Snuglet
July 86

THE SNUGLETTER

FROM THE SOUTHERN NEVADA USERS' GROUP

Vol. 4 — No. 6 JULY, 1986

NEXT MEETING

MONDAY, JULY 14, 1986 — 6:30 PM

CHARLESTON PLAZA LIBRARY MEETING ROOM

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Here we are, coming up on our 3rd anniversary as a user's group. SNUG was officially organized on July 11, 1983. We have had a number of ups and downs since then. We've had some exciting meetings with guest speakers like REGENA, CRAIG MILLER, LES MERRYMAN, and FRANZ WAGENBACH. We've also had some dissapointing times like the pullout of TI and the desertion of most of our original officers. We've weathered the hard times and have recently been savoring the good times. We've matured as a group, and have learned to depend on one another for continued support. This is as it should be.

The 99/4A is finally coming into it's own. The new software and hardware we are now seeing is the kind of stuff we should have had 3 years ago. Every month, somebody somewhere seems to crack another "secret" to the operating system. The programs and hardware mods are getting more and more sophisticated. With last month's announcement of the new "GENEVE" computer-on-a-card at the Chicago CES, we are on the verge of a new chapter in the history of the 99/4A computer.

In addition to being the month SNUG was organized, July is also the month that we elect our new slate of officers for the coming year. Looking back, it may have been better to have the elections in some other month, but we have traditionally held elections on the anniversary month of our organization. Unfortunately, this also seems to be the month when we have the least attendance because of vacations etc. (or maybe because of the elections). We have had some interest in the offices and committees, but it still seems to be the same people who have not been afraid to get involved all along. We would like to see some new faces and ideas at the officer's meetings. It's not too late! Come to the July meeting and let it be known that you want to have a say in the goings on of your group. Become a part of that next chapter of TI history! One other thing that July means... Many of us have our dues date in July. If you are unsure when your membership expires, please call Rudy Johnson or Frank Buckley. (Phone numbers of all officers are listed on the back of this newsletter). They have the latest updated membership roster. Remember, without your dues, we couldn't pay for this newsletter, The BBS, the meeting room, or any of the other monthly expenses.

Enough of the soapbox! This month's meeting, in addition to the elections, will feature a demo of the New Horizon's Ram Disk, and several new programs. We will also have a "free" time for questions and answers, suggestions, and comments. If you won't run for office, at least try to come up with a suggestion or two for your officers so they know what you expect from the group. (Oops, back on the soapbox again...sorry).

See ya at the meeting!!

--John--

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COMPUTER MAGIC TO CLOSE!

Computer Magic will be closing by the end of July. Most of you are familliar with Computer Magic. For several years they have helped SNUG by offering user's group discounts, referring new members to us, and even giving us demonstrations of software and hardware at some of our meetings. They provided us with a place and the equipment to copy disks for and from our library. Until recently, Computer Magic was one of the few places in town where we could get new hardware and software for our machines. They will be having a "going out of business" sale for the remainder of the month. All items will be sold at cost. They have disks, ribbons, printers, disk drives, etc. along with computer furniture. Fran told me

they still have a few TI software packages left, and if I remember correctly, even a used system or two.

I'd like to take this opportunity to publicly say THANKS to Fran, Bob, and Jack for all they have done for us over the last few years and to wish them luck in whatever they decide to do next.

I think every SNUG member should at least call and say thanks. Or better yet, stop in and buy something. After all, they supported us even after they had to stop selling TI products. I think we owe them something in return.

--John--

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TI PUBLICATIONS a review

Over the past few months, there have been some changes in the periodicals covering the TI home computer. While I don't subscribe to all of them, I am familiar with them, and do subscribe to the majority.

The first one I will cover is Super 99 Monthly. This has been an excellent source of programming techniques, both for the novice and advanced user. It covers such subjects as BASIC, XB, MULTIPLAN, FORTH, and ASSEMBLY. They also do reviews of programs and products. Super 99 was published from Sept. 1984 to Feb. 1986. In March, 1986, Richard Mitchell, of Super 99, entered into an agreement with Craig Miller of Miller's Graphics to combine the Super 99 Monthly with Miller's newsletter THE SMART PROGRAMMER.

THE SMART PROGRAMMER was published by MG from Feb, 1984 till the Sept 1984 issue (which came out about a year late). Everyone who subscribed to THE SMART PROGRAMMER still had 3 issues coming at the time of the merger. The first new issue of TSP has been delivered with the date June, 1986 on the cover. It has continued with the original format of hints, tips, tutorials, FORTH screens, and memory maps. Not much of Super 99 Monthly is visible within this first issue, but that may be due to the fact that Miller had been working on one final issue of The Smart Programmer before the merger. Both publications were excellent sources of information about the 99/4A, and I hope that Mitchell is able to blend the two together in proportion over the next few months. I'm looking foreward to the next issue!

Subscription Info:
$18.00 first class, $15.00 third class

The Smart Programmer
171 Mustang St.
Sulphur, LA 70663

For a complete set of back issues of Super 99 Monthly, send $18.00 to Bytemaster Computer Services at the above address.

HOME COMPUTER MAGAZINE ceased publication with the volume 5, no. 6 issue. They have recently mailed out the first issue of the replacement publication, HOME COMPUTER JOURNAL, but from what I've seen written about it in other newsletters, it's definately NOT worth the $75.00 a year price they are asking. If any SNUG members have recieved your HCJ this month, please bring it to the next meeting so the rest of us can better evaluate it.

The Genial TRAVelER is a magazine on disk. It is published as a project by Barry Traver. The first 3 volumes have been sent to subscribers already (along with 2 bonus disks (not advertised nor part of the subscription price). Most of the programs, tutorials, and articles are geared toward the more advanced user, but there is something for everyone. Most of the things on the subscripton disks themselves are copywrited, but the bonus disks are FREEWARE/FAIRWARE. The disks are commercial "flippies", so you get DSSD equivilant program space.

To subscribe:
Send $30.00 for 6 issues (over 4000 sectors not counting bonus disks) to:
Barry Traver
Editor, GENIAL TRAVelER
835 Green Valley Drive
Philadelphia, PA 19128

RYTE DATA COMPUTING newsletter is an informative newsletter from Canada. Normally a 12 page newsletter, the latest issue has gone to 24 pages (probably because they combined the March and April issues). The editor, Bruce Ryan, has been traveling across the country going to the various TI shows this year, and got somewhat behind in his publishing schedule. This issue is the first to have an article by Bill Gronos, formerly with Enthusiast 99. Bill is very well versed in 9900 Assembly language and I, for one, am glad to see him writing again! R/D also has many hardware modifications and construction tips. It is also geared to the more advanced user.

For subscription, send $14.00 to:
Ryte Data
Box 210 Mountain St.
Haliburton, Ontario K0M 1S0
Canada

Computer Shopper is a tabloid type publication. They feature advertising for virtually any type of computer equipment you can think of. I have found a number of good bargains on equipment within the pages of this publication. They also feature articles on a variety of computers including the TI. The articles are well written and informative. This is one that I have been meaning to subscribe to but haven't yet. Whenever I buy one from the newsstand, I tell myself "I've got to subscribe to this", but, so far I haven't.

Don't be like me....Subscribe today:

$18.00/yr
Computer Shopper, Inc.
407 W. Washington Ave.
P.O. BOX F
Titusville,, FL 32781

COMPUTE! Magazine still has some articles and programs for the TI. Lately however, Regena's column is about the only thing you can count on in each issue. While her column alone may be worth the price of the magazine, I would like to see more coverage of our computer within it's pages. My subscription ran out a couple of months ago, and I haven't renewed it.

If you would like to subscribe, Send $24.00 to:
COMPUTE!
PO BOX 5406
Greensboro, NC 27403
or call 1-800-334-0868

I have saved the best for last. MICROpendium is the best all-around publication for the TI99/4A. They have everything from program reviews to key-in programs. They have things for the beginner as well as the advanced programmer. They are responsive to the user's groups and the TI community in general. Having the largest circulation base, you are more likely to find new products advertised here before anywhere else. They also have a FREEWARE section that keeps us abreast on all the new offerings in that catagory. They also have (as far as I know) the best track record for keeping to a publishing schedule of any commercial TI publication in history.

If you haven't already subscribed to this one, please do. You won't be dissapointed!

$17.00/yr
MICROpendium
P.O. BOX 1343
Round Rock TX 78680

There may be more publications that cover the '4A, but I am not aware of them. If anyone knows of any others, please let me know.

--JOHN--

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BBS NEWS

We are starting to get more and more non-TI users lately. So far, it hasn't been a problem except that they are prone to leave a lot of private messages. We now have 113 users and seem to be adding 2 or 3 a week. Still the board is idle most of the time. There are only a few who use it daily. You can still log on almost anytime you want, so don't be afraid to call!

We have added a few new boards to our Other BBS lists (both local and TI). We probably have the most extensive list of TI boards in the country (for that matter, we probably have the best local list in town, too). Thanks again to Bob Tipton for his hard work and patience in compiling both lists.

It has come to my attention that Ralph Fowler (the author of TIBBS) has released the latest version of his BBS to FAIRWARE. I have heard that he is asking $35.00 donation for the program.

This version reportedly supports both TE2 and XMODEM transfers. Since we have run into some difficulties implementing XMODEM on our board, I will be sending off for this version of TIBBS to see if it would be better for us. Stay tuned for further developments.

--John--

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PROGRAM ON PARADE

by Bob Tipton

P = Performance
EU = Ease of User
D = Documentation

NAME: DCopy
TYPE: Utility
AVAILABLE FROM: SNUG BBS and Library

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     POOR   FAIR   GOOD   EXCELLENT
P  :!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
EU :!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
D  :!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
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System Requirements: Disk Drive, 32k Memory Expansion, and Editor/Assembler or Extended Basic and Quick load by Gale Ringley and Barry Boone

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The Primary purpose that I see for this program is to use it in transferring multi-programs that are needed to operate as one, i.e., Fast-Term, Funnel Writer. With this program you can transform all needed files into one, transfer it, and the individual receiving the program can use DCopy to transform the single file back into all needed files.

A disadvantage of DCopy is that programs that are to be transformed must be copied to a freshly initialized disk. The reason for this is that DCopy takes everything on the disk, whether its in the directory or not and copies it into the single file for transferring. This is a small disadvantage compared to the time saved by only having to transfer one long program instead of transferring a bunch of little programs.

The author of this program is unknown, I obtained it from the Portland Users of Ninety Nines, I contacted Duane Goodman, president of the Portland Users Group, and he

doesn't even know who the author is. Hopefully the author will read this and make him or herself known.

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TI Tips #3
For the Basic Programmer

I'm back once again. This month, at the request of John Martin, I'll try to give you some insight to the RESTORE command.

Using the RESTORE command instructs you program which DATA statement to use when excuting the next READ command.

When you use RESTORE with no line number, you are telling the next READ command to use the first DATA statement in the program.

When you use RESTORE followed by a line number, you are telling the next READ command to use the first DATA statement in that line number.

Another way to use the RESTORE command is with file processing.

When you use RESTORE #1 with PRINT, INPUT, or LINPUT you are setting the next record used to be the first record in the file.

When you use RESTORE #1,REC 4 with the above commands, you set the next record used to be record number 4.

All of the above uses are explained in both the Basic User Manual and the Extended Basic Manual. Spend some time using these commands and hopefully you, like myself, will become more at ease with the use of TI Basic and Extended Basic.

Until next time, Happy Computing
Bob Tipton

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Open Forum

Elections are upon us. The cry has gone out, a plea, wheedle, and whine to all, in hope to convince a few of you to run for the club offices at this month's meeting. In the few months that I have been a member of SNUG, I find this techique has proven to be fruitless in generating interest in the group.
I have many hopes and fears for the group, I would like to use this space to state a few questions and let each of you ponder them and your role in the future of this organization.

1. Will SNUG survive in some form in the year to come?

2. If no one runs for the key positions of president, treasurer, and secretary, will SNUG dissolve?

3. If the group dissolves will we be cut-off from other clubs in this country? One of the main sources of news in the TI world.

4. Will all of the above come to pass?

I intend to be one of those few who will still have enough interest in the 99/4a to run for secretary and take on the responsibility of Newsletter Editor to keep the group alive.

THIS IS YOUR GROUP!!

It is my sincerest wish that those of you who have held back in the past, join me now in the quest to make the Southern Nevada Users' Group one of the most healthy and vibrant members of the TI world.

Parts of the above article were taken from the Daytona 99ers, November, 1985 Newsletter.

--Bob Tipton--

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ELECTIONS

As you have noted elsewhere in this issue the annual SNUG elections are scheduled for the July meeting. The constitution for SNUG specifies that only members in good standing may participate in SNUG activities - and that includes voting. For the many who are overdue on their membership renewal I have included a membership form along with the newsletter. Your expiration date may be found on the mailing label in the form xx/yy, where xx is the month and yy the year. I am aware that I have some errors on these dates - you should bring those up to me or Frank at the meeting so that you may participate in the elections. If you are due on your membership I suggest that you bring your renewal form to the meeting if you are going to attend or send it to the SNUG PO Box if you are unable to attend.

At this time SNUG is in a better position for officers than in some of the previous elections with which I am familiar. There are candidates now for three of the four main offices - Bob Sherburne for Vice President, Bob Tipton for Secretary and Bob Bieber for Treasurer. In addition Bob Tipton has also volunteered to act as newsletter editor. I will move over and act as an assistant editor (and hopefully writer.)

So at this point the main office which needs a candidate is that of President. While this officer is not quite a figurehead the duties are not as heavy as the office title suggests. One of the priciple needs is to have a duly elected president to sign official club papers, such as checks, and to conduct meetings. At this

point there are enough SNUG members to call on for aid and help that there should not be a great burden to be the president. If you are interested in being president but are still unsure I suggest you call John Martin and find out what his responsibilities have been.

--Rudy Johnson--

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FROM THE LAWS OF COMPUTER PROGRAMMING

01 EXTENDED EPSTEIN-HEISENBERG PRINCIPLE
IN A PROGRAM ATMOSPHERE, ONLY TWO OF THE THREE EXISTING MEASUREMENTS CAN BE MEASURED SIMULTANEOUSLY. THE MEASUREMENTS ARE PROGRAM, TIME, AND RESOURCES ($).
03 IF ONE KNOWS WHAT THE TASK IS, AND THERE IS A TIME LIMIT ALLOWED FOR THE COMPLETION OF THE TASK, THEN ONE CANNOT GUESS HOW MUCH IT WILL COST.
IF THE TIME AND RESOURCES ($) ARE CLEARLY DEFINIED, THEN IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO KNOW WHAT PART OF THE PROGRAM WILL BE PERFORMED.
IF YOU ARE GIVEN A CLEARLY DEFINED PROGRAM GOAL AND A DEFINITE AMOUNT OF MONEY WHICH HAS BEEN CALCULATED TO BE NECESSARY FOR THE COMPLETION OF THE TASK, ONE CANNOT PREDICT IF AND WHEN THE GOAL WILL BE REACHED.
IF ONE IS LUCKY ENOUGH AND CAN ACCURATELY DEFINE ALL THREE MEASUREMENTS, THEN WHAT ONE DEALS WITH IS NOT IN THE REALM OF PROGRAMMING.

01 GALLOIS'S REVELATION
03 IF YOU PUT TOMFOOLERY IN A COMPUTER NOTHING COMES OUT BUT TOMFOOLERY. BUT THIS TOMFOOLERY, HAVING PASSED THROUGH A VERY EXPENSIVE MACHINE, IS SOMEHOW ENOBLED AND NONE DARE CRITICIZE IT.

01 BRADLEY'S BROMIDE
03 IF COMPUTERS GET TOO POWERFUL, WE CAN ORGANIZE THEM INTO A COMMITTEE - THAT WILL DO THEM IN.

'Geneve' from Myarc makes debut at CES

Myarc's new computer, the "Geneve," made its debut at the recent Consumer Electonics Show.

The long-promised new computer from Myarc features TI-Writer in 80 columns and will support any program in TI assembly language written to specifications for TI, according to John Keown of Myarc.

"A few software authors played some tricks and their programs won't work on it," he notes.

Keown said the company would modify Myarc 128K and 512K cards to be compatible, for any registered owners.

The computer features an IBM PC XT-style keyboard as standard with 640K RAM patches for TI-Writer and Microsoft Multiplan, 80-column display, BASIC 3.0 and a MS-DOS operating system, he noted. It uses a TI 9995 processor chip operating at 12 MHz.

It will have a program to copy existing cartridges, he notes.

Keown says the hex cable to the peripheral expansion box has been replaced, with the keyboard now connecting directly to the P.E. box.

The computer runs "between three and six times faster than the 99/4A, depending on the mode," he says. "The graphics mode is superior to Atari."

It has mouse support and RGB support, Keown says. He says Myarc will be "introducing very shortly an RGB composite 80-column monitor for under $250."

Suggested list price for the computer is $495. The company was planning to ship out beta-test boards in early June to "prime software developers" so they can upgrade their software, Keown says. Orders are being taken now for a shipment date of July 30.

Keown says he has been hired recently to "handle the business end" for Myarc and says he is enforcing strict quality control and deadline policies.

The computer also has separate function keyhs, 128K of VDP RAM, supports 40 and 80 column display modes and includes speech. According to Myarc, it is compatible with Myarc, TI and CorComp disk controller and RS232 cards.