

# THE SNUGL ETTER



FROM THE SOUTHERN NEVADA USERS' GROUP

Vol. 3 - No. 7

JULY, 1985

## NEXT MEETING

MONDAY, JULY 8, 1985 - 6:30 PM

CHARLESTON PLAZA LIBRARY MEETING ROOM

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This month, as you all should know by now is election month for SNUG. We didn't have anyone express an interest in running for office at the June meeting. This seems to be typical of the non-involvement sentiment of the group.

I will have to admit that I didn't voluntarily run for the office of president myself, but I have found it to have been an interesting experience. I am not sure if the membership agrees with the policies and directions we have taken over the past 6 months since most of you seem to be committed to this non-involvement policy. Because of this, it's hard to gauge how well those of us who are active are doing. If you would like to change your status from non-involvement to active, the process is very simple. Just come to the next meeting and let us know. We have all the offices to fill, and committees that desperately need more volunteers.

I would hope that you will all turn out for the July meeting, if for no other reason than to express your feelings about what you expect from the group and where you think we should go from here.

To that end, you will find, elsewhere in this newsletter, a questionnaire that we, the officers of SNUG, would appreciate your taking the time to fill out.

We are going to try to keep the election portion of the meeting as short as practical so that we can also have a presentation from Gordon Leonard.

Gordon will be demonstrating Programming Aids 3, a disk based utility program from TI that will allow several options not available from BASIC or EXTENDED BASIC. For instance, you can delete whole sections of programs or RESequence portions of a program without affecting the rest of it. I have not seen the program yet, but am looking forward to Gordon's presentation. Gordon always does an excellent job when we get him to talk to the group.

-JOHN MARTIN-

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- |                                     |                                      |   |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| * SNUG OFFICERS 1984-1985:          | * Newsletter Editor:                 | * |
| * Pres.: John Martin - 647-1062     | * Rudy Johnson - 871-9583            | * |
| * U.P.: Gordon Leonard - 384-2302   | * Newsletter submissions can be      | * |
| * Sec.: Bob Sherburne - 642-6972    | * sent to P.O. Box 26301, Las Vegas, | * |
| * Treas.: Steve Buchanan - 363-1043 | * Nevada 89126. Articles using TI-   | * |
| * Librarian: Bob Bieber - 878-3167  | * Writer on disk are ideal. You      | * |
| * Membership: ?                     | * may also phone articles with a     | * |
| * SNUG Bulletin Board - 648-1247    | * modem also a preferred method.     | * |
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In this issue:

- SNUG Bulletin Board News
- More on the 99/8
- More Laws of Computer Programming
- News on SNUG's Software Library

- New Feature-Tips from the TigerCub #20
- Gordon Leonard's Seagull Program in XBASIC

LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

As your Librarian I haven't had much of a job to do until the Club's computer System was purchased. However, I was preparing for the inevitable many months ago. I developed a program that will read data written in DIS/VAR 80 format, thus allowing me to make use of TI-WRITER to layout and print a catalog of all the SNUG Library programs.

The Disk Library has been picked up from Computer Magic and has under-gone a complete renovation. The DISK NAMES remain the same, but many of the programs have had their FILE NAMES altered making it easier to identify and list the programs alphabetically. A preliminary copy of the SNUG Program Catalog will be available for review at July's SNUG meeting.

Those of you who wish to obtain copies of programs should bring your own PRE-INITIALIZED disk/s to the meeting. If time is available at a meeting copying will be done there. Otherwise your disks will be returned at the following meeting with the copies (unless other arrangements are made to pick the disk/s up prior to the following meeting.)

For those of you who wish to donate programs PLEASE follow the below listed rules since all DONATED programs will be thoroughly checked prior to acceptance into the SNUG LIBRARY.

- (1) Put program title, your FULL name and telephone number, date, required support equipment, and whether the program will run in Basic, XBasic or BOTH in REM statements at the start of each program. We need your name and phone number to insure you get credit for the donation and to contact you if there are any questions.
- (2) Game rules and/or directions for program usage are an absolute necessity, so place them at the start of the program or include them in a separate program titled XXXX-RULES.
- (3) PLEASE take the time to review your program and change any STATEMENTS that transfer program control to REM statements. When shortening a program the first thing deleted is unnecessary REM Statements.
- (4) Make a backup copy of each program then RESEQUENCE each program, preferably by 10's and starting at line # 100, or if the program is extremely long then RESEQUENCE by 5's starting at line # 10.
- (5) AFTER RESEQUENCING run each program to insure there are NO BUGS. The most common problem is transfer of

program control to a nonexistent line number, especially after deletion of REM statements.

If you abide by the rules you'll make my job a lot easier and avoid the initial rejection of your donated program(s).

R. J. Bieber - SNUG Librarian

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BULLETIN BOARD NEWS.....

Bulletin board use is starting to pick up a little, but there are still not very many people using it. I had hoped that more people would take advantage of the board to keep in contact with each other between meetings. I guess it's like everything else related to computer use, it seems too complicated until you learn how to do it.

One of the trouble areas has been in the <L>eave messages section. I have rewritten part of this section to make it easier to use. Now, after you leave a message, instead of going back to the SUBJECT-> prompt, the program will first prompt you for: ANOTHER MESSAGE FOR \_\_\_\_\_ <Y>es <N>o <M>ain menu-> where \_\_\_\_\_ is the name of the category in which you just left a message. If you want to leave another message in that category, press Y. Otherwise, type N or M. If you type N, you will be taken back to the Messages menu. You can then select another category in which to leave a message. Typing M will take you back to the Main Menu so you can select one of the other BBS options (for instance <R>ead messages so you can look at the message you just left). I also wrote a prompt in the message abort routine to give you a chance to change your mind in case you hit <Q>uit instead of <P>ost when you finished typing in your message. I have seen several instances where people have made this mistake.

We have gotten some calls from former members wanting to keep in touch with the group, and from some non-members who are interested in the group, but for one reason or another can't make it to the regular meetings. I, for one, hope this trend continues. We need all the input we can get from any sources available to us.

The BBS log after 2 months stands at 296 callers. Unfortunately, about 200 of those recorded calls were from me while doing program development and updates. I want to encourage all SNUG members to at least try the board. It doesn't disturb me or my family at all as it can be completely silent in operation. Don't worry about what time you call. The board is on line 24 hours a day for your convenience. The important thing to remember is that it's only a machine. You can't hurt it!! Don't be embarassed if you make a mistake. The worst thing that could happen is that you will have to hang up in the middle of the program. Even if that happens, the program

can take care of itself. After about 3 minutes, it will reset and wait for another caller.

If you have any difficulties at all, call me at 647-1062 between 3 pm and 11 pm weeknights. I will be happy to help you learn how the BBS works.

--JOHN MARTIN--

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From the LAWS OF COMPUTER PROGRAMMING

- 01 HARE'S LAW OF LARGE PROGRAMS
  - 03 INSIDE EVERY LARGE PROGRAM IS A SMALL PROGRAM STRUGGLING TO GET OUT.
- 01 TURNAUCKA'S LAW
  - 03 THE ATTENTION SPAN OF A COMPUTER IS ONLY AS LONG AS ITS ELECTRICAL CORD.
- 01 FALLIBLE MEN DESIGN FALLIBLE COMPUTERS.
  - A COMPUTER PROGRAM DOES WHAT YOU TELL IT TO DO, NOT WHAT YOU WANT IT TO DO.
- 01 TROUTMAN'S PROGRAMMING LAWS
  - 03 IF A TEST INSTALLATION FUNCTIONS PERFECTLY, ALL SUBSEQUENT SYSTEMS WILL MALFUNCTION
  - 03 NOT UNTIL A PROGRAM HAS BEEN IN PRODUCTION FOR AT LEAST SIX MONTHS WILL THE MOST HARMFUL ERROR THEN BE DISCOVERED.
  - 03 JOB CONTROL CARDS THAT CANNOT BE ARRANGED IN IMPROPER ORDER WILL BE.
  - 03 INTERCHANGEABLE TAPES WON'T.
  - 03 IF THE INPUT EDITOR HAS BEEN DESIGNED TO REJECT ALL BAD INPUT, AN INGENIOUS IDIOT WILL DISCOVER A METHOD TO GET BAD DATA PAST IT.
  - 03 MACHINES WORK, PEOPLE SHOULD THINK.

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MORE ON THE 99/8

FROM THE JUNE ISSUE OF THE DELAWARE VALLEY USERS GROUP NEWSLETTER "THE DATA BUS"  
TI WITHDRAWAL OF KEY COMPONENTS DELAYS MYARC BID FOR NEW COMPUTER!

Chicago's C.E.S. became the event that wasn't for eager TI-99/4A users. Barely weeks before that exposition, TI announced they'd suspended any future production of their TMS9900 and TMS99000 microprocessor chips and scrapped plans for the Advanced 64K VDP chip, while withdrawing two memory controllers and production of the TMS9918A chip. Japanese MSX computer plans, dependent on TI items also, suddenly were shaken. Once again, outstanding TI technology yielded to manipulative market techniques.

In a feature story for the July issue of MICROpendium, the prospective maker of the so-called "99/128", New Jersey's Myarc, Inc., has apparently vowed to continue the pursuit for extended development of the capabilities of the present 4A units.

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SEAGULL

This program evolved because of a challenge to write a program that was capable of having the computer monitor screen give the viewer a feeling of depth. When you see the program run, you will see one way to do that. The program is in Extended Basic and I naturally used Sprites as part of the effect. The program has many REM statements to show what each section does, but I will attempt to explain some of the sections in greater detail. Line 250 starts the program, turns the screen blue and sets the magnification of the sprites to 3. Lines 290 thru 550 create and put the graphic characters for the background scenery on the screen. The color of the graphics at this time is blue, the same color as the screen, so they won't show at this time. Lines 590-610 make the Sprite graphics for the small Catamaran type boat. Lines 650-720 create the Sprite graphics for the seagulls. Then lines 770-840 put the small sailboat on the screen and turn on the correct colors of the background graphics. That brings us to lines 880-900. This section determines whether there will be 1, 2, or 3 seagulls on the screen at the same time. The second command in line 880 [CALL PEEK(-31880,6)] gives 6 a random value from 0 to 99. The next instruction divides the value in 6 by 33 and makes L a value from 1 to 3. L then determines the number of seagulls on the screen. The last line of the program is a delay loop. The rest of the lines 940-1090 control action of the seagulls through the use of Call Pattern and Call Color statements with the delay loop.

(Program listing on next page.)

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 \* The SNUGLETter is published monthly by the Southern Nevada Users' Group \*  
 \* (SNUG). SNUG is a non-profit organization of individuals with an inter- \*  
 \* in all aspects of Texas Instruments' 99/4 & 4A computer, including all \*  
 \* related hardware and software by third party vendors. The GROUP meets \*  
 \* 6:30 PM on the second Monday of the month - currently in the Clark County \*  
 \* Library meeting room, 1726 E. Charleston Blvd. [Charleston Plaza Mall]. \*  
 \* Visitors and guests are welcome to attend the meetings. Information on \*  
 \* membership is available at the meeting. \*  
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100 !      ****
110 !      *      *
120 !      *      *
130 !      *      *
140 !      *SEAGULLS*
150 !      *      *
160 !      *      *
170 !      *      *
180 !      ****
190 !
200 !      GORDON LEONARD
210 !      2404 ISABELLE AVE.
220 !      LAS VEGAS,NEV. 89101
230 !      JUNE 1983
240 !
250 CALL CLEAR :: CALL SCREE
N(6):: CALL MAGNIFY(3)
260 !
270 ! PUT SKY AND WATER ON
      SCREEN
280 !
290 S$="FFFFFFFFFFFFFFFF" ::
      CALL CHAR(96,S$,104,S$):: C
      ALL COLOR(9,6,6):: CALL COLO
      R(10,6,6)
295 CALL HCHAR(1,1,104,416):
: CALL HCHAR(14,1,96,352)
300 !
310 ! MAKE PALM TREES
320 !
330 CALL CHAR(136,"000000C02
01C3AC5",128,"101010101010
10")
340 !
350 ! MAKE LAND
360 !
370 CALL CHAR(137,"AFFFFFFFFF
FFFFFFFF",138,"E0F0F8FFFFFFF
FF",139,"000000E0FEFFFFFF",1
40,"0000000000F8FCFF",141,"F
FFFFFFFFFFFFFFFF")
380 !
390 ! SANDY BEACH
400 !
410 CALL CHAR(112,"FFFFFAE0"
,113,"FFFF",114,"F880"):: CA
LL COLOR(13,6,6):: CALL COLO
R(14,6,6):: CALL COLOR(11,6,
6)
      6)
420 !
430 ! PUT PALM TREES ON
      SCREEN
440 !
450 CALL HCHAR(12,6,128):: C
      ALL HCHAR(11,6,136)
460 CALL HCHAR(10,2,136):: C
      ALL HCHAR(11,2,128):: CALL H
      CHAR(11,1,136):: CALL HCHAR(
      11,3,136):: CALL HCHAR(12,7,
      136)
470 !
480 ! PUT LAND ON SCREEN
490 !
500 CALL HCHAR(13,1,141,5)::
      CALL HCHAR(13,6,137):: CALL
      HCHAR(13,7,138):: CALL HCHA
      R(13,8,139):: CALL HCHAR(13,
      9,140)
510 CALL HCHAR(12,5,140):: C
      ALL HCHAR(12,4,139):: CALL H
      CHAR(12,3,138):: CALL HCHAR(
      12,1,137,2)
520 !
530 ! PUT BEACH ON SCREEN
540 !
550 CALL HCHAR(14,1,112):: C
      ALL HCHAR(14,2,113,8):: CALL
      HCHAR(14,10,114)
560 !
570 ! MAKE SAILBOAT
580 !
590 CALL CHAR(88,"01010101
010101010101013F7FFF0080C0E0
7078787C7C7878F080FFFEFC")
600 CALL CHAR(100,"210002400
00000000000000000000000018003
00000000000000")
610 CALL CHAR(116,"00C000000
0000000000000000000000000000
00000000000000")
620 !
630 ! DEFINE THE DIFFERENT
      SIZES AND SHAPES OF
      SEAGULLS
640 !
650 S1$="00000000000000402010
0000000000000000000000000000
000" :: S2$="00000000000000
6010000000000000000000000000
000E000"
660 S3$="00000000000000003050
0000000000000000000000000000C
02000" :: S4$="00000000000080
4020100000000000000000000000
03040808000"
670 S5$="0000000000000000E010
0000000000000000000000000000F
00000" :: S6$="00000000000000
006090000000000000000000000000
00000E09000"
680 S7$="0000000010080402030
1000000000000000000000001820408
0C0" :: S8$="0000000000000001
E03010000000000000000000000000
000F8C0"
690 S9$="000000000000000060B1
1200000000000000000000000000E
09008040" :: S10$="0000000000
000000201000000000000000000000
0000000000C000"
700 S11$="0000000000000000003
000000000000000000000000000000
00C0" :: S12$="00000000000000
000030400000000000000000000000
00000008040"
710 CALL CHAR(36,S1$,40,S2$,
44,S3$):: CALL CHAR(48,S4$,5
2,S5$,56,S6$)
720 CALL CHAR(60,S7$,64,S8$,
68,S9$):: CALL CHAR(72,S10$,
76,S11$,80,S12$)
730 !
740 !
750 ! PUTS SAILBOAT ON
      SCREEN
760 !
770 CALL SPRITE(#6,88,9,100,
15,0,1)
780 CALL SPRITE(#5,100,6,113
,3,0,1)
790 CALL SPRITE(#4,116,8,114
,27,0,1)
800 !
    
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## SEAGULL PROGRAM LISTING CONTINUED from Page 4

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810 ! TURN ON THE CORRECT
      COLORS
820 !
830 CALL COLOR(9,5,5):: CALL
      SCREEN(2)
840 CALL COLOR(14,3,6):: CAL
      L COLOR(13,2,6):: CALL COLOR
      (11,16,5)
850 !
860 ! SELECT 1,2,OR 3 BIRDS
      TO BE ON AT ONE TIME.
870 !
880 RANDOMIZE :: CALL PEEK(-
      31880,G):: L=1+INT(G/33):: I
      F L<2 THEN CALL SPRITE(#1,72
      ,15,90,255,-1,-2):: GOTO 940
890 IF L<3 THEN CALL SPRITE(
      #1,72,15,90,255,-1,-2,#2,72,
      6,98,255):: GOTO 940
900 CALL SPRITE(#1,72,15,90,
      255,-1,-2,#2,72,6,98,255,#3,
      72,6,90,255)
910 !
920 ! ROUTINE TO CHANGE THE
      PATTERN OF SEAGULLS
930 !
940 FOR X=1 TO 5 :: CALL PAT
      TERN(#1,76):: GOSUB 1100 ::
      CALL PATTERN(#1,80):: GOSUB
      1100
950 CALL PATTERN(#1,76):: GO
      SUB 1100 :: CALL PATTERN(#1,
      72):: GOSUB 1100 :: NEXT X
960 IF L>1 THEN CALL COLOR(#
      2,15):: CALL MOTION(#2,-1,-2
      )
970 FOR X=1 TO 9 :: CALL PAT
      TERN(#1,40,#2,76):: GOSUB 11
      00 :: CALL PATTERN(#1,44,#2,
      80):: GOSUB 1100
980 CALL PATTERN(#1,40,#2,76
      ):: GOSUB 1100 :: CALL PATTE
      RN(#1,36,#2,72):: GOSUB 1100
      :: NEXT X
990 IF L>2 THEN CALL COLOR(#
      3,15):: CALL MOTION(#3,-1,-2
      )
1000 FOR X=1 TO 7 :: CALL PA
      TTERN(#1,52,#2,40,#3,76):: G
      OSUB 1100 :: CALL PATTERN(#1
      ,56,#2,44,#3,80):: GOSUB 110
      0
1010 CALL PATTERN(#1,52,#2,4
      0,#3,76):: GOSUB 1100 :: CAL
      L PATTERN(#1,48,#2,36,#3,72)
      :: GOSUB 1100 :: NEXT X
1020 FOR X=1 TO 9 :: CALL PA
      TTERN(#1,64,#2,52,#3,40):: G
      OSUB 1100 :: CALL PATTERN(#1
      ,56,#2,44,#3,80):: GOSUB 110
      0
1030 CALL PATTERN(#1,64,#2,5
      2,#3,40):: GOSUB 1100 :: CAL
      L PATTERN(#1,60,#2,48,#3,36)
      :: GOSUB 1100 :: NEXT X
1040 CALL DELSPRITE(#1):: IF
      L<2 THEN 880
1050 FOR X=1 TO 9 :: CALL PA
      TTERN(#2,64,#3,52):: GOSUB 1
      100 :: CALL PATTERN(#2,68,#3
      ,56):: GOSUB 1100
1060 CALL PATTERN(#2,64,#3,5
      2):: GOSUB 1100 :: CALL PATT
      ERN(#2,60,#3,48):: GOSUB 110
      0 :: NEXT X
1070 CALL DELSPRITE(#2):: IF
      L<3 THEN 880
1080 FOR X=1 TO 9 :: CALL PA
      TTERN(#3,64):: GOSUB 1100 ::
      CALL PATTERN(#3,68):: GOSUB
      1100 :: CALL PATTERN(#3,64)
      :: GOSUB 1100
1090 CALL PATTERN(#3,60):: G
      OSUB 1100 :: NEXT X :: CALL
      DELSPRITE(#3):: GOTO 880
1100 FOR DELAY=1 TO 42 :: NE
      XT DELAY :: RETURN

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**A TERRIBLE LOSS**

by Cricket Raybern of the Portland Users's Group

We were saddened to learn recently of the death of one of our most valued members, Someone Else. Someone's passing created a vacancy that will be difficult to fill. Else had been with us almost since our club was formed, and during that time, Someone did far more than a normal person's share of the work. Whenever leadership was mentioned, this wonderful person was looked to for inspiration, as well as, results.

It was often said, "Someone Else can work with that group or committee." Whenever there was a job to be done or a meeting to attend, one name was on everybody's list-- "Let Someone Else do it."

Someone Else was a wonderful person, sometimes appearing superhuman. But a person can only do so much. Were the truth known, everyone expected too much from Someone Else. Now Someone Else is gone, and we wonder what we are going to do.

Someone Else left a wonderful example to follow, but who is going to follow it? Who is going to do the things that Someone Else always did?

QUIET P.E.B.

Does your expansion box sound like the Concorde about to take off? Here's a simple cure that will not only quiet it down, but give increased cooling too!

Locate a *sprite* style fan such as the Torin TA300S. Be sure it is the 3.125" square model or it won't fit. Also, be sure it requires 115V AC. Used fans can be found cleaned and tested for about \$10. For about \$15 you can buy a new fan, although I've found the used fans to be just as dependable.

You will need to completely disassemble the expansion box to get to the fan but all that is needed is a Phillips screwdriver and a small nutdriver. Remove the old fan, splice in the two power wires, and bolt your new fan on the same bolt studs. Reassemble the box and voila, you now have a super quiet system!

Fans can vary in air noise, but one of my systems is now about 1/2 as loud as the original and the other system is so quiet that I have to look at the lights to be sure it is on. Yet both systems now move considerably more air!

*From the June, 1985, DAYTONA 99'ers Newsletter. Daytona Beach, Florida.*

COOMING SOON!

Five new products have been announced by Databiotics of California:

BITMAC -- Graphics program similar to MACPAINT...\$39.95

PILOT -- True compiler generates 9900 assembly code with only 8 simple instructions to remember...\$19.95

SUPERDISK -- A ram disk for the 99 with BASIC, XB, and Assembly utilities. This is the one we've all ben waiting for. "Faster than a hard disk" card for P-Box. (Available 2nd quarter of 1985). Expandable to 512K!!!...\$299.95

RENDIR -- Contains FORTH with a graphic generation package in an easy to use cartridge...\$99.95

4A TALK -- Terminal Emulator with TE2 transfers and X-modem protocols...\$19.95

For more info, contact:

Databiotics  
P.O. Box 1194  
Palos Verdes, CA 90274

*From the June, 1985, DAYTONA 99'er Newsletter. Daytona Beach, Florida.*

Southern Nevada Users Group (SNUG)  
P.O. Box 26301  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89126-0301

TO:

*Please note - if you haven't already done so - that SNUG's address has changed from PO Box 4920 to the one above. Keep up the good work!*

*Reed Johnson*