

THE PUG PERIPHERAL

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE
PITTSBURGH USER'S GROUP
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The President's Letter

Merry Christmas! The officers of the Pittsburgh User's Group would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year with the hope that the new year will bring prosperity and peace to all. I would also like to thank all the members who have continued to support our user group through the difficult times we have had this year. This support is what makes it all worthwhile.

The disk of the month will be a Christmas music and graphic disk. It autoloads in extended basic and plays various Christmas songs while appropriate graphics are displayed. It takes over 30 minutes to play all the music and display all the scenes. You won't want to miss this one.

The clubs modem will be upgraded to a 2400/1200/300 bps modem hopefully before Christmas. The device is on order and is expected around December 5. This will improve the availability of our bulletin board system which has imbedded code today that causes inappropriate hangups and long rings before it answers the phone. This code is in place because of the modem that we have and will be removed when the new modem arrives. The increased speed will also make downloading much faster.

The Chicago Fest was a great success! There were more vendors with new software and hardware products for sale than I have seen before. Our little "ORPHAN" is growing up. I will try to let you know about these new products as time and space permits. Check the third party catalogs for the new offerings. I demonstrated the PRINT WIZARD program at the last meeting which I picked up at the Chicago Fair. Since then I received two new disks in the mail from TRIO+ SOFTWARE which contain new printer commands so that it now can be used with GEMINI printers. This was a big draw back before and I had voiced my disappointment of it's incompatibility with my printer. This program will produce greeting cards, signs, banners, and letterheads with ease. It is menu driven and simple to use. It comes with ready to print graphics, borders, and character fonts. There is also a program that will allow you to convert artist instances to the PRINT WIZARD format. It comes in a three disk set. The first disk is called the program disk and contains the menu and all the programs. The second disk contains various fonts, borders and pictures for Epson FX and Prowriter printers. The third disk contains the same information as the second disk but is used with the EPSON MX and GEMINI printers. The PRINT WIZARD is written in Extended Basic which accounts for its slow speed. This package is very new and was completed just in time for the Chicago show. It can only be purchased directly from the author. The cost is \$25.00 from TRIO+ Software, PO BOX 115 LISCOMB, Ia 50148. Ph. 515-496-5455. This package will be raffled at the December meeting.

I also picked up a Wico joy stick adapter for the TI at the Chicago fest that will also be raffled at the December meeting. This device will allow you to connect any ATARI type joy stick to your TI.





COMMUNICATION NEWS



BY Gary Taylor

The Pittsburgh User's Group exchanges newsletter with over 160 other user groups around the country. The newsletters that we receive in return are the greatest single source of information that we have access to about the the goings on in the TI community. Other sources of information are the national bulletin board services such as CompuServe, Delphi, and The Source. I also know of three magazines that continue to support the TI991 and they are MicroPendium, RYTE Data, and Computer Shopper. There are also many TI bulletin boards across the country that are run on TI99 computers. The P.U.G. runs a bulletin board with free access to whomsoever wants to use it. You can call our BBS by dialing 412-884-6779. The BBS program was written by J. Peter Hoddie and has been in use for over a year now. All these forms of communication play an important part in keeping the TI a popular computer. However, there is one source of communication that has not been available to us that other computer users have enjoyed. This is a TI CONFERENCE on the bulletin boards that comprise nodes of the "OPUS", "TIBBS/SEAdog", or "FIDO" networks. These network nodes are privately funded BBS systems that share information as well as electronic mail between themselves during the wee hours of the morning when phone rates are the cheapest. Each individual node can subscribe to "ECHOS", where a particular conference is desired. The topics of the available "ECHOS" range from christian philosophy to aviation. There are also "Special Interest Group" echoes such as a Commodore Conference, Atari Conference, etc. We in Pittsburgh now have a TI CONFERENCE echo. The "Harvester of Pittsburgh" supports a Texas Instruments special interest group in addition to SIGs for other computers. This board has been rated as one of the best bulletin boards in the country. The Sysop is Bob Hoffman who will tie anyone that runs OPUS, TIBBS/SEAdod, or FIDO into the TI99 conference. All you have to do is send netmail to him at node 383/0 and he will tie you in. Currently the TI conference mail is being sent and received to our TI friends in Baltimore, MD. For those clubs that have access to a local node, this can be a way to join in on a TI National Conference without the expense of long distance charges. The "Harvester of Pittsburgh" is a multiuser BBS that has 3 telephone lines. It can be reached directly as follows. 300/1200 baud 412-344-1315 300/1200/2400 baud 412/344/1931 300/1200/2400 baud 412/344/5313 Downloads of programs are supported only on 412-344-5313 C>

***** DID YOU KNOW? *****

Marty Kroll has released his CATLIB COMPANION disk to the PUG for beta testing. This program will take the files that were created using CATLIB and allow you to add a description for each file or program that has been cataloged. As your former librarian, this is the program that I was waiting for in order to produce a decent catalog that can be easily maintained. If all goes well this program will be available to the general TI community in February or March, at which time we will form a library committee to catalog our library.

"TIPS FOR BEGINNERS"

-BY FRANK N. ZIC

Here we go together No.-7. Let's talk a little about buying your first, and if done with good foresight, perhaps the only printer you may need to purchase. One of the prime considerations should be to think about your needs for both today and tomorrow. While a printer is practically indispensable for making up catalog listings of filenames to place on your disk jackets, it sure would be nice to do other things too such as graphic print-outs. In other words let's look ahead to all of the features you might later want to use. So, in order to do these graphics you would want your printer to be of the dot-matrix type. Now you can do more things than if your printer was of the daisy-wheel type. The daisy-wheel type of printer, however, does have it's place to give you unmatched letter quality print and interchangeable wheels for special effects. But you would be better off with the more universal responding dot-matrix. One really nice feature you can have on your printer is the NLQ (Near Letter Quality) that will give you surprisingly well formed letters. Another important feature to have is to be able to use tractor feed (perforated feed paper) or friction feed for envelopes and single sheets. The ribbon feed should be of the small spool or reel type that automatically rewinds itself (keeps reversing itself automatically) and is not nearly as expensive to replace as the cartridge type.

While letter quality printers respond at a rate of between 15 to 20 CPS (characters per second), your dot-matrix's will be in the neighborhood of 100 to 120 CPS. What is really nice about this faster speed is that with it you can keep up with a 300 baud rate Modem should you want to print out the various screens on a BBS(Bulletin Board Service) as I often do. We shouldn't overlook one of the most important features and that is to have your printer be Epson compatible. This allows your printer to respond to ASCII standard codes, allowing it to respond to all the various commands normally used during programing. Such nice things as Condensed, Italic, Super & Subscript, Expanded and others types of printing are all possible with the standard built-in features. Another important item is to have your printer be of the parallel configuration. This permits the fastest printing mode and commands to the printer are the shortest to input.

All of the features listed above, and much more, are standard on my Gemini Star SG-10 and newer models. The number 10 after the SG specifies the width of the carriage and therefore the maximum width of paper that can be handled. The 10 will handle a standard 8 1/2 inch wide sheet (normally listed as 9 1/2 on the large boxes of paper because of the extra 1/2 inch on each side of the paper for the tractor feed holes. So you can see that if you are going to use wider paper, you will have to go into the next size carriage which is specified SG-15. Today it doesn't cost you an arm and a leg to purchase a really fine printer as it did not too many years ago. Wholesale catalogs such as Computer Shopper offer such units for under \$200 on sale. Until next time may the good 4's be with you.

GETTING THE MOST FROM YOUR CASSETTE SYSTEM
BY MICKEY SCHMITT
NUMBER 9

UNDERSTANDING CASSETTE ERROR CODES AND MESSAGES

UNDERSTANDING CASSETTE ERROR CODES AND MESSAGES IS NOT QUITE AS DIFFICULT AS IT MAY SEEM. UNFORTUNATELY, TRYING TO FIND A LIST OF THE ERROR CODES AND MESSAGES THAT DEAL SPECIFICALLY WITH THE CASSETTE RECORDER HAS BEEN A DIFFICULT TASK! IN DOING MY RESEARCH FOR THIS PARTICULAR ARTICLE, I HAVE HAD TO COMBINE MANY DIFFERENT SOURCES OF INFORMATION - IN ORDER TO BE AS INFORMATIVE AND AS COMPLETE AS POSSIBLE.

BASICALLY, CASSETTE ERROR CODES AND MESSAGES CAN OCCUR DURING ONE OF TWO DIFFERENT TYPES OF COMMANDS. MORE SPECIFICALLY, I AM REFERRING TO THE "LOADING" (OLD CS1) PROCEDURE AND THE "SAVING" (SAVE CS1) PROCEDURE.

THIS MONTH I WILL BE EXAMINING THE ERROR CODES AND MESSAGES THAT CAN OCCUR DURING THE "LOADING" (OLD CS1) PROCEDURE.

WHEN THE COMPUTER FINISHES LOADING THE DATA, IT TELLS YOU WHETHER OR NOT IT READ THE DATA PROPERLY. IF THE DATA WERE READ CORRECTLY, YOU WOULD SEE THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE APPEAR ON YOUR MONITOR OR TV SCREEN:

- * DATA OK
- * PRESS CASSETTE STOP CS1
THEN PRESS ENTER

IF, HOWEVER, THE COMPUTER DID NOT SUCCESSFULLY READ YOUR PROGRAM INTO MEMORY, AN ERROR OCCURS AND THE COMPUTER PRINTS ONE OF THE FOLLOWING ERROR MESSAGES:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| * ERROR - NO DATA FOUND | | * ERROR DETECTED IN DATA |
| PRESS R TO READ CS1 | | PRESS R TO READ CS1 |
| PRESS C TO CHECK | | PRESS C TO CHECK |
| PRESS E TO EXIT | | PRESS E TO EXIT |

WHEN THIS OCCURS - YOU HAVE A CHOICE OF USING ONE OF THE FOLLOWING THREE OPTIONS: NOTE, HOWEVER, THAT THE SINGLE-LETTER RESPONSES (R - C - E) THAT YOU TYPE IN AT THIS TIME MUST BE IN UPPER-CASE CHARACTERS!

1. PRESS R TO REPEAT THE READING PROCEDURE. HOWEVER, BEFORE REPEATING THIS PROCEDURE, CHECK TO MAKE SURE THAT YOU HAVE PUT THE CASSETTE TAPE IN CORRECTLY - THAT IT IS THE CORRECT CASSETTE TAPE AND THAT IT HAS BEEN PLACED IN THE CASSETTE RECORDER WITH THE CORRECT SIDE FACING UP. THEN FOLLOW THE DIRECTIONS AS THEY APPEAR ON YOUR MONITOR OR TV SCREEN.
2. PRESS C TO CHECK THE DATA YOU HAVE READ INTO MEMORY. AT THIS POINT YOU MAY WISH TO ADJUST YOUR CASSETTE RECORDER'S VOLUME CONTROL AND TONE SETTING. THEN FOLLOW THE DIRECTIONS AS THEY APPEAR ON YOUR MONITOR OR TV SCREEN.
3. PRESS E TO EXIT FROM THE LOADING PROCEDURE. AT THIS TIME ANOTHER ERROR MESSAGE IS DISPLAYED, INDICATING THAT THE COMPUTER DID NOT PROPERLY READ YOUR PROGRAM INTO MEMORY:

- * WARNING:
CHECK PROGRAM IN MEMORY
- * I/O ERROR 56

IF I/O ERROR 56 APPEARS, SOMETHING DEFINITELY WENT WRONG. BUT DON'T PANIC! GENERALLY SPEAKING, WHEN THE ERROR MESSAGE "ERROR - NO DATA FOUND" OCCURS - THE COMPUTER DID NOT RECOGNIZE THE CASSETTE RECORDER AT ALL DURING THE "OLD CS1" ROUTINE. ON THE OTHER HAND - WHEN THE ERROR MESSAGE "ERROR DETECTED IN DATA" OCCURS - THE COMPUTER RECOGNIZED ONLY PART OF THE DATA THAT THE CASSETTE RECORDER WAS SENDING TO THE COMPUTER. WHEN THIS HAPPENS, RECHECK YOUR CASSETTE RECORDER'S VOLUME CONTROL AND TONE SETTING. THEN RECHECK YOUR CASSETTE CABLE. MAKE SURE THAT BOTH ENDS OF THE CABLE ARE ATTACHED TO THE COMPUTER AND TO THE CASSETTE RECORDER. WHILE YOU ARE AT IT - MAKE SURE THAT THE COLOR-CODED WIRES LEADING TO THE CASSETTE RECORDER ARE CONNECTED CORRECTLY. THE CASSETTE RECORDER WILL NOT OPERATE PROPERLY IF THE COLOR-CODED WIRES ARE REVERSED!

NEXT MONTH I WILL CONTINUE WITH THE TOPIC OF UNDERSTANDING CASSETTE ERROR CODES AND MESSAGES. MORE SPECIFICALLY, I WILL BE EXAMINING THE ERROR CODES AND MESSAGES THAT CAN OCCUR DURING THE "SAVING" (SAVE CS1) PROCEDURE.

IF YOU NEED ANY HELP UNDERSTANDING THE CASSETTE ERROR CODES AND MESSAGES OR ARE EXPERIENCING CASSETTE ERRORS - JUST GIVE ME A CALL (412-335-0163) AND I'LL TRY TO HELP.

MULTIPLAN

IBM

MODEL 5150 TELETYPE

In this article I'd like to just pass along a few helpful hints I have learned from various sources concerning the use of Multiplan. When I first purchased my Multiplan package, I dutifully made a back up copy, only to find that it would not run. Chuck at the Computer Bug helped me out on this problem by reminding me that the disk containing the Multiplan files must be named TIMP.

From the Decatur 99er's User Group newsletter, I learned that the time it takes to initialize MP and the response time when it is working with the overlay file is affected by the location of the files on the disk. You can load the files in the desired order by copying them one at a time to a newly initialized disk named TIMP. The best order seems to be: OVERLAY, MPHLP, MPCHAR, MPDATA, MPINTR, and then MPBASE.

Although two drives are recommended for MP, it is possible to run it with only one drive. Before I purchased my second drive, I found it helpful to eliminate the help file from my working disk, thereby freeing up 158 sectors for a data file. I simply made a new disk for each application of MP that I wanted to use in order to eliminate having to switch disks.

If you do have two disk drives, please note that Multiplan will load automatically from any disk drive. Therefore you may put your MP disk in drive 2 and use drive 1 for your data disk as this is the default in the program. If you choose to use drive 1 for your MP disk, you have two options. You must either use a sector editor to change the defaults or upon entering MP, select the Transfer Options command by pressing T, then the letter O. Advance to the set up field by using control A and designate the data file drive as DSK2. Press enter and you're ready to go. If you prefer to change the default, I suggest you copy the file MPINTR onto a new disk. Load up your favorite sector editor and edit sector 22 which will be the first data sector. Shift into ASCII screen mode and find the words DSK1. Change this to DSK2 and it will automatically load from drive 2. Note that it will not show up in the Transfer Option as DSK2, just as DSK1 did not show up. While you are in the sector editor, you may want to change the default for your printer to PIO if you have a parallel printer. Simply replace the words RS232 with PIO. The RS232 data after that should be blanked out by using the space bar. Now write the sector back to disk and you are in business.

TI has released some enhancements for the Multiplan disk that speeds it up a little and also gives you auto repeat when moving the cursor around the screen. If you do not have these, I will be glad to furnish them to you.

I like to print out most of my spreadsheets in condensed print and was disappointed there was no way to do this from within MP. I made a small program to initialize the printer and tried to remember to run it first. Then one day I saw an ad in Micropendium for a Fairware Program called TIMP PRINT by J&B Mathis that allowed you to enter print controls from within your spreadsheet. It works great using the xternal copy command. I will be putting a copy of this in our library.

Next month we'll take a look at setting up a template. If you have any hints you'd like to share please send them in.

TIPS FROM THE TIGERCUB

#42

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TIGERCUB SOFTWARE
156 Collingwood Ave.
Columbus, OH 43213

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Over 130 original programs in Basic and Extended Basic, available on cassette or disk, now reduced to just \$2.00 each, plus \$1.50 per order for cassette or disk and PPM. Cassette programs will not be available after my present stock of blanks is exhausted. Descriptive catalogs, while they last, \$1.00 which is deductible from your first order.

Tigercub Full Disk Collections, reduced to \$10 post paid. Each of these contain either 5 or 6 of my regular \$2 catalog programs, and the remaining disk space has been filled with some of the best public domain programs of the same category. I am NOT selling public domain programs - they are a free bonus! TIGERCUB'S BEST, PROGRAMMING TUTOR, PROGRAMMER'S UTILITIES, BRAIN GAMES, BRAIN TEASERS, BRAIN BUSTERS!, MANEUVERING GAMES, ACTION REFLEX AND CONCENTRATION, TWO-PLAYER GAMES, KID'S GAMES, MORE GAMES, WORD GAMES, ELEMENTARY MATH, MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL MATH, VOCABULARY AND READING, MUSICAL EDUCATION, KALEIDOSCOPES AND DISPLAYS

NUTS BOLTS (No. 1), a full disk of 100 Extended Basic utility subprograms in merge format, ready to merge into your own programs. Plus the Tigercub Menuloader, a tutorial on using subprograms, and 5 pages of documentation with an example of the use of each subprogram. Reduced to \$15.00 postpaid. NUTS BOLTS NO. 2, another full disk of 108 utility subprograms in merge format, all new and fully compatible with the last, and with 10 pages of documentation and examples. Also \$15 postpaid.

```
*****
* NUTS BOLTS #3 is now *
* ready, another full disk *
* of 140 new merge-format *
* utility subprograms, all *
* compatible with the pre- *
* vious. With 11 pages of *
* documentation, $15 ppd. *
*****
```

TIPS FROM THE TIGERCUB, a full disk containing the complete contents of this newsletter Nos. 1 through 14, 50 original programs and files, reduced to \$10 ppd. TIPS FROM THE TIGERCUB VOL. 2, another diskfull, complete contents of Nos. 15 through 24, over 60 files and programs, also just \$10 TIPS FROM THE TIGERCUB VOL. 3, another 62 programs, tips and routines from Nos. 25 through 32, \$10 postpaid. TIPS FROM THE TIGERCUB VOL. 4, another 48 programs and files from issues 33 through 41, also \$10 postpaid.

I'm very sorry about the error in the BXB routine in Tips #40. The "program to write a program" generated line number 32000 instead of 30002. Here is the correct line -

```
110 OPEN #1:"DSK1.BXBDATA",VARIABLE 163,OUTPUT :: PRINT #1:CHR$(117)&CHR$(50)&"][\[" $"&CHR$(190)&CHR$(199)&CHR$(136)&M&CHR$(0)
```

The Hyphenated Fill and Adjust in Tips #41 will crash if the file contains a line with one character too many, which may be only an unnecessary control character. This fix will help-

```
300 IF LEN(M%)<=L THEN 310 :: CALL SOUND(200,110,0,-4,0) :: PRINT M%;" is";LEN(M%);"c haracters long":Truncated t o
";SEG$(M%,1,L):"OK? (Y/N)"
305 CALL KEY(3,K,S):: IF S=0 THEN 305 ELSE IF K<>89 THEN STOP ELSE M%=SEG$(M%,1,L)
310 PRINT #2:M% :: IF EOF(1) <>1 THEN 220 ELSE CLOSE #1 :: CLOSE #2
```


my peripheral

Tips from the Tigercub...continued.

Can you figure this one out? (I can't!) -

```
100 DISPLAY AT(3,4)ERASE ALL : "ILLOGICAL COMPUTER!": " by Tigercub" 110 DISPLAY AT(7,1):"100 IF A=2 THEN IF B=2 THEN C=4 ELS E
IF A=2 THEN IF B=3 THEN C= 6 ELSE IF A=3 THEN IF B=3 TH EN C=9 ELSE IF A=3 THEN IF B =4 THEN C=12 ELSE C=9" 120 DISPLAY
AT(14,1):"Why ca n't you get C to ":"equal 9 or 12 or 99?" 130 DISPLAY AT(18,1):"A? " : : ACCEPT AT(18,4):A :: DISPL AY
AT(20,1):"B? " :: ACCEPT AT(20,4):B 140 IF A=2 THEN IF B=2 THEN C=4 ELSE IF A=2 THEN IF B=3 THEN C=6 ELSE IF A=3 THEN IF B=3
THEN C=9 ELSE IF A=3 TH EN IF B=4 THEN C=12 ELSE C=9 9
150 DISPLAY AT(22,1):"C=";C :: GOTO 130
```

This might come in handy to dress up a program -

```
100 CALL CLEAR :: CALL COLOR (2,5,16):: CALL HCHAR(1,1,42 ,768) 110 X=X+1 :: DISPLAY AT(X,9) : "*****";:: DISPLAY
AT(X+1,9):"PRESS ANY KEY";:: DISPLAY AT(X+2,10):"TO CONT INUE"; 120 CALL KEY(0,K,S):: DN S+1 GOTO 110,130 130 !continue
program here
```

Or, if you'd rather do it backwards -

```
100 CALL CLEAR :: CALL COLOR (2,5,16):: CALL HCHAR(1,1,42 ,768) 110 FOR X=10000 TO 1 STEP -1 :: DISPLAY AT(X+2,9):"####
*****";:: DISPLAY AT(X+1, 9) : "TO CONTINUE";:: DISPLA Y AT(X,9):"PRESS ANY KEY"; 120 CALL KEY(0,K,S):: DN S+1 GOTO 130,140
130 NEXT X 140 !continue program here
```

You might find this one useful -

```
100 ! PAINT CALCULATOR by Ji m Peterson 110 CALL CLEAR :: FOR SET=1 TO 12 :: CALL COLOR(SET,2,8) :: NEXT SET :: CALL SCREEN(5
):: CALL KEY(3,K,S):: DN WAR NING NEXT
120 DISPLAY AT(3,7)ERASE ALL : "PAINT CALCULATOR": "To de termine the amount of":"pain t needed for a room."
130 DISPLAY AT(8,1):"Is the room a regular square or rec tangle? Y" :: ACCEPT AT(9,16 )SIZE(-1)VALIDATE("YN")BEEP: B$ :: IF
B$="Y" THEN 160
140 DISPLAY AT(11,1):"How ma ny rectangular areas":"does the room contain?" :: CALL A CCEPTER(12,24,A):: IF A=1 TH EN 160
150 FOR B=1 TO A :: DISPLAY AT(3,10)ERASE ALL:"AREA #";B :: GOTO 170
160 CALL CLEAR
170 DISPLAY AT(5,1):"How hig h is the ceiling?":" ft. in." :: CALL ACCEPTER(6,2 ,HF)
180 CALL ACCEPTER(6,9,HI):: HI=HI/12 :: H=HF+HI
190 DISPLAY AT(8,1):"How man y walls?" :: CALL ACCEPTER(8 ,17,W):: CALL HCHAR(5,1,32,6 40)
200 FOR J=1 TO W :: DISPLAY AT(5,10):"WALL #";J: "Width ft in" :: CALL ACCEPT ER(7,7,WF)
210 CALL ACCEPTER(7,13,WI):: WI=WI/12 :: WW=WF+WI :: SQ= SQ+H*WW
220 DISPLAY AT(11,1):"How ma ny doors, windows or":"other areas not to be":"painted i n wall #";J;"?"
230 CALL ACCEPTER(13,19,D):: IF D=0 THEN 280
240 FOR L=1 TO D :: DISPLAY AT(15,1):"AREA NOT TO PAINT #";L: "Width ft in" :: CALL ACCEPTER(17,10,WDF)
250 CALL ACCEPTER(17,16,WDI) :: WDI=WDI/12 :: WD=WDF+WDI 260 DISPLAY AT(19,1):"Height ft in" :: CALL ACCEPTER( 19,11,HDF)
270 CALL ACCEPTER(19,17,HDI) :: HDI=HDI/12 :: HD=HDF+HDI :: SQ=SQ+WD*HD :: NEXT L
280 NEXT J :: DISPLAY AT(21, 1):"Paint the ceiling?" :: A CCEPT AT(21,20)SIZE(1)VALIDA TE("YN"):QQ$ :: IF QQ$="N" T HEN 320
290 CALL HCHAR(5,1,32,640):: DISPLAY AT(5,1):"Ceiling di mensions": " ft in by ft in" :: CALL ACCEPT ER(7,2,CWF)
300 CALL ACCEPTER(7,8,CWI):: CWI=CWI/12 :: CW=CWF+CWI
310 CALL ACCEPTER(7,17,CLF): : CALL ACCEPTER(7,23,CLI): CLI=CLI/12 :: CL=CLF+CLI :: SQ=SQ+CW*CL
320 CALL HCHAR(5,1,32,640):: IF B$="Y" THEN 340
330 NEXT B
340 DISPLAY AT(3,1)ERASE ALL : "Total of";INT(SQ+.5);"squa re feet."
350 DISPLAY AT(5,1):"How man y square feet will":"one gal lon of your paint":"cover?"
360 ACCEPT AT(7,8)SIZE(3)VAL IDATE(DIGIT)BEEP:SF :: DISPL AY AT(9,1):"How many coats?" :: CALL ACCEPTER(9,17,C):: G=SQ/SF*C ::
G=INT(G+.5)
370 DISPLAY AT(15,1):"You wi ll need";G;"gallons or";G*4; "quarts of paint."
380 CALL KEY(0,K,S):: IF S=0 THEN 380 ELSE STOP
390 SUB ACCEPTER(R,C,Q):: AC CEPT AT(R,C)SIZE(2)VALIDATE( DIGIT)BEEP:Q :: SUBEND
```

Memory full! - Jim P.

HELP! Can anyone tell me why I was unable to eliminate the unwanted spaces in preceding article. It was formatted for 4 columns and I reformatted it for only one. I tried everything to remove the spaces, even ^k to delete to end of line, but to no avail. Sorry. - Ed. to R

LET'S TALK RAM DISK
by John F. Willforth

We have a problem as TI-99/4A users these days that most market viewers and many TI owners would not have believed possible just a few months ago. There are four major vendors of RAM DISKS in the U.S.A.. There is also a variety of features and sizes in these units, some of which are not found in units being produced for Atari, Commodore, Apple, or the P.C. lines of computers. The biggest problem facing the user now is "which to buy?".

The purpose of this article is to provide some thoughts and facts to help you decide. The next several paragraphs are not intended to promote any one of the RAM DISKS mentioned, and may contain erroneous information, hopefully by omission rather than commission.

First a RAM DISK is by definition, a software/firmware supported RAM circuit board emulating a DISK. i.e. a circuit card, that when plugged into your PEB, will allow you to store and retrieve disk type files to/from the unit with the same ease as you would to your physical disk drive (DSK1 for example). Because RAM is a non-mechanical device, it is not subject to the delays of positioning a read/write head over a cylinder (TRACK), and waiting for the diskette to now rotate to the desired sector, and then read/write data from/to the spinning disk in serial (like cassette) form. These three mechanical limitations are the main reason that disks are slow. Yes, disks are about as much faster than cassettes as RAM DISKS are faster than disks! If you buy one, YOU WILL enjoy that kind of improvement, no matter which brand you buy.

The major two types of RAM DISKS are those using DYNAMIC RAM (MYARC, CORCOMP) and STATIC RAM (HORIZON, MIKE BALLMAN enhanced HORIZON [sold by Bud Mills]).

- * DYNAMIC RAM is less expensive, larger capacity, but requires more support circuitry, draws more power, and is more cumbersome to support if the power is lost (like turning off the PEB).

- * STATIC RAM is lower power and thus easy to support during power outages. They are more expensive, take more space on a board, and thus for the amount memory needed, more expensive than DYNAMIC RAM.

I would like to talk about additional features. The first one that I am most asked about, is the spooling features. All but the HORIZON and the enhanced HORIZON, have the spooling feature. At this printing, all that have spooling do it in a different manner, but just as effectively. Some of you may ask, "What is SPOOLING?". Well to make it simple, spooling is storing data that is to go to a device (printer modem, etc.) in memory space, and releasing it as it can be used by the receiving device. Remember the TI sits there sending to the printer until all the file is sent. Then it is able to accept your next command or continue instructions. A spooler accepts this information as if it were the printer, modem etc., and at a much higher rate than any of those peripherals could, and in most cases will accept the entire file to be processed in a few seconds verses several minutes. The TI-99/4A will then ASSUME that all that it had to do was done and come back to you for further use, when in fact the job is still being completed by the spooler at a pace that the printer, modem etc. can handle it. Pretty neat! Huh?

Another feature is partitioning, or multiple disks being assigned within a single RAM DISK CARD. What this means is that if you have a single drive on your system (DSK1 for example), you may call a portion of a RAM DISK DSK2, or DSK3, DSK4, etc. Now you have one physical, and up to who knows how many other disks which are part of the RAM DISK.

Still another feature is built in COMMANDS, each disk mentioned above has it's own set. For example, you can type "CALL DM" in BASIC COMMAND MODE, and a file called DM1 will be booted from the disk, followed by DM2. Many commands dealing with memory are also incorporated.

Features such as CLOCK, (Time Of Day), Analog-To-Digital, etc are now coming available on the RAM DISKS.

You may need more information to order your RAM DISK than I've provided here. Next month's article will get more specific on each RAM DISK but if you believe the ads, maybe you can understand them a little better now, and your ready to jump in. Good luck!



SOFTWARE NEWS



FROM THE LIBRARIAN . . .

Hi out there! As you know, I am new to this job, and I will be trying to keep up with all the information without being too trying on your patience!

The library was handed over to me by the past librarian, and it is in very good shape! If you haven't looked through the library recently, you should! And for those of you without a disk drive system, remember: there is a cassette library also!

It would take pages to review everything there is, so let's begin by reviewing what will be added to the library for the December meeting.

First of all, added to the library this month is the MENU DRIVEN AUTO LOAD program created by Mickey Schmitt, and demonstrated at the September meeting. For those of you who have the October or November DOM, the loader program is used on both of those disks. Look for this program in the UTILITIES section.

Next, and also demo'd at the November meeting are two new programs, TRI ARTIST SLIDE SHOW version 1.00 and EASY MUSIC. The Slide Show uses some very impressive graphics, and both of the disks have quite extensive DV 80 files. Both disks are autoloader from Extended Basic. Also, both disks are in the "shareware" category. This means that the creators are letting you try their software, and request a donation from you after you evaluate how useful the programs are to you. PLEASE consider: If there is no return on software development, these people will stop marketing!

Another new item in the library is FUNNELWEB. It is in the Utilities section. The doc file (entitled -READ-ME) is short and to the point. Funnelweb is a two disk set from Funnelweb Farms in Australia, and it allows the user to access TI-Writer, Editor Assembler, and Disk Manager from Extended Basic. Funnelweb was demonstrated by our President at the pre meeting seminar called questions and answers.

Also added to the library are the programs from the DOM OCTOBER - LINCOLN, *RUNNER (a TI Runner addition) and a Tunnels of Doom file.

Last, but not least, we will have demos at the meeting on the following, which are also new to the library: Physical Education from TI, ET(a frogger clone), another Tunnels of Doom file, and a disk of music programs.

Remember: If you have something to contribute, don't be shy! Maybe no-one else thought of the same thing! See me at meeting, call (464-0525) or drop me a line (5430 Fredanna Street, Pgh. PA. 15207).....Susan Harper

FROM THE MAILBOX

From Southern California Computer Group

SUPER FUNNELWEB TIP

If you have a program and are not sure if it is an XB or E/A program, load up Funnelweb. Go to the editor and choose the SD function. After the filenames are shown on the screen, press FCTN = (quit key). This will activate the disk drive and soon you will see that most program files have a BX or EA beside them.

From the LA 99ers

Control S = DATA

I "discovered" the time saving routine of using FCTN 8 (REDD) when entering long lists of data.

EX:

100 DATA aaa,bbb,ccc,ddd (enter)

Function 8 brings up a duplicate line of 100. I use the arrow key to change 100 to 110, skip over the word DATA and now just enter my new data:

110 DATA eee,fff,ggg,hhh

Now! I "discovered" an easier system!! Type NUM (enter). At line 100 enter CTRL S, space bar, and enter the data. That's all there is to it! The CTRL S will show a blank, but when listed...it displays "DATA". Easy, huh?

From Lehigh 99'er

SPRITE ONE LINER
by Barron Bartlett

Want to frustrate and amaze your Atari, Apple, VIC-20 and Color Computer friends? Type in the following in the command mode with Extended Basic.

```
CALL CLEAR :: CALL SCREEN(5) :: CALL MAGNIFY(2) :: FOR
I=1 TO 28 :: CALL SPRITE (#I,64+I,16,80,80,3*I,8) ::
NEXT I :: FOR J=1 TO 5000 :: NEXT J
```

Hit ENTER and watch all 28 sprites do their tricks. If you want to see it again, simply hit Function REDD, then ENTER again as many times as you wish.

WELCOMEWELCOME***WELCOME***

The PUG would like to extend a warm welcome to Matthew Falce, John Yankel, Donald McCalla, and John Drennen, who are our newest members. We would also like to convey our continued welcome to Blaine Stone, Dick McNelis, Ken Farr, Bob Melena, Michael Shane, Chuck Hussman and Vincent Lezek, who have recently renewed their memberships.

RECAP OF MINUTES OF NOV. 15th MEETING

Meeting called to order at 6:40PM
Minutes of last meeting accepted as read.
Detailed Treasurer's report accepted as read.
President Gary Taylor demonstrated Print Wizard and Tass 2001.
Gene Kelly gave a demonstration of the PUG BBS.
Raffle winners were Susan Harper...4A Talk and Joseph Gzesh...Learning Basic.
Marty Kroll demonstrated his new CATLIB COMPANION program.
Meeting adjourned at 8:45PM.

COMING ATTRACTIONS!!

Next month we will begin publishing a series of articles on TI Writer, written by Stan Katzman. Additionally, Gary Taylor will begin demonstrating the TI Writer hints suggested by Stan's article each month at his demonstration class.

NEWS ITEM

Texas Instruments offered User Groups a listing of TI99 purchasers who returned a registration card when they originally bought their TI99 4/A. Gary Taylor wrote to them and received over 11,000 names and he only asked for addresses in zipcodes 150xx, 151xx, and 152xx. Now that we have these names, we will be sending out a few letters or postcards a month to tell people that there is still local support for their computer.

HAPPY

HOLIDAYS

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EDMONTON 99'ER USER GROUP
 P.O. BOX 11983
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 ALBERTA CANADA T5J 3L1

NEW ADDRESS
 EFF - 10/15/87

Pittsburgh User's Group
 P.O. Box 8043
 Pittsburgh, Pa 15216



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NEXT MEETING

DEC. 20TH

3 PM C C A C

SOUTH CAMPUS

BBS 412-824-6779

DATED MATERIAL .. Deliver by Dec 17th

[[[SCHEDULE OF EVENTS]]]

3-4:30 Questions and Demos with Gary Taylor...Ra. 401

4:30-6 Hardware Class with John Wilforth.....Ra. 475

4:30-6 Basic & XBasic with Jim Alexander.....Ra. 401

6:00-? General Meeting

[[[SEE YOU THERE]]]