



OSHTI  
99/4A  
COMPUTER  
USERS GROUP

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## JUNE OSHTI MEETING

The May meeting proved to be another busy one. Bob Young and Bernie Bishop both had their PEB upgraded to twin double sided disk drives. Both were tested out and proved to be successfully installed.

There were a number of demonstrations shown. The main one was TI-ARTIST PLUS. I have nothing but praise for the excellent upgrade from the older version of TI-ARTIST.

The current version I have is 1.03. The file ARTIST has been changed and will not work with the ASGARD Artist Plus loader. So be warned. What I did to get my mouse to work on vsn. 1.03 was to use the older vsn. 1.01 of ARTIST. This seems to work fine with the rest of TIA-Plus.

The print-outs for TIA-Plus are much better than TIA ever was. There is more selections of print-outs and you can even put two Pictures side by side even if the files are on different diskettes. There is also a way to do Banners, but I haven't tried it out yet.

The May STSer disk from Toronto had a demonstration of the new GIF file loader for the 99/4A. This utility should prove to be quite an addition to the TI 99/4A software. It will allow us to access a lot of GIF files

from any EBS etc. For details on how to order this programme see the article latter.

The STSer disk also included the fine game JUMPY which was to be released in 1984 by TI. The point of the game is to 'box-in' the little 'gremlins'.

The OSHTI disk for June was GAMEWARE. Included were a variety of games from the usual 'shoot em up' (SPACE BANDITS and SUPERFLY) to the more 'intellectual' type of games like TREASURE (a maze of 99 caves) and WHO DUN IT (similar to CLUE). This later game will now run from the MENU loader thanks to John Johnson's X-loader.

## CHEQUE BOOK LEDGER



CHECK BOOK LEDGER from the Great Lakes Computer Group in Roseville MI was demonstrated using Multi Plan. This template provides you with a ledger worksheet which totals the posted amounts to determine the amount of a check, the checkbook balance, and other relevant factors that you may have wanted your written ledger to contain. It calculates cash on hand with the information taken from the checking and savings account's balances. Once a month the worksheet is updated to allow for the year-to-date totalling of deposits, checks written, withdrawals etc.

Contributions for this template along with ideas etc. can be sent to:  
 GREAT LAKES COMPUTER GROUP INC.  
 P.O. BOX 152  
 ROSEVILLE, MI  
 48066-0152

I believe they are asking for a \$10 donation.

I learned one new thing from using this programme. The BLANK function from the main menu will also do ODD SIZES by first defining a NAME for the area and then using BLANK with the NAME that you picked. The writers of the above programme have defined the work 'new' to do just that. So I learned a 'new' trick for Multi Plan.



## X-10 HOME POWERHOUSE

The X-10 Home Controller Interface for the IBM computer can be used from our TI 99/4A. The software to drive the X-10 came from LAKE SOFTWARE in Eastlake Ohio, via Randy Rossetto of the 9T9er group. Thanks Randy again. I demonstrated how to turn a light off and on as well as to dim it and to programme it into the interface.

While the X-10 has been around for some time, it was originally available for the TI using a cartridge and adapter thru the joy-stick port. The advantage of using the IBM interface is availability and possibly cost. The IBM uses the RS232 to access the device, so this makes it relatively simple to use from the TI. I used my modem cable as it was set up for a HAYES COMPATIBLE MODEM and it works just fine; I have a splitter cable for the RS232 card and 4 leads going to the modem(or interface box) (you must set-up the

second RS232 port for the programme). Below is the cabling required.

(Note: I have the 25 pin DIN attached to the interface CP 290. You can purchase a 9 pin DIN so be careful which you ask for. Both are FEMALE so you will need a MALE-MALE RS232 25 pin cable like the one I suggest below.)

RS232 on TI CABLE (end)  
 pin pin

GRND 7	_____	7	GRND
OTPT 3	TXD/1	_____	2 TXD
INPT 2	RXD/1	_____	3 RXD
INPT 20	DTR/2	_____	20 DTR

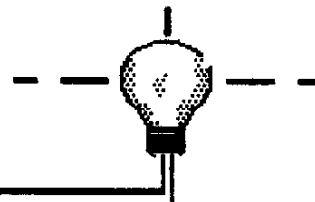
When you use the splitter cable plus the above cable you can interface to most IBM type interfaces. If you use the above cable, you are essentially using the following configuration:

RS232/2 on TI DEVICE (en)  
 pin pin

GRND 7	_____	7	GRND
TXD/2	16	_____	2 TXD
RXD/2	14	_____	3 RXD
DTR/2	19	_____	20 DTR

The address I have is:  
 LAKE SOFTWARE  
 1269 East 348 Street  
 Eastlake, OHIO  
 44094

Paul Wheeler | is the programmer.



The X-10 has 3 basic modules.

- 1) the appliance module
- 2) computer interface
- 3) mini controller

As mentioned above, the computer interface (CP290P IBM interface) is programmed via the software. You can also control the system directly from this interface

since it has 8 buttons. However, the mini-controller has a nice feature. It can go anywhere in the house since it only needs to be plugged in. It can turn ALL the lights ON or OFF with the push of a button. It can also dim any of the lights. You can place it beside your bed at night in case you forget to turn off a light or just want to leave a light on till someone gets home.

The computer interface has a built in clock to keep the time. If power goes off it will keep working as long as you have put a 9 Volt battery in it before hand.

There are more modules available than just the off, on type. There are also sensors for detection of intruders, eg. motion detectors, magnetic catch etc.

If you're worried about home security then the X-10 is a fairly economical way to go. After the initial cost for 4 light modules, a mini-controller and the computer interface (cost was about \$200 Canadian), more modules can be purchased as you means becomes available. You don't have to pay thousands at the start.

(The X-10 used to be called the BSR System X-10. Today it's called X-10 POWERHOUSE.)

Tom.

**PIC**



**NIG**

This year I hope we can get together in July to let the families of our OSHTI members have some fun too. I am looking at the dates July 7 or July 15. These are both Sundays. We could get together at my (Tom) place at about 2 pm and do some

swimming, canoeing (pond) or play some horseshoes or just laze around in the sun. Later we can Bar-B-Q.

I know these dates may not be the best for everyone, so I will be phoning everyone to see which is the best one.

Tom.

## **SPELL-IT** **VSN 1.05**

Late in June (22nd) I received an updated version of SPELL-IT from ASGARD. This is version 1.05. As I have mentioned in previous newsletters there were some serious 'flaws' in that it would not work with my HORIZON RAM DISK. Well, they have managed to get it working with more MYARC hard ware systems than previous versions. The upgrade only involved the LOAD, CONFIGURE and SPELLIT programmes. The word files remain unchanged.

I am really impressed with the excellent way in which they have supported this new product in its infancy. ASGARD (Chris Bobbitt) is to be congratulated.

I have tried out the new version and am happy to say that it works with an HRD using VSN 8.14 (Gary Bowser/MUG) MENU system. However, it WILL NOT ACCESS the DU 80 files on the HRD. But it works OK for 'real drives'; I can't speak for the Hard Drive Controller only the MYARC floppy controller.

This means that I will be able to put out better spelled work in the future. I think SPELL-IT will proved to be a super piece of software that every newsletter editor will want.

A NEW feature of the

programme is that it creates a NEW FILE (ended with S) on your disk. This is the corrected file. Make sure that the file you are working on is 9 characters NOT 10. Better still, make it 8 characters or even less. You can always RENAME the file later. Make sure there is ENOUGH ROOM on your disk for the new file, otherwise, there will be trouble.

The other NEW FEATURE which really is welcomed is the high-lighting of the work using REVERSE screen colours. This makes it much easier to see it.

There is also an UNDOCUMENTED mention that the Foreground and Background colours can be toggled thru and selected during the CONFIGURE programme prior to pressing ENTER at the ENTER/REDO prompt JUST press F and/or B . This also works for earlier versions.

Tom



**CANADA**

**&  
MEECH  
LAKE**



I realize that my article last month, called 'EH CANADA' was not what you might have expected from a computer newsletter, but as I mentioned it was to address a concern that some people in other clubs in the US (or England) might be wondering about when they hear things second-hand about Canada.

Since June 23 has passed and the MEECH LAKE ACCORD has sunk, very little has happened. There have been some pro-nationalist(Quebec) demonstrations but nothing out of the ordinary. As I said, this problem (French-English) has been in

Canada(North America) for hundreds of years. Progress comes very slow.

Economically, the Canadian dollar has not fallen apart there is no noticeable change in everyday living, at least in Ontario and probably in Quebec. The Newfoundlander's have been the fall-guys for the failure of the accord. In actual fact, it was the Native Peoples (Indians etc.) who had a lot to do with the demise of the accord. The Native Peoples of course were NOT discussed in the Meech Lake Accord anyway. Several Quebec politicians have switched from their traditional parties to sit as independents in the legislature, but life goes on with its usual regularity.

Quebec has said only one thing, which is not really new nor unusual, namely that they will only make bi-lateral agreements with anyone, i.e. between other provinces, the federal government, rather than with all 9 other provinces. In effect, this has been going on for some time anyway.

So there you have it, no big deal. Canada will continue to plod along like all democratic countries, trying this and that to make all peoples in it united under one constitution.

By the way, happy 123rd birthday Canada on July 1.

Tom Jakabfy, June 26, 1990



**DELPHI  
GUIDE**

When I joined DELPHI, I chose the special offer for new users and bought the introductory package which includes the OFFICIAL DELPHI GUIDE. The book arrived within 10 days as promised

and it is over 280 pages of information. The nice thing about it is that it has been updated in 1990 by Michael A. Banks. It is well organized and tells you specific information about how DELPHI is set up and how to maximize your time on the system.

Since I joined for the simple reason of becoming a TI Group member, I was impressed by reading about all of the other options available to me. Here are some of the other things that you can do besides join a computer club.

- >BUSINESS and FINANCE
- >ENTERTAINMENT
- >TRAVEL
- >LIBRARY
- >MAIL
- >MERCHANTS' ROW
- >CONFERENCES

Let's look at BUSINESS and FINANCE:

You can use the following services:

- > UPI business news
  - > COMMODITY QUOTES prices from major markets delayed 15 minutes.
  - > DOW JONES AVERAGES half-hourly reports on industrial and other indices
- The list goes on and on. If you use DELPHI during the day when it's more expensive, then this could be of interest to you.

What does entertainment have to offer? Well here is a brief look.

- > ADVENTURE GAMES: play against electronic foes.
- > ASTRO PREDICTIONS : horoscopes, natal charts.
- > BOARD/LOGIC GAMES: computer simulated board games involving logic > FLIP-IT! the game of OTHELLO.
- > HOLLYWOOD HOTLINE for those who don't read the STAR or Nat. Enquirer.
- > MUSIC REVIEWS of latest albums.

> SCRAMBLE WORD GAME a multi-player game.

> MOVIE REVIEWS of the latest flicks.

Again the list goes on further.

As you can see from just the brief outline above of just two of the possible ways of using DELPHI, there is a lot to choose from and now I know why they call it a LIFE-TIME membership when you join; it will probably take that long to find out about all that is available.

New issue of the OSHTI newsletter I'll try to tell you what is available to the TI users of the system. Till then....disconnected.

Tom Jakabfy, OSHTI June 90.

## ZENO BOARD



One of these days, I probably won't have to write anymore articles regarding the ZENO board, but here's one little thing that still bothers me.

I have all the parts of the ZENO board up and running:

- > XBASIC
- > 32K
- > CLOCK
- > 4 GROMS (ED/ASS BUDGET MAN.,DM-II, TI-W)
- > SPEECH SYNTHESIZER

There is a nissy little problem that I still have. The switch to turn the speech synthesizer on and off must be left ON all the time otherwise the powerup routine will not work (black screen and random notes or noises).

By the way, I have added 7 LEDs to show that each of the above circuits is on, with the exception of the clock. I known, I know, it looks like a christmas tree but

what the hay.

Recently, I was plagued with troubles with X BASIC. It would crash on power-up. I went in (again...102th time probably) and took a look. I resoldered two wires on the rotary selector switch and this did the trick. Back to normal. Well everything still works but the system will not powerup unless the speech is ON.

My system includes an HRD and a RAVE keyboard. So I tried the system with no disk system on and the same problem occurs.

If you can help please drop me a line either in the usual mail (Newsletter address) or on DELPHI (TJAKABFY)

Thanks.



The Spirit of 99 (CONNI Newsletter) had a very positive review on the ASGARD game **ROCK RUNNER**. Apparently, this game makes use of an otherwise unknown graphics format for the TI 99/4A (not for the GENEVE). The cost of the GAME is \$12.95. plus \$1.50 shipping. ASGARD SOFTWARE P.O. BOX 10306 ROCKVILLE, MD 20849

Cerealously, it is in ROCKVILLE, I'm sure that was a pure coincidence, eh Chris



**OSSD  
FUNNELWEB**

Since so many of our group members have now got DOUBLE SIDED (not double density guys) disk drives, this summer I will be putting together a version of

FUNNELWEB for ya. This will include a lot more features since the DISK REVIEW programme took up so mu space.

Just bring you FUNNELWEB disk in and get the update put on it.



Well I got a surprise in the mail in June, a cheque, in fact I wrote it Nov. 15, 1988. This was my pre-paid cheque for PRESS. Yes, PRESS, the phantom programme that ASGARD has had so much trouble with. Well, was it the programme or the programmer hey had the trouble with. I have published the letter that Chris sent out. I believe it was difficult to write this letter and the sincerity is truly there. You can make up your own mind when you re it (PAGE 9).

I hope that Chris has now got this monkey off his back, I know he has got a lot of ribbing about it.

I only hope my bank will honour the cheque after such a late date; what will I do if it doesn't? O Chris!



**HI RES-  
GIFs  
99/40**

\*\*\*\* ANNOUNCING NEW AND EXCITING WORLDS OF GRAPHICS FOR YOUR TI-99/4A!!!! \*\*\*\*

Now available for IMMEDIATE release is the new GIF Picture Loader software by

Barry Boone. This powerful software will allow you to tap into the tens thousands of GIF pictures, available from sources EVERYWHERE and convert them into the convenient TI Artist

format for viewing and manipulation. The two pictures enclosed in this archive are just examples of some of the great artwork that is just waiting to be tapped into by the TI community.

#### WHAT IS GIF?

GIF (Graphics Interchange Format) is a format for storing picture files that was developed by CompuServe so that various machines could exchange graphics.

Up until now, the only TI-ish machine that could deal with the GIF format was the Myarc Geneve. Now, any TI user who has one disk drive and memory expansion can take advantage of these pictures.

256 x 192 screen size to 640 x 400 to 1024 x 768, or even larger... if you desire, this powerful software will automatically reduce even the largest GIF picture to fit on a 256 x 192 screen... OR you may wish to simply window around the larger picture, looking at only one part of it at a time. GIF pictures may also contain up to 256 colors out of a possible 16 MILLION colors!

Since the TI may display only 16 colors, the software has more than one method of deciding WHICH TI colors to use where... this allows you to find the color selection method that brings out the best details of your picture.

#### WHERE DO YOU FIND GIF PICTURES?

If you have a modem, it is as simple as calling a local BBS or a commercial system such as GENie, CompuServe, or Delphi. GIF pictures are

on other computers, so BBS's that cater to other machines, or Geneve users, is the best place to find them. As TI users discover the GIF format, I expect the TI-oriented systems to begin filling with them rapidly. If you do not have a modem, your user group is a good place to find them, or your friendly local Geneve user, or a friend with a modem... even a friend with another machine, such as an Amiga, or IBM PC...

\*\*\*\*\*

The GIF Picture Loader software is available for \$15 plus \$2.00 shipping and handling. The address is:

Barry Boone  
P.O. Box 1233  
Sand Springs, OK  
74063

Future updates will be available for the cost of materials, shipping, etc.

(around \$4-\$5) and will enable you to CREATE GIF pictures, load and create Myarc files, as well as other formats (like RLE).

## HARRY SPEAKS.

### THE VIEW FROM THE POINT

By Harry Brashear

From the Northern Nevada 99ers newsletter.

My view this month is of all the other computers in the world. It was fueled by a letter to the editor from the June Computer Shopper.

The letter was one of thanks to CS for supporting classic computers (all of the 8-bit wonders), TI included. It made me realize that I am not the only one in the world that is being trampled to

death by the Big Blue Syndrome. There are Atari people, Commie people, Sinclair, Adam, and even CPM 86ers.

The majority of these people had a better chance than we did. The companies that they bought their machines from, went on to offer others. This, at least, allowed the owners to remain loyal to a product line. If they didn't want to move up thought, they were harassed just as much as we were. Like us, the companies have dropped these people like hot potatoes, simply because they weren't ready to switch. Also like us, they are now totally dependant on their own communities for hardware and software. (This hasn't happened to the Coco as yet... but look out!)

We hang on to the TI because it is different. It's simple, powerful, programmable, useful, and does everything a computer is supposed to do for us.

Unfortunately, we are constantly being told how much better other computers are. The new 486 chip will extend the present clone speed to 60mhz. It's amazing, when you consider that it will require as much code as is in the TI-Writer Editor, to slow it's input down. (That's so a person can type his name legibly without repeating letters.) What's the point? I know there are reasons for all of this, but somehow, I just don't think it applies to you, me, and the rest of the orphans.

There are five major elements that interface between us and any given computer. They are: the word processor, the data-base, the spreadsheet,

graphics, and finally, entertainment. (I should also include communications, but less than half the users get into that.) General speaking, we, and the others, have all those elements, and they are getting better every day. Why? Simply because, we as users want better, and the creators of the software keep up with those demands. For John Doe, average home computer user, that's enough.

For the techie, the guy that insists that faster and bigger is better, there is never enough. He has the same requirements you and I do, and will accomplish the same results. He balances his checkbook with LOTUS, makes yardsale posters with VENTURA, keeps his Christmas address list on D-BASE, and writes letters with WORD PERFECT. The only difference is, that it costs him twelve hundred dollars more for the programs.

Some of us, sometimes, are faced with broader requirements, and therefore are forced to move up one function at a time. That can't be helped. We hang on for as long as we dare, but there is no doubt that big business requires big memories. That's a problem that occurs to only a few people though. For the most part, we can all be quite grateful for what we have; a little eight bit, or sixteen bit computer that does exactly what we tell it to do.

Long live the 9900, the 6502, and the 280!

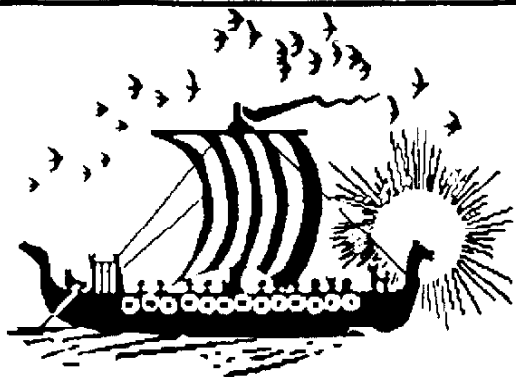
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**Asgard Software, P.O. Box 10306, Rockville, MD 20849, (703)255-3085**



Dear Friend,

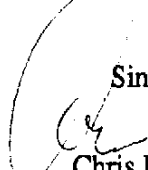
This letter has been a long time in coming, but I wanted to make sure that I had my facts completely straight before writing. I'm sorry to say that I don't believe the *Press* software package, that we first announced at the Chicago TI Faire in 1988, will be completed in the foreseeable future. This isn't to say that *Press* will never be released - considering that every other prediction I've ever made regarding this program has been incorrect, perhaps the chances just went up while you are reading this. In all honesty, this whole project has been at the mercy of Charles Earl for a long time, and I'm just as disappointed as you are that it hasn't materialized. There is still a chance that Charles might give me a call someday and say "Hey - I just found that problem with *Press*...". We can always hope I guess.

While Charles hasn't given me exact reasons why the program hasn't been finished - I personally believe it is because the program tries to do too many new things at the same time. The problem from the beginning is that the program is too complex to be understood in its entirety by a single person - even a person with Charles' prodigious programming talents.

The TI community has attached almost mythic importance to this program over the last two years. I've heard many people say it was the only reason they still owned a TI-99/4A. Geneve owners have repeatedly painted it as the savior for this embattled computer. While I'm flattered, I really don't think our community is going to live or die by this one program. While *Press* promised to revolutionize word processing - the most popular application of our computer - we still have a selection of good word processing programs. It's not as if there is no word processing software for our machine. Even if we can't release *Press*, Asgard Software can at least extend the capabilities of the word processors we have. Our *Spell It!* spelling checker is just the first program in a series of programs that will bring the *TI-Writer* standard up to modern day expectations. If we can't bring *Press* to the TI community, we can at least bring ideas from it - *Spell It!* is comparable to the spelling checker we planned for *Press* in every way.

This letter is more than a mea culpa, however. There are a number of practical considerations that have to be made. Enclosed please find your original check or money order. Fortunately, for many, the money you spent on *Press* never left your bank account! Thank you for your support, and I hope we can help you in the future get more use and enjoyment from your TI-99/4A or Myarc Geneve 9640.

Sincerely,

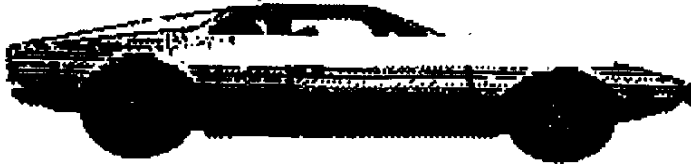


Chris Bobbitt  
General Manager

P.S. We have about 200 binders that say *Press* all over them in stock. If you'd like a *Press* binder and slip case, complete with tabs, disk pages, and a copy of the last beta version of *Press* with an official *Press* label, either enclose a check for \$25.00. The first 50 ordered will also come with the preliminary *Press* manual. These binders are the perfect size for storing small manuals, and would certainly be a conversational piece! Of course, supply is limited - if you want one you have to act fast.

OSHTI JUNE 90 -9-

# PLANS 40 SUMMER

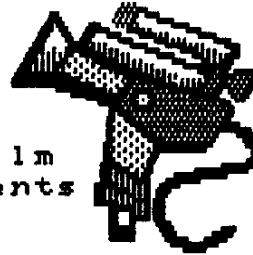


TRAVEL



Buy a new CAR!?

Film Events



COMPUTE!



## OSHAWA TEXAS INSTRUMENTS HOME COMPUTER USERS' GROUP

- CHAIRMAN: RAY BLODGETT  
(579-1767)
- VICE CHAIRMAN: JOHN EASTHAM  
(728-9994)
- TREASURER: GUY LAFONTAINE  
(576-5910)
- LIBRARY/SEC.: DOUG BURLEIGH  
(579-5109)
- NEWSLETTER EDITOR: TOM JAKABFY  
(725-7238)
- MEMBER-AT-LARGE: -----

## MEMBERSHIP FEES:

The OSHTI membership is \$15 per family per year. Members receive ten(10) newsletters per year.(Jan.-Jun. Sep.-Dec.). Members also have the use of the club library (CASSETTE + DISK). VISITORS to club meetings are WELCOME. Copying charges for disks-of-the-Month are \$1(your disk) or \$2(our disk).

## MAILING ADDRESS:

OSHTI  
c/o Tom Jakabfy  
660 Given Rd.  
OSHAWA, Ont.  
L1G 8L7

## MEETING TIMES:

The OSHAWA TI USERS' GROUP (OSHTI) meets between the hours of 7:30 and 10:30 pm. Location to be named in the newsletter.

The OSHTI Users' Group is a Non-profit organization dedicated to encouraging the continued use of the TI/994A for education, entertainment and data management. The club also supports the MYARC 964 or GENEVE(TI compatible) computer.

# OSHTI

