

NUTI NEWS

• NITTANY USERS OF TEXAS INSTRUMENTS •

L. Chapin, Pres.

SEPTEMBER 1990

M. Villano, Ed.

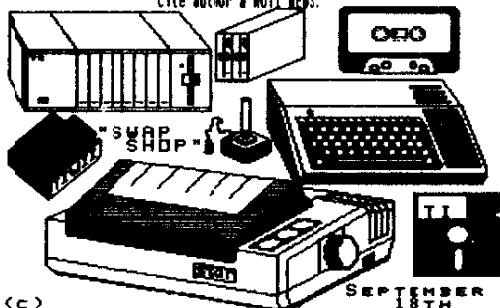


TI-99/4A

Send Exchange Newsletter to NUTI 525 Wiltshire Dr. State College, Pa. 16803 (Do NOT send to the NUG) Material may be copied. Cite author & NUTI NEWS.



GENEVE



(c)

SEPTEMBER 18TH

ARTICLES BEING FEATURED THIS ISSUE:

AVIATION PROGRAM..Part 2 on the North-of-the-Border flight planner
PIRACY..Comments about a virus that still plagues our TI community
NEW-AGE/99 No.8..J. Stahrue's "syndicated TI column" makes a debut
SMART-ONE (tm) SMART MOVE?..2400bps ext Hayes-comp modem under \$130

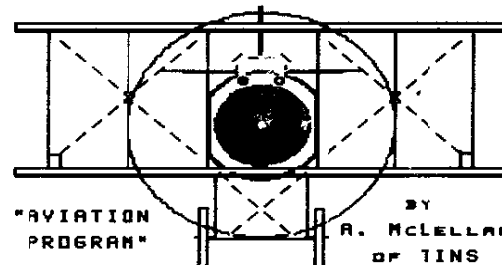
OPEN "THANK YOU" NOTE TO DAN COOPER

In early August, NUTI was the recipient of a TI-99/4A computer system, with expansion box, drives and software. We are grateful to donor Dan Cooper of State College. We are pleased that by this contribution our members no longer have to bring their own gear to set-up for meetings.

ANNUAL SWAP-SHOP SEPT. 18TH MEETING

In what's now become a yearly tradition, we will repeat our mini-fair, to be held at the next regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, the 18th of September. Bring guests, and members of other user groups, interested in buying or selling their TI hardware and/or software. Also welcomed are items generic to all computers, like printers, monitors or modems. All items to be clean, operational, and with manuals. *No Junk please!* Only original disks or cassettes with all docs to be sold. *No copies!* Tables, ac outlets, and testing software (for TI's) will be available. This is an opportunity to upgrade your current TI system at a fraction of new cost, and to unload surplus equipment before prices fall lower. For location, and directions to meeting, call Maurice at 814-238-0396.

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"AVIATION PROGRAM"

BY
R. McLELLAN
OF TINS

Last month, we listed the XBasic code for AVIATION2, actually two programs-in-one: (1) Flight Plan (pre-flight computation of time, distance and speed on up to 10 legs of a course, fuel consumption and position as track crosses a longitude); and (2) Astro program (find altitude and azimuth of body used in celestial navigation).

The programs are applicable to both aero and maritime navigation. In flight you use a bubble sextant and Air Almanac; on the water, use a marine sextant and Nautical Almanac, and substitute current for wind. Bench-marking AVIATION2 for execution time on a TI and Geneve with XBasic and MYARC ABasic v.2.99A, promised before, was nixed, being no search-and-sort routines to meaningfully compare.

Below are some data used to put the programs through their paces. Pilots can access the local Weatherstation (1200bps 8Nl 355-7191); Preliminary Flight Plan (PFP) requires coded airport identifiers. As best could be determined, using real examples from a celestial navigation course being taken with the US Power Squadrons, I find ASTRO to be "completely accurate," as claimed by author McLellan.

prompts	FLIGHT_PLAY	_responses_
No. of Positions (max 10)		3 (two legs)
Pos 1? (latitude & longitude	L 41 52N Lo 80 54W	(Ashtabula OH)
2? in degrees & minutes	L 41 02N Lo 77 39W	(Howard PA)
3? and L N/S? & Lo E/W??	L 40 51N Lo 77 50W	(StCollege PA)
TAS ? (true Air Speed in knots)		100
Fuel ? (lbs/hr) (consumption)		50
Wind ? (direction/velocity kn)		000/000
(L as track crosses intermediate Lo between positions unreported)		
	<u>Solution</u>	
Leg 1 Dist 154 nm, True Head. 108, Time	1hr 33 min, Fuel 77 lbs	
Leg 2 Dist 14 nm, True Head. 217, Time	0hr 8 min, Fuel 7 lbs	

prompts	ASTRO	_responses_
Time ? (Greenwich)		0108Z
Pos ? (L, Lo estimate)	L 41 02N Lo 77 39W	(Howard FA)
GHA ? (Greenwich hr angle body)	086 deg. 25 min	(Antares)
Dec ? (Declination of body)	26 deg. 25 min S	
	<u>Solution</u>	
Altitude (Hc) 22 deg., 04 min	Azimuth (Zn) 188 deg.	(from North)

THE SOFTWARE PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION REMINDS YOU THAT SOFTWARE PIRACY IS A FEDERAL OFFENSE WHEN A FEW PEOPLE STEAL SOFTWARE, EVERYONE SUFFERS. IF YOU GET CAUGHT, YOU COULD SPEND UP TO FIVE YEARS IN JAIL. REPORT PIRACY BY CALLING SPA HOTLINE AT 1-800-368-2188. --from a COMPUTER CHRONICLES telecast (1990)

Alright, so I'm preaching to the choir. The fact you bothered to read this means you are NOT my intended audience; those who ARE will see only the above warning message from SPA and scoff "That doesn't apply to me," and privately brag later, "I never pay for anything I can copy." Think you get my general drift?

The software publishing industry estimates that half the software used in business is pirated. For years software was copy protected for proprietary reasons. Users wanting copies for a backup or for hard drives, have used that technology to defeat any protection scheme. The see-saw battle between the authors and "hackers" is being resolved thru awareness programs, audit by software companies, or as last resort, litigation in court.

But the above doesn't hold true at the local user group level, more specifically the TI world. There is a bare chance of the the long arm of the law coming into our house or club meeting, where we can make illegal copies with little risk. Most of us would think twice before fitting a piece of software cut of a retail store. "Why that's shoplifting, it's a crime!" But how many of us would decline a copy of a new \$30 Gee-Wiz program a friend offers (we will only be "borrowing" his "single" backup copy to be sure, and that therefore will make us feel better).

How has all this evolved? Do "orphand" computerists think of themselves as a "deprived minority" with special entitlements? Are copy programs that "unprotect" ethical, in case we need an extra backup for those "honest mistakes" (Rover ate the disk)? Why should one make payment to a shareware author after paying a copy fee to the club library, or correct charges to the EBB? Do we copy programs (docs) of original paid-for disks we sell? How do we cope when asked outright for copies of new programs?

None of us are so mean-spirited that we would change a program or delete the copyright notices, without securing the author's permission. But often we do that, to coverup the trail of our copying misdeeds. And not only do we deprive an author of his intellectual property, but we also hit him where it could hurt equally or more so--his wallet. Whether the software is from a commercial source or offered through shareware, said company eventually lose the likes of the Chris Bobbitts, Mike McGanns, and others, essential for the TI and Geneve worlds to survive.

Dactylating membership in the TI world is definitely a real problem which has some interesting and real solutions.

The old guard is getting tired and its members no longer want to (or are too tired to) be presidents and newsletter editors and workshop demonstrators and bulletin board downloaders and operate well forever, particularly in what seems an unappreciative atmosphere.

Almost every newsletter I read has the same common problems: basically, too few doing too much for too long. This is true in LA and taking place within groups, if many cases with very bad vibes coming across strongly in the newsletter pleadings. Over and over we see such things as "This club is dying," and "If the members who never contribute don't start doing something soon..." followed by serious threats.

Realistically, a group without a newsletter is a corpse that hasn't yet been identified as such. There are exceptions, of course, but a club without a newsletter is a body without a brain. So, first things first, keep a newsletter going. This is also the biggest (or only) contact with the outside world through exchanges.

Next, a regular monthly meeting YEAR ROUND is essential. Without a place to gather (even if it comes to homes, as a last resort) there can be no club. A club implies a community, a spirit of friendship and commonality, a gathering. Business and pleasure must be mingled here and can only be done by meeting.

Those are the two big things. Even if your group has only three members, but you put out a newsletter and you meet regularly, you can still have a viable, worthwhile user group. Nurses 98ers of Connecticut and the Lime User Group of Ohio are two fine examples of terrific times. But, believe me, there are many, many more, and they are more common than the large, flourishing groups.

There are some other things to consider, too, of course. Is it worth complaining constantly in print and at meetings that too many are not doing their fair share. Most of the people who sit on their hands and don't take leadership roles are not capable and know it. Not everybody is a leader. Not everybody is outgoing and comfortable performing in public. There are lots of insecure (though maybe talented) people who just cannot put themselves on the line. It has nothing to do with laziness or meanness or unwillingness or lack of responsibility. Some of these people come to every meeting; all continue to pay their dues.

And, in truth, everybody in the group has, when allowed and encouraged by the leadership, probably contributed in some continuous, if not significant ways.

My own group - M.U.N.C.H. of Worcester, Mass. - is typical, I think, of most. We went from over 200 members to about 15 (5 or 6 of whom were active) to about 40 (a dozen of whom are active in one way or another). There are officers, of course. Our treasurer (Jim Cox) was one of the

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* by JACK SUGRUE, Box 459, East Douglas, MA 01516 * #3

founders and has continued to men that post and perform lots of others (including membership and newsletter editor at the present). Without him there'd be no club. Every club has a Jim Cox, someone with incredible dedication and common sense. All the rest of us have done different things: officers, editors, workshop demonstrators. Some have brought in friends; some have written programs; some have catalogued our libraries; some have repaired equipment; some have lugged in equipment or materials; some have helped with sales and fundraising and faires. All have paid their dues; most come to meetings, take part in raffles, appear interested in demos and workshops. All enjoy the company of fellow TIers, which has to be the most important aspect of a group.

A lot of us lead some incredibly busy lives. One member flies all over the country and never knows when he'll be able to make a meeting. When he comes, though, he brings enthusiasm and knowledge which he so generously shares. Our chief BBSer who provides the club with many of the library and Disk of the Month goodies misses most meetings because of courses he's taking toward a degree. His sharing doesn't stop, though, as the boards, phones, and mail demonstrate. Then there are illnesses or family matters or all the other obstructions of life in this complex age. But we're still linked by newsletter, library, and common desire to keep a good thing going and growing.

So our M.U.N.C.H. group is a success, as are lots of other groups who don't realize they are.

If you still have an operating group; if you still put out a newsletter, share materials, meet regularly, enjoy some of the friends you've made through TI - then you have a successful group. The workload may not be equitable, but no situation in life ever is.

For what it's worth, here are a few suggestions to get members reinvolved, revitalized: At the next club meeting find out the following:

- 1) What kinds of newsletter does the club want (type-in programs, latest hard/software, reviews, club news, graphics, whatever)
- 2) If everyone would be willing to contribute something to a raffle (blank disks, tapes, cables, non TI stuff even)
- 3) If all members would dig through old disks and tapes and locate at least THREE programs they like (or liked back in the old days) to add to a giant Club D.O.M. (games, utilities, kids' programs, LOGO stuff, tutorial text files, whatever)
- 4) And maybe demo at least ONE???
- 5) Hold a NOVICE NIGHT! This would be to introduce beginners, older kids, and definitely long-time TIers to the fun of writing in BASIC (or XB). I know there are thousands of TI users who became comfortable with their machines and have used them successfully for years and are now ready to learn to program or would take a refresher. All the old newsletters contain GREAT little tutorials, type-in programs, etc. Just what the doctor orders for a new boost in attitude. Maybe this would be a continuing thing with EVERYBODY who wants to gettting involved in research, xercxing, demoing, tutoring, whatever. But mostly sharing and helping. There are more of us amateurs out there (probably 1000 to 1) than wizards.

In order to get reformed we need to remember the three Rs: Review, Rethink, Rekindle!

SMART-ONE (tm) . . . A SMART MOVE?

"Completely solid state...two year guarantee... myriad of options...switch settings are done by means of nonvolatile RAM...truly powerful piece of equipment...modem worked, out of the box, with both TELCO and FAST TERM...excellent manual)...FULLY Hayes-compatible...you can't beat the price."

I was impressed by some of the above features that appeared in a product review by Art Byers in his *Central Westchester 99ers* on-disk newsletter (5), almost a year-and-a-half ago. All the hyperbole was not lost on me, however, and if 2400bps external modems ever fell below that magic \$100 threshold, I planned to use this evaluation as a benchmark for any future purchase. Like Art, I also wondered when modem prices were ever going to bottom out. With the threat of inflation now a reality due to the present oil situation, I made the right move at this time.

It wasn't as though I *had* to replace my current modem. My old AVATEX 1200e has given me much long and faithful service, with nary a wimper. With the chance to *move up* at a bargain price, it was easy to rationalize I *really* needed the 2400 baud: (1) I could see characters *begin "forming" pixel-by-pixel*, as they lumbered across my screen; (2) with prospects of reduced input to our newsletter, due to pending changes in NUTTI, there would be *more frequent* use, and *longer* downloads from EBB's, and on-line services. *Speed*, here, means *lower* connect charges; and (3) simply put, *IMAGE*. Like being "with it," technologically.

After plodding through a few recent issues of *COMPUTER SHOPPER* (*Product Index* gives you item, manufacturer, vendor and page), I placed an order with the same vendor Byers bought his modem:

QUICK ELECTRONICS	SMART-ONE 2400X	\$95.00
7381 114th Ave. N. 4038	Shipping UPS	10.00
Largo, FL 34643	Incl. pwr. supply, manual	
1-800-358-4072	and BitCm (PC) software.	

No surcharge on credit cards Got 4-day delivery by UPS
My new modem readily accepted the serial cable I used with the Avetex. I reconfigured terminal emulator TELCO for 2400 baud, and in terminal mode, keyed in these SMART-ONE modem commands:

AT&F&D29C150=1&W	ATL3&W
Sets DTR active, DCD active	Sets speaker volume to
high (due to noise of my	
Auto Answer ON after 1st ring	PEB & dshumidifier fans)

These &W suffix commands wrote the above configuration to non-volatile memory. Any default pre-set at the factory was kept. My modem has responded *without error* to all the built-in tests I've conducted so far. Modem commands in the manual are *easy*. A trouble-shooting guide is included (haven't yet had to use). My SMART-ONE modem has performed *flawlessly* for the month I've owned it. I commend it to you for *very serious* consideration.

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