. Requires double density controller. XB, E/A, or Myarc 9640.

Picture Transfer for the Myarc 9640 by Paul Charlton. File conversion for
($30.00) viewing, cropping, cut-and-pasTIng, prinTIng, and interchanging
GIF, RLE, MYArt, MacPaint, and GRAPHX files. Also enables slide
shows and animaTIon creaTIon. Myarc 9640 MDOS.

MacFlix by J. Peter Hoddie. Allows for viewing, prinTIng, and saving Mac-
($15.00) Paint pictures from the huge library of available BBS catalogs.
XB, E/A, or Myarc 9640.

Graphics Expander by J. Peter Hoddie. This uTIlity can stretch and shrink most
($10.00) popular graphics by factors from -9 to +9. Includes BIG-TYPE program.
Also provides upside-down, invert, mirror, and rotate features. E/A.

FirstBase by Warren Agee. Menu-driven, full-featured database program written
($49.95) in C language with complete flexibility. Each record may have up to
75 fields with fieldnames of up to 20 characters. Each field may be
up to 720 characters long and each record may hold up to 3000 bytes
of informaTIon. A database may hold up to 34 megabytes of data! Sorts
on up to 75 field keywords and full four-funcTIon floaTIng point math
between fields. Even performs calculaTIons on database contents. Runs
TI-99/4A and Myarc 9640 computers.

TI-Base v2.01 by Dennis Faherty. dBASE III lookalike for the TI and Myarc 9640.
($24.95) Easy to use command language allows custom programming to suit your
own needs. Full math support and mulTIple field sorTIng. Help screens
and sample database tutorial included. XB, E/A, or Myarc 9640.

MICROdex Vol. I & II by William Gaskill. Add-in database for TI-Base with the
($22.95) complete cross-referencing of related wriTIngs from Micropendium,
COMPUTE! '83-'86, 99er/HCMagazine, Computer Shopper, and many more!
Quick searches and reports on all topics. Requires TI-Base v2.0.

TELCO v2.3 by Charles Earl. Full-featured terminal emulator with auto-dialer,
($20.00) text editor, and macro language. Even emulates ANSI, VAX 52 and 100,
DEC, and H/P terminals. XB, E/A, or Myarc 9640.

6

March 17th, 1990, 9:30 am to 4:30 pm will be the day and hours of the next TICOFF. (The [T] [I] [C]omputer [O]wners' [F]un [F]aire - [T]he [I]BM & [C]lone +[O]wners' [F]un [F]aire.

+ Some Background Info:

TICOFF is the the only computer show supporting the TI that has consistantly GROWN in attendance from year to year. The final official audit for 1989 showed 925 paid admissions, an increase of almost 400 over 1988. The faire also netted over $4000 for the Student Council's Scholarship Fund for Roselle Park High School, the most of any TICOFF. This is the ONLY faire supporting TI that donates the net proceeds to a +worthy cause.

As in the past, all adult and student participation is on an UNPAID volunteer basis. This means that an unusually high proportion of each dollar earned will goes to the scholarship fund.

+ Key Personnel for 1990

+Faire Director -Bob Guellnitz. Special Events -Art Byers, Vendor support and Operations-Dennis Porpora. TI Fairware -Ellen Kramer. Special Project +-Frank Bubinek

+ FREE USER GROUP TABLES

BonaFide User Groups, who get their application in to TICOFF before February 15th 1990, will be given free display tables at TICOFF. After this date they will have to pay for tables as though they were a Vendor. The free table can be used to promote the club, sell software, sign up new members, etc as they wish. However, because this is a charity fundraiser, all UG member attendees, even those who staff the free exhibit tables will be expected to pay admission.

+FREE LUNCHEON MEETING for +User Group Presidents.

A reservation form will be in the mailing, to ALL user groups from coast to coast. Send it back to receive a ticket to the "President's round table luncheon" that will be held during TICOFF'90. We hope a great many club presidents or their designated substitute (if they can't make TICOFF'90) will attend. Host for the luncheon will be Art Byers, President of the Central Westchester 99'ers Club of Westchester +County, NY.

+ SPEAKERS AND SEMINARS

Once again TICOFF will feature well known speakers and classroom educational seminars, not only for the TI 99/4A and MYARC 9640, but also for IBM and compatables. We expect Lou Phillips of MYARC will be covering the latest hardware and software for

the +9640 computer. In addition, there will be at least one "generic" seminar applicable to all computers. For 1989 this was the classroom on "Advanced telecommuni- cations". The lively Q and A session at the end of this class drew much +favorable comment.

Another well attended seminar, last year, was "Build your own clone". This showed how to buy parts and boards, often at very low prices, to put together your own custom computer. It started wih an empty case and went right through formatting the hard disk. TICOFF'90 will have many such +goodies to enjoy.

TICOFF BBS to be on line Sep 1. 201-241-8902 +300/1200 bd

The TICOFF BBS, which proved so useful in the past, will go on line, 24 hours a day, around Labor Day to maintain an easy quick source of detailed information about everything from the names of Vendors who have signed up to "show special" prices and items. In addition, Fairware authors can upload the latest updates or versions of their software. A general Chit chat message base will also be featured. The BBS will have one "private" message base exclusive to committee members to enable them to stay in constant communication with each

other as TICOFF'90 approaches.

+ THE SWAP SHOP

Once again, TICOFF will feature the SWAP SHOP! Here you can sell your no longer needed hardware, computer books etc. Only original software, no copies or pirate software, can be sold here. In 1989 Over $3000 worth of "Bargains" changed hands. Ten Percent of the selling price goes to the Scholarship Fund. Be sure anything you bring is clearly marked with your +name and address.

+ GRAND PRIZE DRAWING

Each year TICOFF has had a free drawing for all paid admissions. In 1989, two 2400 baud external modems were given to lucky winners. For 1990 it is expected TICOFF attendees will be putting their names in for a new EPSON dot matrix printer. You do not have to be present at the drawing in order to win, but you must attend, in person, to put your name into the draw.

+ First TICOFF'90 MAILING

Applications for tables will be mailed out in November 1989, both to Vendors and User Groups.

+For More Info, Contact:

Bob Guellnitz 201-382-5963, Art Byers 914-528-5402 or use your modem to dial the BBS after 9/1 at

+COLUMN TEXT III By Ron Prewitt
+   Review by Art Byers.

This is a simply wonderful Fairware Word Processing utility that will print out your text in either two, three or four columns, as you wish. What is really amazing is that the author is asking only $5.00, truly a BARGAIN!

It is very simple to use. Just prepare your text on any wordprocessor you like to use. If you want two columns, set your left margin at 0 and your right margin at 33. For three or four +columns use 0 and 28.

This article was written using Funnelweb Writer. The resulting DV/80 file can be put through COL TEXT III to produce a two column printout. There are some useful features:

(1) You indent paragraphs simply by using leading spaces. You simple set at word wrap and type.

(2) You can toggle on/off such options as Right hand justify and Draft or Bold print and the number of columns to be printed.

(3) It supports your choice of three printers: Epson, Gemini and Panasonic. You can revise the program itself for other printers by changing the printer codes.

(4) There is the option of having a two line enlarged type title at the top of your page as you can see from this review.

At the main menu, just pressing the number of your choice will cycle through all the +available options.

Two columns use regular Pica type, three Elite and four condensed. If your text file is greater than one page, Column Text III will print multiple pages until the entire file is printed.

The whole process is very easy. Just create your text file with the proper margins. Save it in the ordinary way with the or Command. Load and Run Colun Text III. The running speed isn't +fast but it is adequate.

There is an extra option that will allow you not to right hand justify a single line - just start the line with a plus sign.(+). This should be put on any LAST line of a paragraph that is short or any line you want left alone such as charts or +graphs, etc.

Now there are a lot of different columnizers around. Chris Bobbit released one to public domain and Barry Traver has released still another as PD. I also believe Tom Freeman wrote one in Assembly some years +go. So! Why pay for this one when there are others available +for free??

The answer is because this is the best and easiest to use and the one that gives you the most options. It is just great for printing up Church or Computer Club newsletters, bulletins for the Cub Scouts or even notices to +post in the Supermarket.

+Send your $5.00 to the author:

+   Ron Prewitt
+   6429 South Fife
+   Tacoma, WA 98409

Prodigy
by Steve Nickerson

Prodigy is a telecommunication program developed by Sears and IBM to be used with IBM-type computers.

Before going into the program let me tell you the good part. At the April meeting of the Westchester 99 group, a demonstration was given on PRODIGY. It seems to be that the testing in other states has gone well and they are now expanding into our affluent Westchester County area, with a White Plains phone number.

At the end of the program it was announced that they were going to use the group as a test group. Any person at the meeting with an IBM compatible, 512K or greater, and a 1200 baud modem, could have a FREE startup copy of the program. If you didn't have a modem, they would sell you a HAYES 1200 baud ($99) or 2400 baud ($159). The reaction was just what they were probably looking for; I think they ran out of copies of the programs that they had brought to the meeting. I got mine.

The only thing that you had to do was to sign a contract agreeing to pay a $9.95 monthly fee (or cancel) after the first 3 MONTHS of free use. There are no line or time fees except for the local call (plans are for a northern number; now is just White Plains in our area).

The reason for the flat rate is that some of the cost is made up by add-ons on the screen. If you want you can order the item through the program. The Saturday after I brought the program home I asked my kids if they wanted to try it. I loaded it on my hard drive (it has an install program), we picked out our passwords; you can have up to 6 users listed. The program checks the computer to find out what equipment you have and just confirms it. Unless you have EGA, there is no color.

I set up the program on my hard drive menu so that the kids just turn on the computer, go to Prodigy, and hit enter. The program loads and makes the call, they enter ID and password and they are off and running.

You use the TAB or arrow key to move around the menu. They have a feature called "Jump words"; these take you directly to the section you want. On most of the screens are the ads that you can "look" at, should you want you can buy from them. If you want to buy from Sears or Pennys you will need the store catalog.

The services available are: games for kids, (one for adults); weather bulletin boards (pc and fun mail); newsroom; consumer reports; travel planner; financial guides; shopping; movie information; banking; travel info and more.

One thing lacking is an encyclopaedia, but it was said that they will have one in the future. To sum up, the price was right and I will know better about PRODIGY's value in couple of months.

The 99/4A Gets Down To Business
By Art Byers, CM-99'ers

I was very impressed by the short demonstration that Steve Nickerson, who has a very responsible job with the County Park Commission, gave at the May meeting. It was still another way he is using his TI-99/4A computer at work. This is about the fourth time Steve has shown us his ingenuity is making the TI useful on his job.

Al Trudeau and Nils Boderman have also shown us their original programs that they use for business. I too have been using the TI-99/4A for my varied businesses. To somewhat paraphrase the poet, "Let me Count the Ways" the 99/4A is earning money for me:

#1: Along with my modem and terminal software such as FAST-TERM or TELCO, I use it as a dumb terminal, to access the real estate multiple listing service data base. This is a very necessary part of one of my endeavors. I gave a demo of this at a past meeting and will do it again if there are enough members who are interested.

#2: I have a "Customer" for whom I do programming at $25.00 per hour. Believe it or not, this customer uses a full house TI, in his retail store, for a mirade of business purposes from banners and price lists, to calculating markups and printing price labels for items in the store. He uses a 1/2" x 3" or 1" x 3" pin fed label and gets lots of info on it such as count of package contents, retail list, discount retail, percent of saving for the customer, etc. At one time he even did bookkeeping on the TI but switched to a "one write" manual system at the suggestion of his accountant as the store's requirements were simple enough that a computer was not needed.

It is for this customer that I have written several programs designed to manipulate data from DV/80 files prepared on TI- WRITER. Simple versions of these programs have appeared in previous CALL SOUNDS Newsletters. One of the programs that he finds most useful will sort up to 252 full lines of DV/80 text, reprint it in ascending order and allow for calculation of varying price columns according to quantity purchased.

I'd like to mention that he bought his TI used, complete with TI Impact Printer, PE box and all cards and cables for less then $250. At the time he bought it, he had considered an IBM which would have cost him well over $1800. Now, after three years, he has yet to outgrow his TI -but this is a diversion. Let's go on.

#3: I do mailing list maintainance for another local business. The current list is about 4000 names and growing. My 99/4A prints out mailing labels by Zip code, by classification of customer, etc., - what ever my client requires.

#4: I do considerable and varied wordprocessing. This includes not only business letters, price lists, charts, outlines, etc. but also insurance claim forms, standard contracts, leases and so on. All this as part of an on-going business.

Surprising as it may seem, I actually do "MULTI TASKING" with my 99/4A. Of course it's because I have TWO of them. <<that's a joke, son!>>. One is usually used for word processing while the other is sorting a data base or printing out labels.

My TI-99/4A not only has "paid for itself" many times over, but also it continues to do so, - and that's good business!!!

ORGANIZING YOUR DISKS, PREVENTING DATA LOSS
by Frank P. DeCandia (June '89 North Jersey U.G.)

(I don't believe this! Three times I started this article and was unable to save it. No kidding. Irony is best served on someone elses plate!)

Sooner or later it happens to all disk drive users, the plight of Diskus-Discomboobulus. Followed by the sometimes fatal disease of Data-Disappearus. Symptoms are as follows: Disks are everywhere and you have no idea what is on what disk. You get the feeling your hard work on program or file is amiss. Once you have confirmed this feeling you give out a scream that would scare Freddy Krueger. Followed by violent hair pulling, burying your face in your hands, swearing (optional), and long hours re-typing lost data.

The best preventative measure is called OAYG (Organize As You Go). If you are like me, you probably have all kinds of programs and files. The first thing you should do is get a DSDD disk drive if you don't have one, and some blank DSDD disks. You won't lose compatibility with your SSSD Disks.

First format at least 6 to 10 disks at DSDD with 40 tracks. Make sure you include the disk manager itself. You should keep your like-data on the same disk. Mine are broken up like this: 1. Basic Programs.   2. Extended Basic Programs.   3. Logo Files.   4. Word Processing Data Files.   5. Programs from Books.   6. Copies of Bought Programs. (For personal use only!) You will make 2 (yes, 2) copies of all files. The first disk is your working copy, the second disk is your Master Back-up. Remember to use the "protect" option in the DISK Manager for finished programs and files. This will not copy protect it, but it will prevent writing over something you want.

First of all, make a copy of your Disk Manager disk. Without this you may as well be dead. Programs of different languages should be on different disks. You can have programs from books on the same disk, like Basic and Extended Basic. To tell them apart precede the Extended Basic files with an "X-" or "X". Ex: "X-PROG1". This will put all Extended Basic files at the end of your disk catalog. Some Basic programs may use speech and require the T.E. II cartridge. I would give a name like "PROG-TE2". It's a big extension to use, but it's better than loading a program only to find out you need to re-load it with the T.E. II cartridge. Develope your own system of naming files and stick with it.

Make sure your on a power line that isn't shared by an appliance like the 'fridge. The constant drops and surges of power cause unseen havoc on your computer chips, making them weak and shortening (or ENDING) their lives. I don't even want to think what happens to your disk drive heads should you be writing or saving a file when it strikes. Even if it means digging out the extension cord and dragging it to the next room, get off that bad power outlet! You should also consider a spike and surge protector. Did I say "consider"? Better yet, GET ONE! Even a "safe" outlet isn't safe for your computer. Your local Radio Shack or computer store should carry several models. Dig deep in your pockets and get a good one.

Save your work once in awhile, WHILE YOU'RE WORKING. When you feel "Now is the time to save." - do it! Many a time I lost large portions of Extended Basic programs by ignoring this feeling. NEVER eat while you are working. Food crumbs gum up the keyboard and destroy data on disks. Even careful users such as myself lose data. A printed copy of all your programs and files will help you recover from a total loss. "What would cause that?", you ask! Lots of things, animals (some children fit this category), disk theft, some joker with a magnet, or even a magnetic meteor passing over your house. I know, I know. Some of you are saying, "That's silly! There are no animals in my house!". Maybe so, but we never can tell when Mr. Meteor will pay a visit - can we?

Get a disk holder and keep all disks in their sleeves and in the holder when not in use. If there are small children in the house, get one with a lock. Never give a small child a disk to play with, even a bad one. (Bad disks that is not a bad child). They put everything in their mouth.... even if it tastes like strained broccoli. (Yeck!) Loose disk particles, lubricant and dirt might be swallowed. The same is true of a dirty baby bottle or teething ring, but at least those things come sterile.

Get a vinyl dust cover for your computer and other peripherals. Meanwhile the styrofoam cover that came with your computer will do. DO NOT use cloth, loose threads and dust can get ANYWHERE. A Cartridge Expander by Navarone is the 2nd best way to prevent cartridge contacts from wearing out. The best method is not using cartridges. A disk cleaning kit with fluid cleaner is good also. Don't over clean a disk drive head. It will cause more damage than good.

There you have it, most of what you need to know to make computing a little easier. So remember the next time you spill soda on a disk don't throw it out. Use it as a coaster at the dinner table to serve as a painful reminder.

T.I.-dings

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Next Meetings: October 19th and November 21st at the Dumont H.S.
Faculty Lounge from 7:30 to closing

"We are family enjoying the unspeakable peace and freedom of being orphans."
(Paraphrase of G.B. Shaw line in *Major Barbara*)

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