

## ROCKY MOUNTAIN 971ers

TIC TALK

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# FROM THE EDITOR

Well, another month has gone by, and I'm running late with the newsletter again. I have been trying to write a program to print a calendar similar to the one we used in the newsletter last year. So far, I'm not having too much luck getting it to work. Hopefully, by next month, I'll have it going and in use on the front page.

I want to remind everyone that the meeting in February will be on the first (lst) Tuesday instead of the usual second (2nd). I will note this in the February issue of the newsletter, but I figure it can't hurt to say it here too.

I want to wish everyone the happiest of holiday seasons, and hope to see every member at the January meeting.

## BEST WISHES!

JANUARY MEETING

JANUARY 8

Jefferson County Fairgrounds

Auditorium 7:00 PM

6th Ave. West to Indiana Ave.



by Mike Holmes

One of the best services that we as a club can supply to our members is to try to filter out programs which may sound like what you want but really do not perform as advertised. With this in mind the group is beginning to some software for invest. in evaluation purposes. If we find something unsuitable or very useable we will attempt to bring it to your attention here. This month I am going to review two new pieces of software which were ordered for this purpose. 9900BASIC ----Which 1 5 1. as assembly advertised an language development tool. and 2. SUPER COPY - Advertised as a general purpose copy program.

of 9900BASIC is a. series subroutines written in assembly language which are intended to the syntax of extended simulate basic and make it easier for аn extended basic experienced programmer to develop programs in assembly language. The routines included seem well thought out and of good utility. The user Know something about should assembly language on the TI since the functions of Extended all Basic are not included in the package. The code is included as source code which is included in your assembly program by using the assembler's copy directive. All in all this is an execlient package and seems to be well The doccumented and thought out. problem with the single doccumentation is the last page. This page contains a list  $O^{+}$ names which are not explained. Upon looking into the source code I found that these are the names of labels which are reserved for the use of 9900BASIC only. 1+ of these names in you use any your assembly program you will

find that there are duplicate definitions.

SUPER COPY is also a product of CHALLENGER SOFTWARE, who marketed 9900BASIC. After looking at the previous program I was prepared to use a well thought out responsive copying routine. Ι was very disappointed. Aside from being able to copy protected files of some types I found this package to be a waste of money. The program offers three options on it's menu. 1. Catalog a disk. 2. Copy a file. And з. Exit the program. There is no provision for using the expansion memory or for backing up a disk in it's entiriety

This program turned out to be an extended basic disk catalog program which does get around TI file protection but there are better programs on the market for this purpose. They also work faster.

# FOR SALE

1 TI 99/4A CONSOLE (NEW) \$65

1 P.E. BOX (NEW) -32K MEMORY CARD -DISK CONTROLLER	
-DISK DRIVE	\$375
1 RS-232 CARD	\$80
1 TI-WRITER	\$65

OBCAR SMITH 794-8448 (HOME) 977-9524 (WORK)



NOW THAT YOU'VE BEEN USING YOUF COMPUTER FOR ANHILE ISN'T IT APOLT TIME THAT YOU SET IT UP PROFERENT SITTING AND STARING AT A SEPER FOR A FEW HOURS CAN BECOME A LITERAL PAIN IN THE NECK. YOU SHOULD SET UP YOUR COMPUTER IN AN ENVIROMENT THAT MAKES COMPUTING PRODUTIVE AND LESS OF A STR-IN ON YOUP BODY.HERE ARE SOME STEPS TO HELF YOU COMPUTE PAIN-FREE:

+ YOUR SCREEN SHOULD BE ARN'S LENGTH FFOM YOUP FACE.

+ IF YOU SIT AND STARE STRAIGHT AHEAD, YOU SHOULD BE LOOKING AT THE VERY TOP OF THE COMPUTER SCREEN: IN OTHER WORDS, WHEN YOU LOOK AT THE CENTER OF THE SCREEN, YOU SHOULD BE LOOKING DOWN SLIGHTLY.

+ HERE'S HON TO FOSITION YOUR LENDARD LET YOUR ARNE HANG LOOSE AND BEND YOUR FOREARME UP TO FORM A FIGHT ANDLE AT THE SLIPUNG-THAT'S A BEED HEIGHT FOR THE FEED ARD

+ NOUT CHRIF RETERT SHOULD ALLOW Your FEET TO BUST TOLDH THE SFLOWE.

+ YOU SHOULD HAVE PAPELE LOWER-BROD SUPPOPT. IF YOU DON'T HAVE A BODE BACK-REST. PLACE A PILLOW REFIN YOUR BACK AT THE BASE OF YOUR SFINE.

+ THE TOF OF YOUR PRINTER SHOULD BE WAIST HIGH AS YOU SIT. AND CLOSE ENDUGH THAT YOU CAN REACH IT EASILY WHILE SITTING AT YOUR TERMINAL.

+ REEP A SMALL FOOT-STOOL OFF FROME BOOK UNDER THE DEBLE PROP Ing or Book febt on the Stool To Help (Relify) pressure of your Lower Back. + Ts: TO BI ON BOTH FLAS AT THE SHOT TIME IN PROF TO DISTRIBUTE

YOUR RECENT CLANNER

# ARTICLE

CHANSE YOUR SITTING POINTION WHENEVER POSSIBLE. SUTEMING AROUND CAN PREVENT MUSCLE SPASMS AND HELF KEEP YOUR BLOOD DIRCULATIAG.
FACE YOUR WORF DIRECTLE. RATHER THAN TWISTING YOUR BOLD.
AVOID SITTING ON A WALLET OR OTHER BULKY OBJECT. IT CAN PRESS ON YOUR SCIATIC NERVE (WHICH RUNS DOWN THE LENGTH OF YOUR LEGS), RESULTING IN SHOOTING FAINS. + WHEN YOU STAFT TO FEEL STIFF UP TENSE, GET UP AND WALK AROUND FOR FIVE TO TEN MURUTES.. IT WILL DO A WORLD OF GODD.



ADEQUATE SUPPORT FOR MIDDLE AND LOWER BACK.

SPLIT-LEVEL TABLE GIVES HAXIMUM FLEXIBILITY IN SCREEM AND KEYBOAPD HEIGHT AND ANGLE.

STITTOM OF CHAIR SHOULD CURVE DO ~ SUGHTLY. USER SHOULD LOOK DOWN SUGHT TO SEE "CREEN. CHAIR HEART SHOULD BY ADAUTILE FORTH DISK FIXER

by Joel Gerdeen from MSP 99 NEWSLETTER

The October ASSEMBLER SUBGROUP meeting covered a review of the TI99 disk format and the use of the language FORTH as a disk fixer. This article continues that discussion and also reviews the operation of the NAVARONE INDUSTRIES' DISK FIXER command module.

The DISK FIXER module allows you to access floppy disks by sector rather than by file. You can display, print or change any byte (character) or series of bytes anywhere on the diskette. This alows you to UNDELETE files that have been inadvertantly deleted, CLOSE files that were improperly closed and recover data that is otherwise inaccessable. Note. details of these operations will not be covered in this article. Only a review of the capabilities of DISK FIXER and how FORTH can be used to accomplish the same is covered. In summary, anyone who is inclined to fix disks should learn FORTH and can come to the ASSEMBLER SUBGROUP for further assistance.

First, a definition of some terms. The TI99, single-sided, single-density disk is divided into 360 sectors, a minimum of two of which are always used for diskette directory information. DISK FIXER works with sectors while FORTH works with SCREENS or BLOCKS. Each block is made up of four sectors, so there are only 90 BLOCKS on a SESD diskette.

FORTH contains two different full-screen editors that edit a complete screen or block all at once. Each screen is made up of 16 lines of 64 characters each for a total of 1024 characters on bytes. One of the editors displays only 40 characters aris while the other classes are full of characters. FORTH a lows you to change any character on the screen as long as it is displayable. Remember that only 95 of the 256 ASCII codes are displayable. The non-displayable scies must be changed in a different manner that will be described later. Note that DISK FIXER does not allow any characters to be edited in this full-screen editor fashion.

To load disk data into memory, the DISK FIXER has a command called READ SECTOR with the syntax "R sss,d", where sss is the sector number and d is the disk drive device code. Both sss and d can be omitted to allow sequential reading of the same diskette. Only one sector is in memory at any time.

FORTH loads a block from diskette in two ways. Typing "b BLOCK" will load block numbered b if it is not already in memory. Typing "b EDIT" will both load the block and place you in the editor mode for changes. As many as five blocks of data can be in memory at once.

To store a sector of data back to disk, DISK FIXER uses the WRITE SECTOR command with the syntax "W sss,d" where variables are the same as before. Care must be taken because the sector number sss is incremented by other commands and other disk sectors could be overwritten.

FORTH will store any block in memory to disk with the simple comand "FLUSH". Note that all changed blocks in memory will be flushed. You can erase all blocks in memory with the "EMPTY-BUFFERS" command.

To display a sector, DISK FIXER uses the DISPLAY BUFFER command with the syntax "D". The current sector in memory will be displayed. The display will show both the hexadecimal and ASCII forms of the data along with a memory location required for further changes.

FORTH will display any block in metric y or on disk with the command

"b BLOCK n DUMP" where again b is the block number and n is the number of bytes to be dumped. The display is similar to that of DISK FIXER.

To change data in the sector buffer, DISK FIXER uses the ALTER DATA command with the syntax "A occo" where cocc is the address as displayed by the D command. New hexadecimal data is typed in. A command INSPECT/CHANGE with the syntax "M cocc" can be used to change any memory location including VDP memory. This commad has the same syntax as the M command in the TI-DEBUGGER.

FORTH uses one of two store commands to alter memory. For complete 16-bit words of data the syntax "n addr. !" will store the data word n at address addr. For bytes of data, the syntax "n addr C!" will store a byte n at address addr. In addition, the FOTH command EXPECT can be used to read characters directly from the keyboard to memory. Of course for text, it is easier to use one of the editors described above.

The last command that DISK FIXER has is the PRINT SECTOR command with the syntax "sss,d,n" where n is the number of sectors to print. The format of the output is similar to that of the display command except that it is twice as wide as the screen output. Note that multiple sectors are read from the diskette and printed automatically to any TI99 supported device.

FORTH uses a variation of the DUMP command to accomplish the above, making use of the SWCH command to switch display output to the printer. The syntax is "SWCH b BLOCK n DUMP UNSWCH". Note that if n is 1024 the complete block or four sectors will be printed. If greater than 1024 you will start printing other memory locations outside your block. Note also that the FORTH TRIADS command will print any number of blocks directly from dishette but only for blocks that are ASCI1 displayable.

DISK FIXER also has a FIND STRING command. While FORTH does not, a FIND command procedure to do such is easily written.

In summary, I am an advocate of FORTH which has extended my interests further into the power of the TI99/4A. While the DISK FIXER module is all it is advertised to be, I put my money into FORTH and its more powerful features.



## TI-WRITER TIF (Adapted from an article b, Norman Rakke in the Pittsburgh users Group's P.U.G. Peripheral) Reprintei from MSP 99 NEWSLETTER

Have you ever wished that your printer has some special character or symbol, such as Greek letters like pi or alpha, or a division symbol, or Cyrillic characters, or something of that sort? Well, if your printer has dot graphics capability, and allows you to mix text and graphics on the same line, then you can use TI-Writer to create characters which you define, and print them in documents you create. Before getting into details, you should note that the information in this article specifically relates to the T199/4 printer; however, the control codes used are standard Epson codes, and the technique should work with most Epson compatible printers. An attempt was made to verify this technique on the Star Micronics Gemini 10, but the attempt failed because the Gemini 10 will apparently not allow graphics and text mixed on a line. If you have some other printer which has the above mentioned capabilities, you can still do what is described below; however, you should read your printer manual to determine how your printer does each of the things mentioned. If anything is done in a different manner, you will have to take that into account.

First of all, you must make sure that your printer is ready tο receive graphics data. You may have your to remove the cover from printer and change the position of a DIP switch so that the printer can raceive 8 data bits. Check your printer manual to make sure that the graphics mude works properly. Fisally, if your printer i 5 connected to the serial port of the SSIZZ Interface, you will need to include .DAAS in your file description SVCFP lime you use the 201 121

Printer graphics consist of one a: more columns of dots. There are a total of 460 such colums across a page. Each column is 8 positions high, and a dot can appear in any one of the 8 positions. Each position has a data value associated with it as shown in the figure below. The data representing a particular column is simply the sum of the data values for all positions where a dot is to be printed.

+		-	t
1	2	8	l
+	~	-	t
ł	6	4	ł
+~	~		+
ł	3	2	ł
+ ~	-	-	t
ł	1	6	ł
+	-	-	t
ł	8		ł
+ ~	-	-	+
ł	4		!
+ ~	~	-	+
ł	2		ţ
+	-	-	+
ł	1		ł
+ -	-	-	t

For example, to print a column where only the top dot is printed would require a data value of 128. A column in which both the top and the bottom dots were printed would require a data value of 128+1, or 129. A column which had all 8 dots printed would require a data value of 128 + 64 + 32 + 16 + 8 + 4 + 2 + 1, or 255.

l∈t's create our Now กพก graphics character and see how we can incorporate it in a document prepared with TI-Writer. Let's make an arrow pointing up as our special The normal characters character. tuilt into the printer are as wide as 6 columns of graphics (480 columns / 80 characters), so let's make our character the same size. It's helpful to draw the character on graph paper, so lets do that.

+	-+-		-+-		-+-		-+-		-+-	+
ł	1		ł		1		1		1	1
+	- + -		- + -		- + -		-+-		-+	+
1	ł		ł	¥	ł		1		1	1
+	- + -		- + -		-+-		-+-		- + -	+
1	ł	¥	1	¥	1	¥	1		1	1
+	-+-		-+-		-+-		-+-		-+-	+
: *	T		ł	¥	I		1	¥	1	1
+	-+-		-+-		-+-		-+-		-+-	+
1	ł		ł	¥	ł		1		ł	1
+ ~	-+-		-+-		-+-		-+-		-+-	+
1	1		1	¥	1		1		1	1
+	-+-		-+-		-+-		-+-		-+-	+
1	1		1	¥	ł		T		1	1
+	-+-		-+-		-+-		-+-		-+-	+
1	1		1		1		1		1	1
+	-+-		-+-		-+-		-+-		-+-	+

The data for the columns from left to right is 16,32,126 (64+ 32 + 16 + 8 + 4 + 2, 32, and 16. (You might find it useful to know that the normal text characters of the printer do not use the column on the right (to prevent characters from running into each other) or the bottom row (except in lowercase characters with descenders). Tn send the graphics data to the printer we first need to send a control code. For normal graphics mode this is in the form of ASCII codes 27,75,n1,n2. The codes n1 and n2 define the number of bytes of graphic data which will be This represents the transmitted. number of columns of dots which will be printed. If N is the number of columns of graphics to be printed, then n2 is the integer result of N/256, and n1 is N MOD 256, or the remainder of N/256. For our special character, n2 is 0 and n1 is 6. The graphics data follows immediately after n2. The complete string of ASCII values neded to print our special character is therefore 27, 75, 6, 0, 16, 32, 126, 32, 16, 0. We will create the special character by using the TI-Writer "transliterate" command. We will use some character we won't be using, such as ~, and transliterate it to the string of data we defined above.

We can now use our special character in a document. If we were writing directions for using a program where pressing the E key moved something up on the screen, we could write the following:

To move up ~ Press E

If we now print this short file using TI-Writer's Text Formatter, we will get the following:

To move up ↑ Press E

Using special characters which are six graphics columns wide allows you to still be able to use the .AD and .CE even if special characters are present in the text. If you are not going to use either of these commands, you can make your characters of different widths than 6.

CAUTION! Using the method just described, you can design almost any character that you might desire. Unfortunately, the values 8, 12 and 13 cause problems which disallow their use for graphics data using this method. You may have to modify your character to avoid these values.



#### ADDING A NUMERIC KEYPAD TO THE TI99/4A.

by Norman Riger from the MSP 99 NEWSLETTER

Proficiency with a numeric keypad is a valuable skill. Employment ads in the newspaper often mention requirements of ten thousand keystrokes per hour for keypad operators. Considerable time and practice is required to achieve such speed and the necessary accuracy. Your home computer can provide you with the opportunity to learn this valuable skill. This article shows how to connect a numeric keypad to the TI99/4A. This method will not work with the TI99/4, which is wired differently and has a different keyboard.

My procedure involves selecting a surplus keypad that has ten separate spring type switches, each with two terminals. Both terminals of each switch must be accessible and not permanently connected to the terminals of a different switch. There are four rows of switches on the standard keypad. The top row (left to right) has keys for seven, eight and nine. Below are keys for four, five and six. The third row has keys for one, two and three. The bottom row has a single key (at the left) for zero. There is no ground connection on the keyboard of the TI99/4A and there should be no ground on the keypad selected for this project. Only these ten keys are required and any others are not needed and may be ignored as long as they aren't connected to the required keys.

Turn the computer upside down and remove the seven recessed Phillips screws used to fasten the bottom. Carefully pull out the on/off switch until it comes of and then remove the bottom. A fifteen conductor ribbon cable conected the keyboard to the processor printed circuit board (covered by a metal shield). Only seven wires are needed to connect the keypad and there are several methods possible.

A clamp type connector can be attached to the ribbon cable (use an ohm-meter to make sure that adjacent conductors don't become shorted together). It is possible to disconnect the ribbon cable connector from the processor printed circuit board and place an additional connector between them which contains the seven wires required. These methods have the advantage of requiring no solder connections on either the keyboard or the processor printed circuit board. Another possible method is to scrape some of the insulation off of the required conductors in the ribbon cable and solder directly to them.

My method is to solder the seven wires directly to the printed circuit board in order to save the cost and trouble of finding additional connectors or run the rist of damaging the ribbon cable. The end of the ribbon cable closest to the joystick connector is pin one and the end closest to the I/O port connector is pin fifteen. My method involves soldering each wire and running it through one of the ventilation slots in the bottom of the computer. Bread ties may be used to provide strain relief for the wires.

Pin two of the keyboard connector should be connected to one terminal of the switches on the keypad for the 6, 7, 8, 9, and 0 keys. Pin seven should be connected to one terminal of the switches for the 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 keys. At this point, each of the ten switches on the keypad should have a Pin eight on the keyboard connector should be connected to the one and zero keys on the keypad. Pin nine is connected to the five and six keys. Pin 13 is wired to the 2 and 9 keys. Pin 14 goes to the 3 and 8 keys. The last connection is from pin 15 to the 4 and 7 keys. Check the keypad to be sure that all twenty terminals are connected correctly.

Be careful to avoid cold solder joints and solder bridges between adjacent connectors. A grounded (three wire cord) soldering iron is recommended for the protection of the sensitive computer chips. Replace the bottom of the computer along with the screws and the on/off switch. If it's necessary to remind you that the computer should be turned off and unplugged during the modification procedure, it's recommended that you have the job done by a qualified electronic technician. The modification described in this acticle has been performed successfully and requires no additional hardward or software of any type.

	T	
70 REM**********	0	590 R5\$="D5K1."
75 REM * LOAD *	350 Q=6	600 RZ\$=RR\$&SEG\$(""",1,1)&RS
BO REM 🐟 A PROGRAM TO 🔭	360 INPUT #1:A\$,A,J,K	\$&R\$(M)&SEG\$(""",1,1)
85 REM * CATALOGLE DISKS*	370 R\$(N+1)=A\$	610 CALL CLEAR
90 REM * BY FRANK UHLIK *	380 IF LEN(A\$)≃0 THEN 540	620 DISPLAY AT(5,1):"
95 REA **************	390 N≃N+1 -	TYPE IN-"
100 CALL CLEAR	400 IF N=16 THEN 420	630 DISPLAY AT(11,1):" %%%
110 DIM R\$(60)	410 IF N=32 THEN 420 ECH 4	₩757070707070707070707070707070707070707
120 DIM X\$(254)	0	640 DISPLAY AT(12.1);" %
130 DIM TYPE\$(5)	420 DISPLAY AT(23,1):"TU SEL	0, <b>8</b> , (1), (2), (2), (2), (2), (2), (2), (2), (2
140 TYPE\$(1)="DIS/FIX"	ECT FROM ABOVE PRESS STO CON	
150 TYPE\$(2)="DIS/VAR"	TINUE PRESS SPACE BAR "	
160 TYPE\$(3)="INT/FIX"	430 CALL KEY(3,K,S)	
170 TYPE\$(4)="INT/VAR"	440 IF S=0 THEN 430	650 DISPLAY AT(15,1):" ****
180 TYPE\$(5)="PROGRAM"	450 IF K=83 THEN 550	87899999999999999999999999999999999999
190 A=1	460 DISPLAY AT(23,1):"	660 DISPLAY AT(13,5):RZ\$; TAP
200 OPEN #1:"DSK"&STR\$(A)&".		(27);"%"
", INPUL, HELATIVE, INTERNAL	1:	670 DISPLAY AT(20,1):"
210 INPJ1 #1:A\$,J,J,K	470 IF N 15 THEN 480 ELSE 4-7	AND PRESS ENTER"
220 DISPLAY AI(1,1):"DSK";ST	0	680 END
R\$(A);" - DISKNAPE'= ";A\$:"AV	-480 DISPLAY AT(Q+1,1):"	
A11 ABLE=";K;"USED=";J-K		CATALOGUING DISKS
2-0 DISPLAY AT(22,1):"*****	490 DISPLAY AT(Q, 1):N: (20.50)	from BUG-BYTES
xx************************************	;A\$;TAB(15);J;TAB(19);TYPE\$(	
240 DISPLAY A1(4,1):" NO FIL	ABS(A));	If you're like me, you
ENAME SZ TYPE P":"	500 IF ABS(A)=5 THEN 510	want to run a program,
	510 IF A10 THEN 530	and you can't remember
250 u='	520 DISPLAY AT(0,28):"Y";	its file name, so you
260 FUK ( UOP=1 10 127	530 NEXT LOOP	have to get out your disk
270 CALL REY(3, K, 5)	540 CLOSE #1	manager module to
260 - F SET THEN 290 ELSE 330	550 DISPLAY AT(23,15:4	catalogue the disk. With
197 168 ALL: 10 106	550 DIGITAL AT(2),17.	-
TO DELLAB	· · · ·	this programme jou won't
210  CMA  KFY(2, K, 5)	560 DISPLAY AT(24,1):"10:001	need to do that any more.
320 If S=0 Then 310 ETSE 330	No:"	Put the programme on to
320 11 520 HEN 210 COBE 330 330 (stude)	570 ACCEP1 A1(24,11):M	each of your disks, and
	570 ACCEPT AT(24,117:M 580 HR\$="RUN "	if you use the filename
340 a g=21 THEN 350 ELSE 36	200 8645=	LCAD for it, it will load
		automatically as you

the coloradi have to a strach programme an is tabl

select E tended Basic,

<sup>9</sup> 

DAEL FILE TRANSIEN WITHOUT THE TELT. by Larry Frikockis Reprinted from CLEVELAND AFEA 99/4A

When transfering files over the phone, the leasiest and most reliable method is to use the Terminal Emulator. The price for this ease of use and error checking is that the process is very slow. Fortunately, there is a way to transfer Basic and Extended Basic programs at five times the speed of the TC.

First, both the sender and receiver must select TI Basic. Then, load the program to be sent into memory and type "SAVE RS 232", but do not press enter yet. The receiver should type "OLD RS232". When you are ready, switch over to the modems and press enter. The receiver should wait about five seconds and then press enter also. Both users should see a number, corresponding to the number of blocks of the program, at the top of the screen. This number will slowly count down to zero at which point the transfer is complete. Since the program is loaded directly into memory, the receiver must remember to save the program to disk or cassette.

Obviously, this method is limited to programs which can run in Basic or Extended Basic. The procedure for transferring assembly programs or text files is a little more complicated, but still faster than the TE.

To use this method, both users must have an editor assembler module. First, select the editor assembler and press "1" for the edit section. The receiver should do the same. Then select option 4 for print. When you are asked for a filename, enter "RS232.BA=300.CRLF". The receiver selects option 1 for load (make sure Disk A is in the drive) and uses "RS232.BA=300" as a filename. When both sides are ready, switch over to the modems and press enter. Again, the receiver should wait five seconds before hitting enter. With this method, there is no way of telling how much more of the file is left to be sent, so just sit back and wait until it is finished. The file can be saved to disk by using option 3.

## <<<<< DISPLAY ADS >>>>>

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10



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#### Rocky Mountain 99'ers

### TIC TALK

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