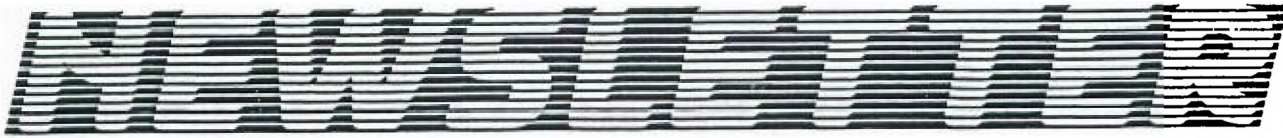




The Ottawa T.I. 99/4 Users' Group



VOLUME 4/NUMBER 01.....JANUARY 1985

# C o n t e n t s

NEXT MEETING.....THURSDAY 7th of FEBRUARY, 1985, starting at 7:30pm at the Merivale High School, 1755 Merivale Road in Nepean.

EXECUTIVE NOTES...Dues, survey, Multiplan sub-group library list, code of ethics, Corcomp report, and library report.

FEATURE ARTICLES..R.A.GREENE commences the new year with PART 1 of 5 articles dealing with the Personal Record Keeping Module...B.BOONE in PRIOR PATTERNS puts CORCOMP DISK CONTROLLER CARD to the test..B.CARON has the BBS report and part 3 DISK BIT MAP..Spotlight on Youth by SHAWN MILLAR...Warped Disk Awards.

DEADLINE for the FEBRUARY issue will be the 18th of FEB. 1985.

**THE THICK ONE**

The Ottawa T.I. 99/4 Users' Group - 2144 Station D Ottawa, Ontario

**\*WARNING\*.....THIS IS A "FINAL EDITION"**  
for all who have not paid their dues.

# CHAIRMAN'S TWO CENTS WORTH

by Bill Sponchia

## General Meeting:

I would like to thank, on behalf of the Group, Mr. David Todd, manager of DATAPAC 3101, Telecom Canada, for his demonstration on Datapac. I was greatly impressed and can see where this service could be put to use by us "small" people.

For anyone at the meeting this wouldn't come as a big surprise but the proposed Constitution amendment did not pass, in fact it wasn't even voted on. There were a few technical problems such as certain definitions. This, hopefully, has been resolved and the amendment will again be placed on the floor for passage.

Our next meeting will comprise of the Amendment discussion (and hopefully) passage followed by demonstrations of MBX - baseball using voice recognition and DRAW A BIT - the ability to draw pictures. These demonstrations will be looked after by John Altorio and Bob Boone.

## 1985 Membership Dues:

Please be advised that the 1985 membership dues are overdue. As in previous years, realizing some have just forgot to renew, we are again mailing out the January Newsletter to everyone who held 1984 membership. Unless the 1985 membership dues (\$20.00) are paid the February issue will not be sent. Therefore avoid missing a copy and get your dues paid now. If you have lost your registration form there will be extra copies at the meeting.

## Survey:

If you have not filled in your Group Survey form yet please do so. If you have misplaced this form extra copies will be available at the meeting.

## Tutorials/Workshops:

The Intermediate and Advanced Tutorials are going full steam ahead. Anyone already taking either know when they are being held. If you hope to start but need to know dates phone Berry Minuk at 234-5472. Unfortunately due to lack of requests the Beginners Tutorial session due to start in late January will not be put on. If enough demand is later generated this tutorial can be reinstated.

The Programming seminar that was planned is also put on hold due to lack of response.

Anyone wishing to attend a Multi-Plan workshop please contact John Altorio at 224-8440.

# HOTLINE NUMBERS

The executive has expressed a desire to assist all members should you have some problems or have some questions, do some library swapping or borrow a book. This will be the place to look. Of course if you wish to be placed on the list just give me a call...I know there is a lot of expertise within our Group. I hope to add to this list and improve the coding. Please respect normal hours unless you specifically know that someone doesn't mind a call at 3am or use the BBS to leave a message at 738-0617.

BILL SPONCHIA.....CHAIRMAN.....TUTORIALS,B,XB.....(M)523-0878  
BERRY MINUK.....V/CHAIRMAN...TUTORIALS.B,XB,ASL,F,.....(M)234-5472  
JOHN ALTORIO.....TREASURER....FINANCES,B,XB,Mmp,L,CC....(M)224-8440  
JANE LAFLAMME.....SECRETARY....RECORDS,BBS,B,XB,Mwp,Lb,Lc(M)837-1719  
BOB BOONE.....P/CHAIRMAN...U/G CO-ORD,Ld,I,S,SS,CC... (M)623-7841  
BRUCE CARON.....SYSOP.....BBS,ASL,I,R,CC.....(M)733-7675  
PAUL BERLINGUETTE.EDITOR.....NEWSLETTER,R,I,Lb,CC.....(M)741-6175  
TONY HOPKINS.....ADVERTISING..Ld,Lb.....746-4463  
CLIFF PROCTOR.....Mp,S.....(M)824-0056  
ART GREEN.....ASL.....837-1955

SOFTWARE:::ASL=ASSEMBLY LANGUAGE  
B=BASIC  
F=FORTH  
L=LOGO  
Lb=BOOKS/MAGAZINES  
Lc=CASSETTE LIBRARY  
Ld=DISK LIBRARY  
M=MODEM

Mp=PLATO  
Mea=EDITOR ASSEMBLER  
Mmm=MINI-MEMORY  
Mmp=MULTIPLAN  
Mwp=TI WRITER  
S=SALES  
XB=EXTENDED BASIC

HARDWARE:::CC=CORCOMP EQ.,I=INSTALLATION,R=REPAIR,SS=SALES

**\*\*SUPPORT ADVERTISERS WHO SUPPORT YOU\*\***



## EDITOR COMMENTS

Our BBS has been improved again(INFO-MART),and it looks excellent. Rumor has it that we will be looking for a new SYSOP in the near future and our loss will be a Kingston gain. Hate to see you go Bruce. Excellent sales of software library at the last meeting,13 cassettes(5 speech,8 games) and 15 diskettes(6 utilities,1 game,5 Nutrition,1 CAI, 2 speech). If you are looking for more or you don't want to miss out,check the Febuary library page and see what is available for the next meeting. Looking for our User Group Book Library? Well there are two locations,one in the east and one in the west with a duplicate set of books so phone before you go and they are located at Jane Laflamme residence and E.O.S. Don't forget to pay your dues and the contest that was in the last N/L will be valid until this upcoming meeting due to the shortage of time at the last meeting. Check the ads out...Great work Tony.

I had an excellent chat with JACKIRAE SAGOUSPE, president of CORCOMP INC. and things are certainly sunny across the way in California. In Febuary a call is being made to MYARC of NEW JERSEY, so if you have any questions that you wish to be asked then,contact me so I can draft my questionnaire sheet. Has anyone seen an issue of Enthusiast'99 since the MAY/JUNE issue of 84? I'd like to throw a brick at the person who walked off with a NAVARONE CARTRDGE EXPANDER at the last meeting,with friends like you who needs enemies! I hope you have all submitted your survey sheets as it will provide a big assist to the executive and their planning. LAURIER BOOKS in L'esplanade Laurier office,181 Bank st. is giving a 20 % discount on all TI books. ADDISON of Montreal spent \$100,000 for their new catalog which contain a lot of excellent buys and spare parts for the 4a as mentioned last month but I forgot to mention cassette cables, a single for 2.50 and a double for 3.95,original TI. The deal of the month goes to K-MART for selling orignal TI joysticks new for 2.00 a pair.

Both the December and January meetings saw close to 70 people in attendance at each meeting and along the same wavelengh the noise and interruptions are way down,so a tip of the hat goes out to you. Let me go on record as supporting the "CODE OF ETHICS" for our Group. The executive has spent many hours to come up with it,so lets show them the support they deserve and get this behind us and onto better things and ideas!!!! John is getting a Multi-Plan sub-group together and he would like to hear from you. Thank you Jane,EMPHASIZE mode for this N/L is now possible,looks great eh? Larry,why did you give up on your orphan and why isn't a National BBS feasible? UMBBS/DATAPAC thanks for the try maybe somebody will.....

## **\*\*CONSTITUTIONAL ADDITIONS\*\***

At the last meeting it was approved by the membership that something should be in the constitution addressing PROPRIETARY\* software.

\*DEFINITION:pertaining to a proprietor;subject to exclusive ownership.Protected as to name,composition,or process of manufacture by copyright,patent,secrecy,or other means.(from dictionary)

\*DEFINITION OF PROPRIETARY SOFTWARE(USER GROUP DEFINITION) :is software published by a software publisher who is still in business or has sold the rights and the product is still on the market. PROPRIETARY SOFTWARE does not include programs published in books or magazines.

The Executive committee recommends to the membership the following additions to the constitution in keeping with the above motion.

### **CODE OF ETHICS**

ITEM 13.1...."The Group does not condone nor encourage the copying of any proprietary software by its members. Neither will it knowingly allow any proprietary software to be placed into its software library."

ITEM 13.2...."Any Group member who knowingly distributes or receives proprietary software which was written by another Group member,without that member's expressed permission is subject to immediate removal of all his/her membership privileges."

ITEM 13.3...."Any Group member who deliberately makes copies of any programs from another member's personal library without that member's expressed permission is subject to immediate removal of all his/her membership privileges."

ITEM 13.4...."As the payment of the annual membership fees is an acceptance of the constitution of the Group,removal of the membership privileges due to violation of 13.2 and/or 13.3 is not grounds for a refund of all,or a portion of the paid membership fees."

ITEM 13.5...."The removal of membership privileges means that the membership card will be revoked."

ITEM 13.6...."The procedure to be followed for alleged violations of 13.2 and/or 13.3 are:

i)A complaint must be submitted in writing,to one or more members of the Executive,giving the nature of the alleged violation,the accused's name(s) and the complainant's name(s),telephone number and membership number.

ii)The accused member(s) will be notified of the complaint by an Executive member.

iii)The Executive committee will appoint a 3-person adhoc committee to hear the complaint.

iv) An adhoc committee meeting will be convened as quickly as possible (preferably within 7 days) to which the complainant and the accused will be asked to attend. They may in turn invite witnesses.

v) The adhoc committee will hear evidence, ask questions as it deems necessary and render its decision.

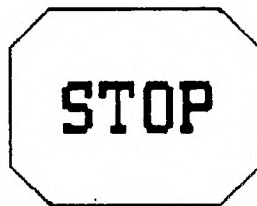
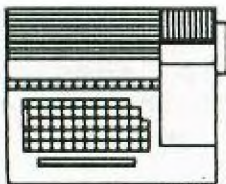
vi) The decision maybe appealed to the Executive committee."

ITEM 13.7.... "The expelled member may not reapply for membership for a period of not less than 12 months."

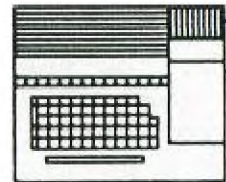
THE PRINCIPLE OF THE MATTER IS IRREVOCABLE IN THE EYES OF THE EXECUTIVE AND THEY ARE UNANIMOUS IN THEIR STAND. A VOTE OF NON-CONFIDENCE WILL INVOKE AN EMERGENCY ELECTION OF A NEW EXECUTIVE ACCORDING TO A TIMETABLE TO BE SET BY THE CHAIRMAN.

\*\*\*\*\*

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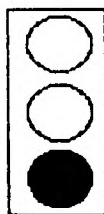
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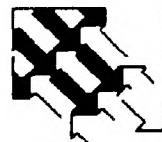
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## CORCOMP REPORT

Right now CorComp is in the middle of shipping out lots of the 9900 MICRO expansion system (neat and compact system housing an RS232, 32k and a Disk Controller card). It was the first full week of production for the system. After rumours of the 99000 being put back on the drawing board it seems very likely that the medium sized system is being permanently shelved because it will not handle the PASCAL card or the 128K card along with other problems. There would be a long delay in getting UL approval for the new power supply and the two engineers who were responsible for the main design did not have all the boards up to speed when they left the company. As a point of interest CORCOMP employs 10 people in the electronic manufacturing field.

Jackierae was full of optimism for the present and future operation of CORCOMP. When asked about a TI CLONE I was assured that none was forthcoming via CC as personal computer market is so volatile and is considered a poor venture capital risk. A new issue of CURSOR was in the printing shop and due to be mailed shortly. No plans to enter the software market but don't discount it entirely. CC is planning diversification into the TI product line as well as other avenues with other product lines. Products will be introduced next year for the TI but there will be a working prototype before announcements are made avoiding problems previously encountered. The 80 column card has been discussed as well as the PASCAL card. The problem with the PASCAL card is that it is very expensive to obtain the rights from the university, and the chances of this becoming public domain are very remote. Also months of software development would be required so it doesn't look good for this item.

The problems with the DISK Controller card have been solved with the purchase of new equipment and employing technicians with a consumer market background rather than an industrial one. Undetected alignment problems was the major gremlin. User Group specials will continue and stay tuned for new things from CORCOMP. Bob Boone has rated the DISK CONTROLLER CARD in this issue and in the near future he will have a report on the 9900 MICRO SYSTEM...GOOD LUCK CORCOMP AND THANK YOU TO JACKIERAE SAGOUSPE, PRESIDENT OF CORCOMP.

ED



 CorComp Inc.

# LIBRARY CORNER

By Berry Minuk

Early last year I had written several short book reviews which appeared in the newsletters. I have been asked to comment on some of the newer books which have appeared since then.

As there are many books to cover I will not be able to review them all but I will rate them on the 5 star basis. If you are interested in a particular book please let me know and I will try to print reviews of those. This rating is of course based on my own personal preferences and may not fit your own views.

## BASIC BOOKS - TUTORIAL TYPE

Peckham:- Programming BASIC with the TI Home Computer (1979)

McGraw-Hill \*\*\*

Inman al.:- Introduction to TI BASIC (1980)

Hayden \*\*\*

## BASIC BOOKS - PROGRAM COLLECTIONS

Andrews al.:- Timelost (1983)

Que \*\*\*

Casciato Horsfall:- TI-99/4A: 24 BASIC Programs (1984) Sams \*\*\* 1/2

Schechter:- TI-99/4A: 51 Fun Educational Programs (1984)

Sams \*\*\* 1/2

Ingalls:- TI Games for Kids (1984)

Compute \*\*\*

Turner:- 36 TI-99/4A Programs for Home, School Office (1983)

Arcsoft \*\* 1/2

## BASIC BOOKS - MANUALS MISCELLANEOUS

Casciato Horsfall:- TI-99/4A BASIC Reference Manual (1984)

Sams \*\*\*\*

Heller:- Free Software for your TI Home Computer (1984)

Enrich/Ohaus \*\*\*

## BASIC EXTENDED BASIC - PROGRAM COLLECTIONS

Ton Ton:- Entertainment Games in TI BASIC Ext BASIC (1984)

Sams \*\*\*\*

McEvoy:- Creating Arcade Games on the TI-99/4A (1984)

Compute \*\*\*\*

## ASSEMBLY LANGUAGE

Tracton:- How to Build Your Own Working 16-Bit Micro (1979)

Tab \*\* 1/2

Cannon Luecke:- Understanding Microprocessors (1979)

TI or Radio Shack \*\*\* 1/2

Cannon:- Fundamentals of Microcomputer Design (1982)

TI \*\*\*\*

(continued next month)

Someone sent in a request for assistance with a hardware problem but I seem to have misplaced their name. Would they please contact me at 234-5472 and I will arrange to refer them to an expert.



## SPOTLIGHT ON YOUTH by SHAWN MILLAR

Hi! My name is Shawn and I'm 14 years old. I am writing this column so the the youth of the group can be more aware of what is going on and to just get to know one another better. Hopefully one regular feature of the column will be a HIGH SCORE listing of games that can be played on your T.I. This listing will be on all types of games. The exact games depends on what kind of input I get from you so please get your scores into me. Don't lie about your score, it just ruins it for everyone else. The listing might fall into different age catagories but that depends on what I get from you. Any score on a game that you think should be listed just contact me and I will see if you are #1.

I will also be here to try and answer any questions you have and if it is a good question I will give the answer in this column. You are more than welcome to write an entry and give it to me to post.

### TIP:

Have you ever been typing in a program and accidentally pressed FCTN= instead of SHIFT=?, and poof!!! Your program is gone. If you have the memory expansion unit you can disable the QUIT key. Just type in this command in Extended Basic line and PRESTO! the QUIT key functions no more. To enable the key again, turn your computer off and back on again.

```
CALL INIT::CALL LOAD(-31806,16)
```

You can contact me at home at 684-3466, leave me a message on the BBS or see me at one of the meetings.

## THE GRASS IS GREENER?

Here is a HOME COMPUTER MAGAZINE answer to a letter enquiring about assistance in setting up a software library exchange, Vol4, No.5.

"One caution to you and others who start software exchanges. Beware of copyright infringements on the software appearing in Home Computer magazine or in other magazines. Our very existence depends on reader support for software sales of ON DISK and ON TAPE. The software provided in Home Computer magazine is protected by copyright and IS NOT public domain software. Be very careful that any software put into your exchange is in the public domain"

How about this one from May/June issue of ENTHUSIAST'99

"The IUG 99/4 has agreed to an out of court settlement in its suit against the 99/4a Program Exchange, Torrance, CA. The settlement stipulated that they would discontinue unlawful use of IUG copyrighted material, refrain from use of a similiar trademarks and pay a five figure sum to the IUG. Several other suits are planned. In the view of John Cobb, an IUG attorney, software copyright protection has come to the forefront of our judicial system and the courts are taking a dim view of software piracy."

The disk bit map is located on "Sector 0", which is the first sector on every diskette. Along with the bit map, sector 0, contains a lot more information about the diskette. This info is needed by the disk controller so it can read and write any data to the diskette. Sector 0 contains the following info...

Information	Size in Bytes	Sector Offset Address
Disk Name	10	>0000
# of sectors on disk	2	>000A
# of sectors per track	1	>000C
Rom info, letters "DSK"	3	>000D
Proprietary disk flag	1	>0010
# of tracks per disk	1	>0011
# of sides per disk	1	>0012
Density per side	1	>0013
Not used	36	>0014
Disk Bit Map	180	>0038

>0000 Disk Name: The diskname can be any valid ascii code however the TI Disk manager program will not accept or display lower case characters because the manager uses the space where the character patterns are stored as a buffer area.

>000A # Sectors on Disk: For the TI-99/4A there are only 3 values that can stored at this location. They are..  
>0168 = 360 , >02D0 = 720 , >05A0 =1440 Sectors.

>000C # Sectors per track: For a Single-Density diskette the value will be >09 = 9 sectors per track, for a Double-density diskette the value will be >12 = 18 sectors per track.

>000D Rom info, letters "DSK": These letters are used by the disk controller to access the routines that are located in the Disk controller Rom.

>0010 Proprietary disk protection flag: This flag is used by the disk manager module to prevent copying of programs and files from a protected disk. The value for a disk that is not protected is >20 = Space character, for a disk that is protected the value is >50 = to the letter "F". Some programs may check this flag as part of a protection scheme.

>0011 # of sectors per disk: The only two values that will be in this location will be >28 = 40 tracks per side ,or some of the older drives that were made years ago were only able to step to 35 tracks. In that case the value would be >23 = 35.

- >0012 # of Sides per Disk: For Single-sided diskette the value is >01 = 1 , a double -sided diskette will have the value >02 = 2.
- >0013 Density per Side: A single-Density diskette has the the value >01 = 1 , and a double-density diskette has a value of >02 = 2.
- >0014 The next 36 bytes starting at this address are not used.
- >0038 Disk Bit Map: In order match a location on the Bit Map to a physical sector on a diskette, a little numeric manipulation is required, and maybe a little backround info as well.

In order for the disk controller to identify which sectors on the disk are currently being used it must have some type of look-up table to refer to. Since a byte value contains 8 Bits made of 1's and 0's, its possible to Map out 8 disk sectors with every byte in the Bit map. A "1" means the sector is used and a "0" means the sector is free.

If you take a freshly initialized diskette and examine the Byte value at Sector 0, address >0038 you will find the value >03. Remember I said that a Byte value can be used to map out 8 sectors, well this is how it looks.

>03 hex = 0000 0011 binary .. This coresponds to the first 8 sectors on the diskette. If we expand this out and match the bits to the sectors we find that sectors 0 and 1 are used, and that sectors 2,3,4,5,6 and 7 are free.

Address	Value	sector	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
>0038 =	>03		0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
			F	E	D	C	B	A	9	8
>0039 =	>00		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
			17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10
>003A =	>00		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

To mathematically explain a routine to calculate a bit value and position to a physical sector would take up over 3 pages of text, with many calculations in HEX and DECIMAL arithmetic. What I have done is included a table that I drew up to represent the Bit map for a Single-sided Single-Density diskette. For those that wish to expand the table, just carry on where I left off.

for some simple arithmetic we can find out how many bytes are used for each disk format.

SSSD Diskette: 360/8 = 45 Byte Bit Map  
SSDD Diskette: 720/8 = 90 Byte Bit Map  
DSSD Diskette: 720/8 = 90 Byte Bit Map  
DSDD Diskette: 1440/8 = 180 Byte Bit Map

Bit Map Address	Length	Format
>0038 to >0064	45	SSSD
>0038 to >0091	90	SSDD
>0038 to >0091	90	DSSD
>0038 to >00D7	180	DSDD

>00D8 The remaining bytes starting at this location are not used by the disk controller and normally contain the the value >FF, however some programs on disk may contain ascii characters in this location. The characters that are here are not copied by the disk manager and usually contain some reference to the software program that is on the disk.

#### Disk Bit Map Notes:

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If you find a disk that can not be cataloged or copied by the Disk manager program, its most probably because something on this sector is not Kosher. Go through the Bit map info and make sure the values are correct. If the values don't match what I have given you then it doesn't belong there.

Some protection schemes actually check to see that the Bit Map is screwed up, so you may have to return things back to how you found them.

If you try to read Sector 0 and find that Disk Fixer returns an error, then the diskette is either formatted to double-density and your controller doesn't work double-density or the diskette is physically damaged. You can verify a damaged diskette by attempting to read any other sector on that particular track.

Changing any of the values in the Bit Map (>0038) should only be done if you are absolutely sure of what you are doing. This area is only used to determine how many sectors are free for a catalog function and for a disk write operation. If you can't read a sector then changing this area won't help you.

The next page contains a screen dump of Two different Disk Bit Maps. See if you can identify the following information on each.

Example #1  
Disk name \_\_\_\_\_  
Format \_\_\_\_\_  
Used/Free \_\_\_\_\_

Example #2  
Disk name \_\_\_\_\_  
Format \_\_\_\_\_  
Used/Free \_\_\_\_\_



DISK BIT MAP (SECTOR 0) FOR SSSD DISKETTE

<u>BM BYTE</u>	<u>SECT ADDR</u>	<u>SECTORS</u>							
1	0038	007	006	005	004	003	002	001	000
2	0039	00F	00E	00D	00C	00B	00A	009	008
3	003A	017	016	015	014	013	012	011	010
4	003B	01F	01E	01D	01C	01B	01A	019	018
5	003C	027	026	025	024	023	022	021	020
6	003D	02F	02E	02D	02C	02B	02A	029	028
7	003E	037	036	035	034	033	032	031	030
8	003F	03F	03E	03D	03C	03B	03A	039	038
9	0040	047	046	045	044	043	042	041	040
10	0041	04F	04E	04D	04C	04B	04A	049	048
11	0042	057	056	055	054	053	052	051	050
12	0043	05F	05E	05D	05C	05B	05A	059	058
13	0044	067	066	065	064	063	062	061	060
14	0045	06F	06E	06D	06C	06B	06A	069	068
15	0046	077	076	075	074	073	072	071	070
16	0047	07F	07E	07D	07C	07B	07A	079	078
17	0048	087	086	085	084	083	082	081	080
18	0049	08F	08E	08D	08C	08B	08A	089	088
19	004A	097	096	095	094	093	092	091	090
20	004B	09F	09E	09D	09C	09B	09A	099	098
21	004C	0A7	0A6	0A5	0A4	0A3	0A2	0A1	0A0
22	004D	0AF	0AE	0AD	0AC	0AB	0AA	0A9	0A8
23	004E	0B7	0B6	0B5	0B4	0B3	0B2	0B1	0B0
24	004F	0BF	0BE	0BD	0BC	0BB	0BA	0B9	0B8
25	0050	0C7	0C6	0C5	0C4	0C3	0C2	0C1	0C0
26	0051	0CF	0CE	0CD	0CC	0CB	0CA	0C9	0C8
27	0052	0D7	0D6	0D5	0D4	0D3	0D2	0D1	0D0
28	0053	0DF	0DE	0DD	0DC	0DB	0DA	0D9	0D8
29	0054	0E7	0E6	0E5	0E4	0E3	0E2	0E1	0E0
30	0055	0EF	0EE	0ED	0EC	0EB	0EA	0E9	0E8
31	0056	0F7	0F6	0F5	0F4	0F3	0F2	0F1	0F0
32	0057	0FF	0FE	0FD	0FC	0FB	0FA	0F9	0F8
33	0058	107	106	105	104	103	102	101	100
34	0059	10F	10E	10D	10C	10B	10A	109	108
35	005A	117	116	115	114	113	112	111	110
36	005B	11F	11E	11D	11C	11B	11A	119	118
37	005C	127	126	125	124	123	122	121	120
38	005D	12F	12E	12D	12C	12B	12A	129	128
39	005E	137	136	135	134	133	132	131	130
40	005F	13F	13E	13D	13C	13B	13A	139	138
41	0060	147	146	145	144	143	142	141	140
42	0061	14F	14E	14D	14C	14B	14A	149	148
43	0062	157	156	155	154	153	152	151	150
44	0063	15F	15E	15D	15C	15B	15A	159	158
45	0064	167	166	165	164	163	162	161	160

## ON THE BBS BY BRUCE CARON

Well our BBS is almost into its fifth month of round the clock operation. By the time this article makes its way into the Jan. newsletter there will have been over 1800 phone calls put into the board, and well over 850 messages posted. Currently we have 56 registered users. Some of the users hail from Toronto, North Bay, Sudbury and a few are from Nova Scotia, during Christmas we even had Santa Claus using the BBS to deliver greetings and answer a few "Letters to Santa".

The BBS has gone through quite a few revisions, along with the increased text capacity for messages (16 to 32 lines), there is now a new file section called Info-Mart. The Info-Mart section contains a whole range of files on various topics such as hints for the Scott Adams adventures, tidbits and rumours downloaded from other BBS's across the country, magazine articles, and for those with money to burn there is a gigantic list of BBS's that span this country from coast to coast. If anyone would like to place a file on the board that would be of interest to others, just give me a call for details.

For those that still don't have a Terminal Emulator or a modem there are a few public domain terminal programs around for the TI, however these require 32k and a Disk system to run, also a few retailers have some low priced modems, so check around town and you'll probably find a good buy.

Rumour has it that I will probably be leaving Ottawa this July, the details aren't final yet but there is a good chance that I will be transferred to Kingston. So right now we have Jane doing some on job training to take over as main sysop. Right Jane !!

For those that would like to download ascii text files and use your word processor to edit them after, the instructions are on one of the Info-Mart files. If you have any questions on the technique used just leave a message on the board or give one of the sysops a call.



The Corcomp 99000 system that the group had been waiting for, has been shelved by Corcomp. The BBS is still running on my PEB so the executive has decided to look elsewhere for a reasonably priced system. If you have a PEB that you would like to sell, or know of one for sale, then give a member of the executive a call to let them know. If any of you were worried about your TI console getting overheated, forget about it, mine has over 3500 hours of continuous use (24 hours a day) with out a problem.

For those that like something different there is a new BBS that has multi-user capability. The BBS is called System 3 and it is run by Telebyte Communication here in Ottawa. The BBS allows up to 8 people to be online at any one time. There are adventure games online that allow the users to interact together in order to complete thier quests. The BBS works on a credit system, for more details and sneak preview call 820-0010.

# WARPED DISK AWARDS

1. Honourable mention to the TI 99/4a for the UNDERDOG CATAGORY.
2. The least portable portable computer award was the TI Portable Computer weighing in at a herniating 44 pounds.
3. The most overrated computer was the IBM PC.Ohers mentioned were Macintosh,Adam,Commodore 64,IBM PCjr,AppleIIc and IIe.
4. How about the honesty in advertising award to ATand T for selecting the DEATH-STAR as its corporate symbol.
5. The most unpronounceable Acronym award goes to NAPLPS. A graphics transmission standard known in full as NORTH AMERICAN PRESENTATION LEVEL PROTOCOL SYNTAX(friends call it NAP-LIPS).
6. The most over used computer term..USER FRIENDLY followed by INTERFACE.
7. The hardest game to win award goes to the ZORK series followed by ZAXXON,DINO EGGS,WITNESS,MICROBE and FLIGHT SIMULATOR.
8. Finally another special for TI, a disgruntled TI aficionado nominated TI for a special WARPED DISK AWARD for "effortlessly changing over 2 million of their popular TI99/4a computers into white elephants at the first sniff of a Peanut."

AS PRINTED IN THE DECEMBER ISSUE OF POPULAR COMPUTING.

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*****
*  TRADING POST  *
* ----- *
* 1.FOR SALE;TI LOGO I.....WALTER KENT...EVENINGS....592-3497 *
* 2.FOR SALE;TI MULTIPLAN....$40.00..TONY HOPKINS..EVENINGS 746-4463 *
* 3.FOR SALE;TI DISK DRIVE..$135.00..BRUCE CARON.....733-7675 *
* 4.FOR SALE;TI MULTIPLAN....$45.00..LARRY SABO....EVENINGS....836-1519 *
* OR *
* 5.FOR SALE;TI EDITOR/ASS...$60.00..LARRY SABO.....DAYS.AT...592-5111 *
* EXT 2794 *
* 6.FOR SALE;TI P EXP. BOX..$500.00..LARRY SABO.....".... *
* INCLUDES 32K AND DISK CONTROLLER CARD *
* 7.FOR SALE;DUAL/DISK DRIVES$450.00.LARRY SABO.....".... *
* INCLUDES CABINET AND POWER SUPPLY *
* 8.FOR SALE;NOVATION MODEM.$90.00...LARRY SABO.....".... *
*****
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## A SOLUTION TO OUR LIBRARY PROBLEM:

Over the last few weeks I have given a lot of thought(I'm sure that a lot of you have as well) to the problems we've been experiencing in getting software out to you people. These problems are not anyone's fault, but are a valid indicator of the enormity of the project. I have developed a plan that I think is fair; should work; and might just eliminate the problem.

I'd like to stress a few points before I elaborate further though.... 1. Just so everyone is aware...I will make some money from this plan; the user's group will make more money and some of you MAY make money from it as well! No one will get rich though and it will get the software out to our users where we all think it belongs! 2. It is a possible solution but it's by no means the only solution. If any of you out there have an alternative we urge you to make it known to any of us on your executive committee or on the floor at a general meeting. 3. This article in no way denigrates the efforts of our library committee who I know have agonized for hours on our behalf and may still come up with a method that will work. 4. To the best of my knowledge, no commercial software will be included in the material offered at general meetings(it'll all be worth having though!) My proposal is as follows.... Disks will cost \$5/per and cassette tapes will cost you \$4/per and will be available at all meetings. The software on both will be identical. I will supply the diskette medium; the club will supply the cassettes and the copy machine. I'll supply the software and the time involved in preparing cypys for each meeting and an article for each months newsletter highlighting one program from each package to be offered at the next meeting. In return I'll require \$1/cassette sold and \$3/disk sold at meetings. 50% of each dollar I take in per cassette will go to the volunteer that makes the master for the club's use. That person's name will be written on the master and he will be eligable for that royalty until such time he chooses not to renew his club membership(Moms and Dads:maybe your teenager'd like a little extra pocket money!). Any of you that might be interested in getting your name on master cassettes let me know as soon as possible...I'll play no favorites and work on a first-come/first-served basis(unfortunately you will require both disk drive and either a TI-recorder or a late model Panasonic recorder to get in on this). Further details are available on request.

Each meeting there will be six each of five different diskettes and three cassette cypys of each diskette. If we sell out of any item, you can make arrangements to get it from me or another executive member as soon as possible or at the next meeting. Orders from back issues will be allowed, but orders in advance of publication in the newsletter will generally be a no-no.

Trade and/or procurement of software which, for whatever reason, may not be included in the User group's library, is a matter between you, me and the proverbial gatepost and cannot involve the UG or its equipment in any way.

I fully support the club's proposed new bylaw with regard to locally produced commercial software and wish to go on record as doing so.

Please don't hesitate to offer your reactions to the above proposal; either for, or against and suggestions for improvements or alternatives are eagerly sought after as well!!!

AS THEY SAY ON THE BOARDS.....TTYL BOB.

## FROM THE LIBRARY IN FEBRUARY:



To the left of this text is a sample of the graphics from one of Sam Moore Jr's music programs called Amazing Grace. Music disk 5 also includes; "You Light Up My Life" and "Time in a Bottle" by the same author and has comparable graphics. "Fiddler on the Roof" will amaze you! Other great songs include: Yesterday, House of the Rising Sun, Raindrops are Falling on my Head and others. Regretably available only on disk.

GRAPHIC FROM "AMAZING GRACE" BY SAM MOORE JR.

Games package 4 includes Backgammon, Cribbage, Goblin, Goldrush, Space Invasion, Jumping Jack, Lost Ruins, Paratrooper, Space Wars, Pursuit, Shimmy and TI-Wars. Backgammon was written by me, allows joystick or keyboard input, has great use of color and graphics and definitely will not allow you to cheat!(Cribbage is a new program in this package and isn't too shabby either.) -----disk or cassette available-----

The Utility 8 package I had at the last meeting sold out so I'll have it available to those that might still want a copy. It has a lot of software that may prove useful round the house. Included are Home Aids, Mortgage(Canadianized), Addressbook, Alphasort, Calendar, Conservation, Coupon Calculator, Finance Wizard, Geneology, Taxes, Kitchen Aids, Stock Market, The Biller and Yarn Estimator. The best of the bunch are the first two both by our own Dennis Denny. -----disk or cassette available-----

The Math-CAI 1 package has training aid software for virtually all ages but is mostly targetted for the elementary or pre-school child. Its program content includes: Geometry, Countin' Fun, Chase, Counting, Division, Firstmath, Math-tutor, Math for Kids, Mathaids, Mathdrill, Mathflash, Mathman, Mathrace, Mathtest, Matrix Muncher, Number Nibbler, Statistics and Tiny Math 1. -----disk or cassette available-----

Misc-CAI 4 has learning programs that are informative and fun at the same time. Its software includes: Animals, Birds, Elements, Build the USA, Capitols, Constellations, Filestutor, Flag-O-Rama, Findex, Flowers, Money, Mixed-up words(French), Spelling-Bee, Trees and a quiz on Vitamins! All programs in this package are great! -----disk or cassette available-----

I'll also try to have more copies of the Nutrition Package for the next meeting for those that missed the boat last month. It was developed by Paul Meadows of TI Nova Scotia and as I said at our meeting in January is a worthwhile holding in anyone's library!!! -----disk only-----

## A LOOK AT THE PRK MODULE by R. A. Green

The Personal Record Keeping module (PRK) and its companion the Personal Report Generator module (PRG) provide an easy to use data base system. However, it would often be useful to be able to process a data base with a BASIC program. The PRK module provides you with this facility!

With the PRK module plugged in, you will find that TI BASIC has several new subroutines which your programs can CALL. These are:

- CALL P(...) - reserve VDP RAM for PRK data base loading,
- CALL A(...) - facility similiar to Extended BASIC's ACCEPT AT statement,
- CALL D(...) - facility similiar to Extended BASIC's DISPLAY AT statement,
- CALL G(...) - get fields from a PRK data base record, or put fields into a PRK data base record,
- CALL H(...) - get the number of records in a data base, or set the number of records in a data base,
- CALL L(...) - load a PRK data base into VDP RAM from disk or cassette,
- CALL S(...) - save a PRK data base from VDP RAM to disk or cassette.

While not all features of these subroutines are known, with what will be described later and a little experimentation you can make good use of them to write TI BASIC programs to process your own data bases.

This is the first of a series of articles on the PRK module subsequent articles will provide information on some uses of these PRK subroutines. In addition, a program and a model PRK data base will be submitted to the club's library which demonstrates their use.

This program will be of special interest to disk owners. It builds a data base from the catalogs of 1 or more disks.



TI 99/4 USER GROUP  
EAST END LIBRARY HOLDINGS  
-----

Jane Laflamme  
83D Glen Park Dr.  
Gloucester (Blackburn Hamlet)  
Tel: 837-1719

USER\_GROUP\_HOLDINGS:

36 TI-99/4A, Programs for Home, School & Office  
Author: Len Turner

101 Programming Tips & Tricks (for the TI-99/4A Home Computer)  
Author: Len Turner

Entertainment Games in TI Basic and Extended Basic  
Authors: Khoa Ton and Quyen Ton

Programs for the TI Home Computer  
Author: Steve Davis

TI-99/4A: 24 Basic Programs  
Authors: Carol Ann Casciato and Don Horsfall

TI-99/4A Technical Data, Book #2  
(For those who wish to design peripherals)  
Author: Texas Instruments Inc.

TI Extended Basic Student Guide  
Author: Texas Instruments Inc.

TI-Writer Student Guide  
Author: Texas Instruments Inc.

PERSONAL\_HOLDINGS: (Available for members)

Basic Fun (A Kids' Guide to Basic Programming)  
Authors: Susan Drake Lipscomb and Margaret Ann Zuanich

Introduction to TI Basic  
Authors: Don Inman, Ramon Zamora, and Bob Albrecht

Using the TRS-80 in Your Home  
(Fairly easy to translate to TI Basic and/or Extended Basic)  
Author: Charles D. Sternberg

**BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR MORE ADVERTISERS  
SPECIALS IN THE UPCOMING MONTHS.**

Happy New Year to you all near and far! This past month and a bit have been exciting ones for me at least; I hope they have for you as well. UMBBS; sponsored by the University of Winnipeg since early November last year has made it possible for me to make new contacts in eight of our ten provinces in Canada! The only two I haven't touched(yet...) are PEI and Newfoundland(the territories are next). My library is growing in leaps and bounds and I'm very hard-pressed to keep my 'backer-uppers' current!! I love it!!

I've found some exciting news on the TI Nova Scotia BBS earlier this week. Terry Atkinson, its Sysop, has discovered through good sources that MYARC in New Jersey have decided to build a big-bro for our computer....called TI-99/8. It will be 100% compatible with TI peripherals but, for some reason, not with Corcomp stuff. It's off the drawing board but still in the Prototype stage and will be supported with a Disk Manager; Hex-Bus; RS232 etc. all by Myarc. These peripherals and more will be compatible with our 4A too! With companies like Myarc and Corcomp standing behind us, we may carry on forever! LONG LIVE TI!!!

Corcomp's disk controller card has arrived in the Ottawa Valley and through the kind indulgence of Bob Picard, I've been allowed to try it out! My wife has gone to bed now, so I can safely say.. I'M IN LOVE WITH IT...and I hope the affair lasts FOREVER!!!

I haven't had the problem others in the group have been having with it. Three other OUG members have had the cards since early last month and have experienced problems ranging from inability to initialize double density to complete failure of the card. I think(and hope) these were a result of an earlier 'buggy' version finding its way into the marketplace and that these problems will not be too wide spread! The card runs circles around TI's product and the Disk Manager is almost a dream!

The demos included on the Disk Manager diskette superbly show the power this card can and does unleash in our computer! It's a real joy to behold such speed in TI-Basic! I can't wait for the card to be widespread enough to warrant the appearance of some software written for its new commands. Maybe our John Altorio or Bob Picard will be the first to write some?!?!

The card, upon power-up seizes control of the computer and puts a new and very striking title screen up on your monitor! The Disk Manager is always option 1 on this screen; then TI Basic is next; followed by the options generated by whatever cartridge you have plugged in and enabled. The Manager can be loaded from Basic and Extended basic too.

The mangement system they've developed, as I said earlier, is a sweet one compared to TI's. Full screen editing is a reality in the file subsystem... You can copy, rename, delete, move(copies, then deletes), protect, unprotect all at once! The options on the Disk menu are nice too One called 'Turbo-copy' duplicates an entire DSDD diskette(thats 1440 sectors!!!) in the time it takes the TI manager to copy a SSSD one.


The only thing I'm not fussy about (and I can live with it) is their method of listing disk contents to a printer. I can't see, for the life of me, why they chose to do this with a screen dump routine...it sure messes up the printout.

The 'Configure Manager' option on menu 1 allows a user to input his/her own desired defaults for everything from printer output to screen and text colors and eliminates a good number of keying while using the program. MY OVERALL GRADE FOR THIS PRODUCT IS AN AN "A" AND WOULD HAVE BEEN HIGHER WITH A BETTER ROUTINE FOR DUMPING TO A PRINTER.



\*\*\*\*\*

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