

THE SNUGLETTER

FROM THE SOUTHERN NEVADA USERS' GROUP

Volume 8 - No. 8

August, 1990

Next Meeting
7:00pm Monday, August 13, 1990
Nevada Power Meeting Room
6226 West Sahara, Las Vegas, Nevada



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Rudy Johnson

Ouch! It's the 4th already! Time to get this to George. Every month I have good intentions but something seems to get in the way. (This time a major redecorating project.) In any case the next meeting promises to be interesting and Cindy will cover the items planned for demos. Since I will not be at the August meeting, Gordon has said he will conduct the affair. One item brought up at the officers' meeting is the renewal of the Nevada Power Company meeting room for the next year. Alternatives have been discussed in the past as to having a different meeting place or time. We have always come back to Monday evenings as the best for the greatest number of members and the present meeting room has been the best choice (especially since the no-charge use of the room has the least impact on our treasury). If anyone has any alternatives to the present place or time he should bring them up at the meeting or we will arrange the meeting room for the next year.

I noticed an interesting article in the May Nine-T-Nine newsletter from the 919 U.S. (Toronto). The article was a download from Delphi regarding the use of a PC-type power supply to replace the original one in the P-Box. (Author is Al Beard producer of FORTRAN for the 99/4A and 9648.) He used the strategy that I have speculated on but never tried, that is to use the 12V from the power supply on the P-Box buss and jumper the voltage regulator(s) on the cards to power the components on the cards. This takes the heat source (the regulators) off of the cards and keeps it in the P/S. It also gives a much bigger power capacity in the 150- and 200-watt units for \$50 to \$70 discounted. For some of the newer Myarc cards, i.e. 9648 and MFDC, this would be a big help in keeping them running and also to keep them from burning up. If any one doubts this they should ask to see some of the 9648 cards that have been in use for a year or more. This is a modification that I will probably try but don't hold your breath waiting for the results. The

same newsletter also has an article on connecting multisync monitors to the 9648 with the various connections that need to be made to the 15-pin and 9-pin connectors that seem to be commonly in use.

I recently received my upgrade to version 3.6 of TI-BASE. The improvements in this version are impressive, however the only thing I have to report on so far (lack of time again) is that this version will not run from EXEC under MDOS on the 9648. SPL is the only way to go for proper operation. However my problem with disk corruption by the single sector writes is still a problem on my system with the 9648 as it has been in the past. Maybe some day I'll find the culprit. (Perhaps the disk controller chip in my CorComp controller.) Fortunately I have enough ramdisk space to get around this problem. It only requires a little thought on my part to get files copied before I boot TI-Base - and how many of us think before selecting a program load? Anyway, I marvel at the programming skill of Dennis Faherty in putting together this program which runs on the 99/4A. I wonder what he could do with the resources of the 9648?

Word is out that J. Peter Hoddie and Paul Charlton have teamed up and formed Bluestreak Software to publish stuff for the Mac I believe - at least not for the TI market. I hope that we will not lose these two for the TI.

I hope that others here in the LV valley haven't had the same experience with the phenomenal-LV-growth power glitches that I have. I was updating a large Multiplan file (writing it to a floppy) when the power dropped out. I haven't had the will power to face the havoc that that created on the disk. I haven't looked to verify yet - but I don't think I had a back-up. OUCH! The lesson to be learned is "BACK UP, BACK UP, BACK UP!" No matter what!

Enough mental wanderings. Have a good meeting!

- Rudy -



It has been almost 7 weeks since I sent off my check for the MEMEX upgrade (at the time of this writing) and my face has turned blue from holding my breath. Reery Miller has received his so it may not be much longer. Speaking of late products, Disk Only Software has given up on Myarc after waiting since March, and is refunding orders for HFDC cards.

This month I purchased two hard drives from RMS (Rotating Memory Services -1- 1-888-776-5622) and I am delighted with their service. Both drives arrived within a week after placing my order and I later received a phone call from Sandy, the woman who took my order, to see if the drives were working out alright! RMS currently has 10meg Seagates on sale for \$98.00. (Just mention my name.) The first drive was a 10meg Teac for our BBS and the second was a Miniscribe 3053, a 40meg, 25ms, auto-parking screamer for my own system. RMS advertises the 3053 for \$359.00 but since my drive was "refurbished", the price was only \$226.00 with shipping! It looks and acts just like new and comes with a 90 day warranty. Just call and say something like: "Hey dude, I want like a really fast 40 meg with the bells and whistles but I don't want to sell my arm and leg." They do have specials and will take trade-ins so just ask.

Another product which arrived in timely fashion was HARDBACK, written and distributed by Dr. Tom Freeman of the LA 99er's. This program backs up a hard drive either to itself or to another hard drive and will save you hours of copy time. The program runs only from GPL mode although I have heard rumors that a patch may be available to allow loading from EXEC.

From DELPHI I down-loaded MATHPAD by Paul A. Dow. This public domain C99 MDOS program is a nifty calculator and can be found on our bbs in the 9640 section.

Another DELPHI down-load which I found very interesting was the transcript of a conference with Gary Bowser of Oasis Pensive Abacutors (OPA), a Canadian based hard/software firm, which has brought us RAMBO, TASS, RECALLIT and DISKODEX. OPA's next and nearly completed hardware venture TIM (Ti Image Maker), will be a 9958-based video upgrade card for the 4A. The card, which will sell for \$150.00, is a mere 3"x4" boasts 192K of video memory and plugs into the existing 9913 video chip socket in the TI console. After TIM is completed, work will continue on several other projects:

GEM, a 128K EPROM operating system for the 9640, will have a better GPL which will run more TI programs than the present GPL set, allow booting of MDOS from memory, ramdisk or hard drive, and other new features.

GIZMO, an eight cartridge slot "review library module" expansion box which should allow mixing of cartridges such as TEII speech capabilities with XR.

Z80 EMULATOR, a program which has no name as yet, will allow CP/M programs to run on the Geneve when using a MEMEX with zero-wait state. Although several hardware "guru" types have stated that it can't be done, a prototype of the program has been demonstrated at Canadian users group meetings. Apparently several Z-80

machines use the same video and sound chips as the 4A, thus allowing Sega, Coleco and Adam program compatibility.

Mr. Bowser also stated that they are working on a program to expand the capabilities of the speech synthesizer, which when demonstrated will be the talk of the TI community for months to come. This transcript is also on the bbs.

Our 9640 nemesis, Harry Brashear has been up to his idiotic tricks again. The following is a message extracted from the DELPHI FORUM with the addressee's name removed to protect the innocent:

16686 21-JUL 09:11 9640 GENEVE
 ***** HFDC & 97H (Re: Msg 16640)
 *****From: HTB*****To: xxxxxxxxxx (NR)

Don't be shy xxxxx, let the world know of your Myarc problems. In my opinion the faster we put them out of business, the faster the Myarc will be turned over to someone else, or the users, so that it can become the equipment that it was created to be.

Harry Brashear

As I mentioned last month, Mr. Brashear is a writer who reviews programs for MICROpendium magazine. (You can tell he's a writer by the beautiful prose above.) He uses a CDCO and a TI and does not own a 9640. Mr. Brashear was complaining in a separate DELPHI message that he would not have a column in MICROpendium for a while because he hasn't been sent any free software to review. How then, can he continually criticize, defame, and attempt to sabotage Myarc and its products since he has surely not been GIVEN any to review? My opinion of the 9640 is diametrically opposed to that of Harry's, and I own two Myarc products which function flawlessly. Everyone who owns a TI SHOULD buy a 9640. They are fabulous machines with features you won't find on any of the others. This would give Myarc the financial shot in the arm which they deserve and so desperately need. If Myarc had not taken a chance, forged ahead and shown that 256 colors, 80 columns, 2 meg memories, fast BASIC, 12MHz speed, and 7 graphics modes were possible with TI compatibility, I doubt that half of the products currently being produced for the TI would be available today. In my opinion, Harry should talk about something he knows about, whatever that could be, and keep his opinions about Myarc and the Geneve to himself until such time as he buys one and tries it out. After all, as others have pointed out, Harry has never given a bad review in MICROpendium...

Here is a tip for the Advanced Basic users. Type the three letters "PWB" (print working directory) at the command line prompt and your current working drive will be displayed. The drive displayed will be your default drive and files SAVED, OLDED, MERGED etcetera without a drive designation will be saved here. i.e. SAVE FILENAME, OLD FILENAME etcetera instead of SAVE DSK7:FILENAME or OLD G:FILENAME. RUN FILENAME or CALL FILES also work.

As an afterthought I tried to look up the word "abacutors" (the last word in OPA's name) in the unabridged Webster's. The closest word to it was "abacus", which leads me to believe that on a Canadian desert island, thoughtful primitives are creating wonderful hardware and writing sophisticated software using nothing more than strings and beads for their calculations!

Secretary's Report



MINUTES for Monday July 9, 1990....

President Rudy Johnson opened the meeting at 7:00 PM. Thirteen (13) members were present.

The first order of business was the election of new officers. The nominations for the following were passed unanimously:

- Rudy Johnson.....President
- Gordon Leonard....Vice President
- Cindy Mitchell....Secretary
- Ralph Guise.....Treasurer

We THANK Bob Bieber for serving as Treasurer when Karen Rodgers left.

As Rudy mentioned in his July article, it did not seem that anyone else was interested in running for an office!

John Martin demonstrated sector editing using the sector editor in "BSKU". With the aid of a help sheet that Bob Bieber typed up from Millers Graphics, "ADVANCED DIAGNOSTICS" the group was able to follow John as he explained what each sector on a disk represents. As usual John gave a thorough and educating demo. The members that did not attend missed out.

At long last I gave the demo on Mike Dodds "Identifile", for the TI-99/4A and Geneve. Identifile is a catalog utility that recognizes over fifty different kinds of files. TI-ARTIST, INFOCOM, CHAINLINK, RLE, ADVENTURE CART, REMIND ME!, MBOS are just a few. The catalog may be printed to disk or printer. The documentation was complete and easy to understand.

John Martin gave another demo. A program he wrote, "Check Book Manager" utilizing Barry Travers "XBX". The program is what it says, a MANAGER. It does every thing one might need and is easy to use.

RAFFLE: Rudy Johnson chose IDENTIFILE and Gary Lagoy picked a PLATO Cartridge.

At the August meeting the demonstrations will be MISSING LINK demoed by Lance Wilson and CHAINLINK, shown by Ralph Guise.

These are two good programs so don't miss the August meeting.



Cindy Mitchell



SECRETARY
SNUG USERS GROUP

SNUG TREASURER'S REPORT - 31 JULY 1990 (in lieu of 31 July 1990 bank statement)

* Item added, changed or adjusted *

* Ralph P. Guise - Treasurer *

* by RJ Bieber *

* Last entry made 25 July 90 (rfg) *

FIXED ANNUAL EXPENDITURES

SNUGLETter (estimated cost per 100)	
Publication Costs (\$10/mo x 12)	120.00
Postage (\$25/mo x 12)	300.00
P. O. Box Rental (\$28 annually)	28.00
Bank Account Service Charge (\$8/mo x 12)	96.00
SNUG B/Board Phone Line (\$11/mo x 12)	132.00
Long Distance Phone Calls (estimated)	44.00
Miscellaneous Expenditures (estimated)	90.00
TOTAL ANNUAL OPERATING COSTS (estimated)	810.00

Annual Dues Collection (estimated) 300.00

ANNUAL DEFICIT (Estimated) 510.00

BANK STATEMENT BALANCE (as of 30 JUNE 1990)

(includes 7.02 June-90 service charge) + 757.83

OUTSTANDING (uncashed) SNUG checks. 274.09

ACTUAL CHECKING ACCOUNT BALANCE >>>>> + 483.74

COLLECTIONS - July 1990

Membership - Regular (? x \$18)	.00
Membership - Senior (? x \$12)	.00
Membership - SNUGLETter only (1 x \$10)	10.00
Disk of the Month	.00
Library programs	.00
Miscellaneous TI Equipment raffle	16.00
Miscellaneous TI Equipment sale	3.00

(sub-total) + 29.00

EXPENDITURES - July 1990

None submitted/reported .00

(sub-total) - .00

FUNDS MANAGEMENT (as of 31 July 1990)

Adjusted Checking Account Balance + 512.74

Petty-Cash (undeposited funds) 0.00

TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE >>> + 512.74



It's been another exciting month on the ol' BBS. It got off to a kind of rocky start when I started having troubles with the hard drives (again!) right after the July meeting. There was a period of time when I had files lost or corrupted on one drive and couldn't contact the other one at all! It seemed like everything was going bad at once. The problem turned out to be a bad connector on one of the ribbon cables. It would intermittently short a couple of pins together. This caused unpredictable results depending on the operation that was going on at the time. I spent several hours copying files back and forth between the two hard drives and then reformatting them to get rid of some corrupted sectors. In the end, I was able to save everything except for a couple of messages in the II section. Since replacing the bad connector, I have had NO problems with the BBS. This past 3 weeks is the longest the board has run continuously without some kind of problem this year!

Now that everything is running smoothly, I have started updating the BBS program itself and adding new features. We recieved a new set of ASSEMBLY LINK routines from Ben Matheway (Thanks Ben) last month while the hard drive was down. These links allowed a number of improved features to be added to the board. Based on the utilities Ben sent, I have made the following changes to the BBS:

* You will no longer be prompted for the number of sectors in a file that you are uploading. This is now automatically calculated when the upload is complete, and is added to the description of the file.

* You will now be reminded of the number of sectors you are about to download (the actual number, not the number the person uploading claimed there were) just prior to the beginning of the download.

* All new uploads will now be automatically date stamped and this information will be included in the description of the file. Actually, this is a feature that I implemented a couple of months ago, but lost when the hard drive crashed (oops, no backup).

* All text files that are read on/line except for messages, file catalogs, and the user log will now display substantially faster than before. These files include the phone log, logon message, bbs lists, and the help files.

* By the time you read this, I will have implemented a quick disk catalog routine for all of the download sections. This will give you filenames in alphabetical order and the number of sectors used by the file just like a regular disk catalog. The advantage is that it is -MUCH- faster than the current catalog routines used by the bbs. Disadvantage is that there is NO chronology. They are simply listed in Alpha order.

There are several more possibilities suggested by the new ASSY links. I will be looking into them in the near future, so stay tuned for MORE!

NOW FOR THE NEW GOODIES!
(files are listed in reverse order of upload)

* NEW in the II section this month:

SNUGLOADER.....A RE-upload of Ben Matheway's new BBS ASSY LINK files. Some of them had been trashed during the hard drive problems of last month.

CAL.....A calendar program that prints any month, large, normal, or small, anywhere on a sheet. Good for birthday cards etc.

OPR-CON.....Delphi conference with Gary Bowser of Oasis Pensive Abacuters (OPR). New products, new ideas.

!SG123.....Stargazer I, II, and III. Brush up on your astronomy and astrology. 3 programs in 1. Requires EMD loader.

PEANUTS.....An XB program that plays the "PEANUTS" theme.

BORDER/ARC....Assembly lang. versus XB demos. Flashing light borders to dress up your programs or videos. A/L source code is included.

RACER.....XB racer game. Requires Joy sticks

* NEW in the Geneve section this month:

FLOPPYPATCH....A patch for .97h MDOS that will allow access to floppy disk with Telco, Archiver, DM1000, etc. using only HFDDC. Corrects a typing and a "forgotten" page switch.

TPA-97HFIX....Delphi message regarding patching MDOS .97h to make it print graphics from TPA. I tried it and it works great!

* NEW in the Computer Graphics section this month:

BASEBALL-2....A collection of major league team logos from the National League teams. These are in II-Artist picture format. See BASEBALL-1 for American League teams.

BASEBALL-1....A collection of major league team logos from the American League teams. These are in II-Artist picture format. See BASEBALL-2 for National League teams.

MERMAID_P.....II-Artist picture of The Little Mermaid. Not exactly Disney (She's Nude), but innocent enough that I doubt anyone would be offended.

!FNTSCAN.....A II-Artist and C.S.G.B. font scan program copied from the "PUNN" newsletter. A handy little program typed in by Cindy H.

TRANSPRT.....GTAR series. A collection of 64 TIPS pictures covering various modes of transportation.

TRANSPAT/1....The "TRANSPRT" TIPS pictures converted to II Artist instances. Conversion was done with a Geneve MDOS program "TIPS2TIA" which can be in the Geneve download section

BBS --- continued from page 4

TIPSHOW.....A "slide show" program for TIPS pictures. Puts them on the screen for viewing with a user selectable delay between pictures. Much faster than the viewer in the TIPS program itself.

TIPSFONTS.....A set of 9 TIPS fonts (ten if you count font 0). These are new and go with tips ver 1.5 (ORIGINALLY UL'D IN LATE MARCH 90).

!TIPS-LFRP....An XB program that will print out the "LIST/XXX" files contained in the TIPSNAMES files. Format is 4 columns wide condensed print - 1 groups per page.

TIPSNAMES.....A descriptive file for the first 17 TIPS picture disks and 17 sub-files alphabetically listing each TIPS picture by name and a suggested corresponding TI Artist instance name.

TIPSI/5.....Version 1.5 of the TIPS program. Several improvements over version 1.4 including support for color printers and the addition of a number of ASSY routines to speed up printing etc.

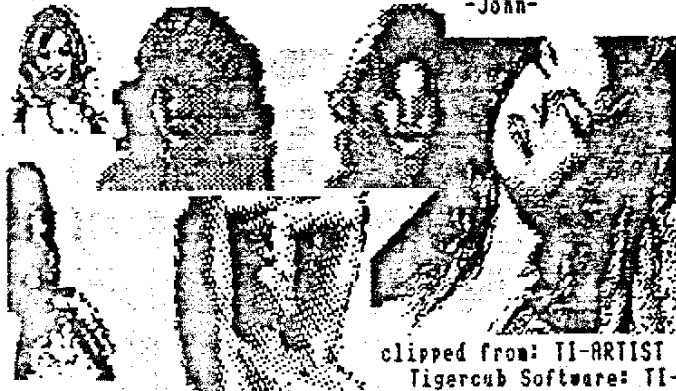
TIPS10-ARK through TIPS12-ARK. More TIPS pictures that Bob Bieber has re-uploaded because we had lost them when the original hard drive crashed. Bob has re-uploaded ALL of the TIPS files in this list for us. Thanks Bob

As you can see, if you aren't using your BBS, you are missing a lot! Besides the File Transfer section, we also have 2 message bases with lots of good information being passed back and forth between the users. We get calls from TI and GENEVE users from all parts of the country. Many times these callers leave programs and interesting messages for us. Because of the relative small size of our message bases (I plan to enlarge them soon), if you don't call us at least once a week, you may miss reading some of these messages. They will be "rolled over" and new messages written on top of them.

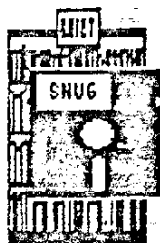
The SNUG BBS number is 702-648-1247. We are on-line 24 hours a day, 7 days a week except during user group meetings, BBS failures, and updates. We support 300, 1200, and 2400 baud and provide full access to all callers from first sign on.

Guess I won't "see ya at the meeting" this month due to my upcoming trip, but it looks like the meeting will be a good one.

-John-



clipped from: TI-ARTIST NUDES
Tiger Cub Software: TI-PD 1508



LIBRARIAN'S COLUMN

by GEORGE CAMPBELL

FOR OUR NEVER MEMBERS AND THE ONES WITH FAILING MEMORYS (ME FOR ONE), A REVIEW OF THE CURRENT LIBRARY.

THE PRESENT LIBRARY IS CONTAINED IN THREE DISK BOXES (PRACTICAL SIZE ABOUT 65 DISKS).

1. MAIN LIBRARY. MOSTLY ARCED AND CATALOGED.
2. BACKUP FILES THAT HAVE BEEN TESTED AND ARCED INTO THE MAIN LIBRARY. ALSO SOME THAT NEED DEBUGGED FIRST.
3. MOSTLY JUNK, AND NEW MATERIAL THAT HASN'T BEEN CLASSIFIED YET. SPARE DISKS ETC.

THE FOLLOWING WILL REFERENCE #1 BOX (THE MAIN LIBRARY) ONLY.

THERE IS A COMPREHENSIVE AND EXCELLENT CATALOG AVAILABLE FROM THE SECRETARY FOR \$5. THIS WAS COMPILED BY THE PREVIOUS LIBRARIAN BOB BIEBER AS OF 2/89 AND PRINTED UP BY OUR NEWSLETTER EDITOR GEO. TILLEY 6/89. 46 PAGES OF DESCRIPTIONS, ANALYSIS, AND HARDWARE REQUIREMENTS OF NEARLY ALL THE PROGRAMS IN THE LIBRARY 2/89. WELL WORTH THE PRICE. OR THERE IS THE DISK VERSION AVAILABLE FROM THE LIBRARY FOR THE SAME PRICE

THERE IS ALSO A SHORT VERSION, CONTAINING ONLY THE SECTIONS, DISKS, AND FILE NAMES, AVAILABLE FROM EITHER THE S.N.U.G. BBS, - OR FROM THE LIBRARY (FOR THE USUAL FEE). THIS VERSION IS CURRENT TO 2/90, BEARCS TO 288 SECTORS.

THIS LIBRARY IS 25 YEARS OLD, AND (MOSTLY DUE TO BIEBER) THE RESULT OF SEVERAL THOUSAND HOURS OF WORK AND \$\$\$ FROM THE CLUB TREASURY. IT HAS ABOUT 65 ARCED DISKS AND 2000+ FILES. AND MOST OF THE FREWARE AND SHAREWARE AVAILABLE TO THE T.I. WORLD.

PLEASE NOTE THAT WE DO NOT CARRY NOR DISTRIBUTE COMMERCIAL OR COPYRIGHT MATERIAL, AND WE ENCOURAGE SENDING IN THE FAIR FEES FOR SHAREWARE, ETC.

MATERIAL FROM THE LIBRARY MAY BE OBTAINED BY MEMBERS, EITHER BY MODEM, OR (USUALLY) AT THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETINGS. WE WILL ALSO TAKE AN ORDER AND DELIVER THE DISK AT MEETINGS - PLEASE ALLOW A LITTLE LEAD TIME. PHONE # 564 1536. SPECIFY THE FORMAT (SINGLE/DOUBLE-SIDED - SINGLE/DOUBLE DENSITY.) WE NEED A DISK IN RETURN FOR ALL TRANSACTIONS. CLUB OFFICERS HAVE FREE ACCESS. MEMBERS PAY \$1. PER DISK. ALL OTHER TRANSACTIONS ARE NEGOTIABLE.

A REMINDER! IF YOU HAVE A FILE THAT SHOULD BE IN THE LIBRARY - SEND IT IN. SEE YOU AT THE MEETING

GEO. CAMPBELL, LIBRARIAN

UNCOMMON COMMENTS ON FAIRWARE

-- George Tilley

I recently received SIDEPRINT v3.4(TI-PB 999) and SIDEWRITER v2.1(TI-PB 1888) from Tigercub Software, 139 Collingwood Ave., Columbus OH 43213. Both programs are classified as MULTIPLAN utilities but operate on files printed from MULTIPLAN in B/V 88 format. Neither will cause me to change the way I've printed MP for years but I may use them for text files. If you have a need to print text sideways, here are two good programs. At \$1.50 each, they are good to stash away and some day-----

Part of the documentation was worth many times the modest charge for Tigercub disks. Each of these programs had comments on FAIRWARE that I had to pass along: TOMIETTO's comments are made with eloquence and grace. I believe his attitude is shared by most programmers. Ah what a refreshing change. I'm saving SWEDLOW's FAIRWARE HINTS as a checklist. I think it is that good. See for yourself.

SIDEWRITER v2.1

Sidewriter is written by Mauro Tomietto and distributed by the Ottawa TI-99/4a User's Group.

If you like the package and use it, send a donation of \$5 to \$18

OTTAWA TI-99/4A USER'S GROUP
P.O. BOX 2144, STATION D,
OTTAWA, ONTARIO, CANADA , K1P 5W3

Please feel free to distribute copies to your friends. If you have any suggestions for improvements or noted any errors please forward them to above address. Presently this program only works with EPSON or EPSON compatible printers. If you would like another printer configured for this program send all the appropriate escape codes (ie how to send graphic characters to the printer) and I will try to modify the program, provided no major changes are needed.

Unlike others, I'm not going to tell you that its a must to provide authors of a program with money for their efforts in order to keep them writing quality programs. As you might have noticed from the main menu this program is being distributed by the Ottawa TI User's Group, the same group that have produced such quality programs as DM1888, and MACRO ASSEMBLER. Thanks to efforts of dedicated members such as Bob Boone, we've developed close ties with such notables as Craig Miller, Horizon User's Group, and authors of FunWriter. I'm not asking for any money for myself, but to be donated directly to the group. The money's just being used to promote group functions and to unite and organize more and more TI enthusiasts. USER GROUPs out there has about getting together and consider making bulk donations. Remember a little amount of money is actually a little amount of support for the TI.

I'm happy if there are people out there that find this program useful. If you have any questions, suggestions or some good (or bad for that matter) words to say about anything write to our USER'S GROUP. Maybe because this is my first ASSEMBLER program that I don't see why people need money to inspire them to write more programs. Having the challenge of writing it and getting it to run are rewards enough for me.

SIDE*PRINT Version 3.4

(c) 1987 Jim Swedlow

Fairware is a marketing technique that appears to be unique to the computer world. You can get and evaluate software before purchasing it. It allows, in fact encourages, you to make copies for other potential customers. The risk is born completely by the person marketing the software.

I hope you find SIDE*PRINT useful. If you do, please send what you think it is worth (up to \$18) to:

Jim Swedlow
7381 Kirby Way
Stanton CA 90680

If you send me fair consideration I will advise you of updates, fixes and future offerings. I cannot afford to do this unless you support this Fairware effort.

This software carries no written or implied warranty regarding its performance or suitability. Neither the author nor any subsequent distributor accepts any responsibility for losses which may be incurred from its use.

FAIRWARE HINTS

These hints can help you when you send for fairware: SEND A NOTE or letter asking for the program. Fairware authors are in this to share their effort and to support the 4A. A check without any kind of note is discouraging. Mention where you heard about the program and describe your system.

IF YOU SEND A DISK, initialize it as SSSD (unless otherwise specified). Don't sweep it, format it and verify the sectors. This will make sure that it is OK. Check with the postal service to make sure that you are using enough postage (and not too much!). Be sure to include return postage.

Many fairware authors would greatly appreciate getting programs from you - it is a waste to send an empty disk. Send new programs or ones from your area that may not have migrated to where the author lives. Mention the programs in your note so the author will look for them.

IF YOU SEND MONEY, print your return address clearly. Better yet, send a mailing label. It not only helps the author but the post office moves your mail faster when the address is typed.

Send your funds in the currency of the author's country. It can be anything from inconvenient to impossible to cash a check written in foreign funds. Your bank may be able to help or you can send an international money order from the post office. This is slow but sure - one that came to me from France took almost a month!

REACT AFTER YOU GET THE PROGRAM. Drop the author a line and let him know what you liked (or didn't like). Many fairware authors report that communication with other 4A owners is very important to them. Many programs have improved significantly from user feedback.

If you ask a question, send a SASE (Self Addressed Stamped Envelope). It will help assure that you get an answer.

SUPPORT FAIRWARE AUTHORS. If a contribution is requested and the program meets your needs, send it with a note.

Some fairware authors give special support to people who support them. Examples are extra documentation, notices of fixes and updates, copies of updates and bonus disks.

Some User Groups collect funds for fairware authors. If the User Group and the author are in different countries, it is a good idea to contact the author before sending anything.

USE COMMON COURTESY. Fairware authors are 4A owners who work and/or go to school full time. Fairware is a side line. Treat them the way you would like to be treated.

Formatting the SNUGLETter

A How-Done not a How-To ---

by George Tille4-

Before John Martin left on his vacation and a couple of weeks after he submitted his BBS column, we had a long conversation about the newsletter. We talked mostly about the use of TPA-MDOS but also about many other subjects relating to the newsletter project. The only specific request John made was for me to write down the formats I use and give him copy or put it on the BBS. His interest centers around preparing his articles in a manner that would make my job easier. That's a typically-John attitude, but he also said that he thought there were others that would be curious if not downright interested. I have no complaints about the formatting of the articles we get, but John pushed my button, so here goes. I just hope I can find a stopping place.

IN GENERAL

The standard format is two columns of equal width with .25" margins and column separation. The margins give room to bind or punch the pages. The fonts need to be big enough for easy reading and small enough to keep the newsletter under one ounce so as to avoid additional postage.

The programs used to process submissions are based on either ASCII characters(abbreviated ch) or are broken down into pixels, dots or bits which will be referred to simply as dot-bits(db). The standard ch is 8x8db. All Chara fonts are 5db wide and usually 6 or 7db high. This leaves 3db inter-character-space (ics) and either 1 or 2db for line spacing(lb). My printer allows an increase of ics but not a decrease. The lb is completely controllable. TPA-MDOS allows ics, lb and the width of the blank spaces to be adjusted. PAGEPRO is ch oriented and more rigid. I've never seen PAGEPRO text with more than 68ch/8" -- it has good, easily placed graphics, though. I use both for graphics; TPA for text.

The first step in getting newsletter articles on the page is deciding how much of the page to use and what to use to get it there. A print line is 8" long. Subtracting the allowance for margins and column separation (3*.25") leaves 7.25" to work with. Dividing this by 2 gives you a column width of 3.625". The column width divided by the line width gives you a standard factor for determining how many ch or db per line you can line you can expect. In our case the standard factor is .453125(.453125" if you prefer). Applying this to the chart below gives an idea of the characters per column to expect from the default values.

Print Fonts(STAR NX1800)		Bit Graphics	
ch/8"	ch/column	line	column
Pica	88	36	
Condensed Pica	136	61	
Elite	96	43	
Condensed Elite	160	72	
		PAGEPRO	68ch 27ch
		TPA-MDOS	1824db 464db
			18db/ch 128ch 58ch
			17db/ch 146ch 66ch

Formatting for the printer:

Material for the printer is formatted to run on my STAR NX-1800. The Users Manual claims "This printer will work with any program that supports a Star, Epson or IBM dot-matrix printer." Printer codes don't pose much of a problem. If the submission has printer codes, I put it through the formatter and view it on an 80 column screen to see how the author intended it to look. If the article is submitted copy-ready, I use it that way if I can; otherwise, I reformat. If the article requires retyping, I'll try anything before I retype it. A pasteup or reduced copy; anything beats retyping. I'm a lousy typist. I have some excellent practice -typing programs and for the last two years have intended to use them right after I go on a diet. The bottom line is the format of a submission is no big deal.

The basic font is ML4 condensed Pica (17ch/" or 136ch/8" line). The Tab/Foracter settings are .LM 5;RM 65;FI;AD. Include .IN 3

if paragraphs are indented or leave a line between paragraphs without indenting. This gives 61 ch/column. Variations are restricted to the 3.625" column width when practical; otherwise, the 2nd column is adjusted also.

The default line setting is 6 lines per inch(12/72";36/216). You have about ten usable inches +/- one line. You can count on 60 lines with the default. 8 lines per inch is used a lot to allow 80 lines/pg. I think that is a little tight. I prefer a maximum of 72 lines (18/72" or 36/216"). Varying the number of lines can stretch an article to fill a blank space or prevent carrying over a few words to another page, but there are limits. Once I used superscript with reduced line spacing to make an article fit. At the next meeting someone commented that he needed a magnifying glass to read it. The we-too chorus include most of those present. I dropped that procedure but it was good to know that most of those present had read the article.

Graphical Word Processing

The cover story for the July edition of PC MAGAZINE is on graphical word processors. They title it "Tomorrow's Word Processors Today - The Graphical Advantage". The cover says: More Power? Yes; More Fun? Definitely; Less Work Hmm.... The story covers five processors that list from \$195 to \$595 that require from 768kb to 3mb of memory. One of the processors is recommended to run on machines of 20-33mb because of the slow processing time. The chart of features takes two and a third pages of mostly basics but some bells and whistles. PAGEPRO and TPA-MDOS offer a surprising number of the same features. Add a few supporting programs and we TIers have more than a foot in the door.

I use TPA-MDOS for most things and sometimes really "go the long way around" when it would be far simpler to format for the printer. I tell myself it is to help me learn but I still do it when I've learned how. You get the picture. TPA-jotter loads and saves BY/80 text and offers a limited formatting capability. The jotter is limited to 100 lines for any column width. A 28ch column gives you a total of 2800ch. An 88ch column comes in at 8800ch. Know what the first thing I do is? Reformat to an 88ch format before loading the jotter, of course. I usually stay in the editor mode, set tabs for 8 and 79 and step through the articles using Ctr-2 to reformat; Ctr-4 to go to the next paragraph and Ctr-8 to add a line between paragraphs. Jotter doesn't have an in/outdent capability, hence the line between paragraphs. TPA is 1824db wide and displays the row and column db under the cursor. 8db wide characters allow 128ch/8" line. This versatile program lets you easily vary this so you seldom see an article I've formatted using default values. The page is 768db long. With a zero line space setting you get 96 lines.

If you are not interested in formatting for TPA, just accept the fact that adjustments can be easily made to the length of your article and skip the next three paragraphs. TPA lets you select intercharacter spacing(ics), line spacing(lb) and the width of the blank character(bw). The default is 3/8/5 (ics/lb/bw). This produces the 128ch/line, 96 lines/page and the 58ch per column previously shown. A CHARA file is in 8x8 format but the ASCII characters formed are usually 5x6 or 5x7. TPA reads the 5 wide and defaults 3ics to make the total 9db wide. For line spacing, 8lb leaves only 1db between lines for chars that are 7db high and 2db for the 6db high chars. A minimum of 2db is desirable. 3db is better.

The standard column settings are 28 to 458 for the left column 488 to 918 for the right. This gives a column width of 431db which I adopted after a lot of trial and error even though the math route indicates the column width should be 464db. I've measured the margins and column separation a number of times. They are never off enough to change the standard settings. The

Formatting ... continued from page 7

difference is probably with the printer. Double-density graphics is 128dpi or 960dh/8". Quad is twice Dbl. If TPA's capacity is 1024, the printer can't handle it.

A few words about formatting for TPA when column integrity is required. I don't believe TPA JOTTER will do a .NF function. Everything responds like a Fill(.FI) command. To simulate .NF start each line with a dummy character that you will remove later and end each line with a carriage return. This precludes closing up and wrapping. John came up with a good procedure. He starts the line with a period. He uses tab settings that leave room for the dummy character to be inserted. From the editor mode he uses the RS function to put the dummy char at the beginning of the line and the carriage return at the end of the line. He saves the file, loads it into jotter, formats it on to the page and zaps out the dummy chars. That's it. If this sounds like too much hassle: just send me the copy formatted like you want it and I'll either follow John's method or use a use a formatter that does a .NF. Don't let it hassle you. I do some of it every month. No biggie.

Other standards are: a 7dh high font with 3/2/3. Reducing the bw to 3 makes 2xhw more db available on the line. 2/2/3 is also good. An ics of less than 2 is not recommended. Reducing the ics from 3 to 2 results in a total character width of .7 and a maximum of 146ch per line and columns 66 characters wide (see chart above). Since the columns are only 43ldb wide, 2/2/5 allows 61 characters (same as the printer) and 2/2/3 adds more char depending on the number of blank spaces.

3/2/3 is sort of a middle ground that allows a little give in both directions. One exception: the bw must be 5 (same as char width) to reproduce any copy that requires column alignment to be preserved.

The graphics at the end of John's article on page 5 were used to fill up space and illustrate one point on the graphics. I didn't use the full figure but I could have. They are about as revealing as a lingerie ad in the daily paper. Or I could have put bikinis on them with six lines and two small circles, but what I wanted to illustrate was that some of the pics upload as half-wides. Someplace in the process they get changed from Dbl density to single or maybe Quad to Dbl. The pathetic creature on the lower left is one. So were the two in the top middle but I recopied them using using Getpic with a two-wide pixel setting.

I admit again, I'm a very poor typist. Getting an article in a digitized format is a big, big help. I'd like to get everything we publish on disk or via modem. The most fun I've had formatting an article was Dr. Charles Good's coverage of PAGEPRO. He sent disks with the article to print and his input that produced the finished article. You could follow every step from the original drafts to the final product. Formatting was a snap. Most of what I know about PAGEPRO I learned from working on that article and the demo that followed.

I want to close with an offer. I'll put the logos for the SNUGLETter on the BBS. They will be in TPA format. If anyone knows of a program to convert TPA Screen to an Artist format, get it to me and I'll upload in a format more of you can use. Most of the newsletter articles are downloaded from the BBS. Format an article (yours or one you download), upload it to the board and we'll use it in the newsletter. One caveat: more than one entry and I choose. If you want to be sure your effort is published, volunteer to do the entire issue and you make the selection. THIS OFFER IS NOT A CRY FOR HELP. I mean it as a sincere offer to share the fun 'cause it is an satisfying experience. The newsletter belongs to all the members.

On the other hand, if you just want some material to try on your TPA program, download the files and have a ball. If you duplicate a file that has been published in the newsletter and have a "how did you do that?", call or leave a message on the board (Geo Tilley #41) and I'll answer or if someone else did the formatting we'll sweat it out of them. ... enjoy, Geo!



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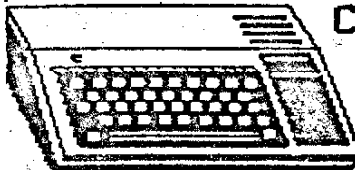
The ESD ad above appeared in the July issue of the WEST PENN 99'ERS. Last month we carried one of their articles on the new ESD's Hard and Floppy Disk Controller. We were promised more in the next issue and the above is all there was! I committed to an update and I'm passing on all I have-- Sorry, no address or phone number and no specific reference to the Geneve, usa or nay. Last month I called John Willforth about his article. He said the Geneve would not be supported. He also said my name and address would be forwarded to the new company. So far, I have heard nothing. If I hear anything more, be sure I'll pass it on.

There are five or more controllers under development according to the grapevine. One from Germany will be unwrapped during their upcoming TI-fair. From what I have heard it is a floppy controller in the \$200 range (subject to the exchange rate). Very little specifics on the others. We'll see ---

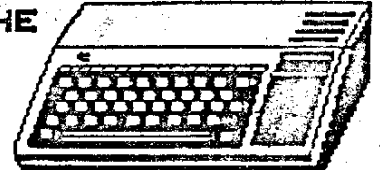
Meanwhile--- George Campbell got his HFDC from Myark !!! That's the good news. The bad news was the drive is on backorder. If I know George he'll hang in there. At least we know something is coming out of Myark. That's good news. I hope their problems are over and things are looking up. Again, We'll see. Hang in there Geneve Owners. I still believe the last word will be ours.

-- Geo!

Fest West 91



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FEST WEST 91

SOUTHERN NEVADA USERS' GROUP

The SNUGLETter is published monthly by the Southern Nevada Users' Group (SNUG). SNUG is a non-profit organization of individuals with an interest in all aspects of Texas Instruments' 99xx & 99xxx based computers including hardware and software by third party vendors. The GROUP meets 7:00 PM on the second Monday of the month - currently in the Nevada Power Company, Wengert Community Meeting Room, 6226 West Sahara Avenue. Visitors and guests are welcome to attend the meetings. Information on membership is available at the meeting. Articles may be copied from the SNUGLETter provided credit is given to both the author and the original source and that the article not be used for profit. (For-profit organizations wishing to use any articles from the SNUGLETter will need to make prior arrangements with the Executive of the Southern Nevada Users' Group.)

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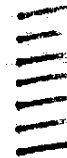
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Currently SNUG supports Texas Instrument's 99/4 and 99/4A computers, and Myarc's Geneve 9640 computer.

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