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THE TACOMA INFORMER



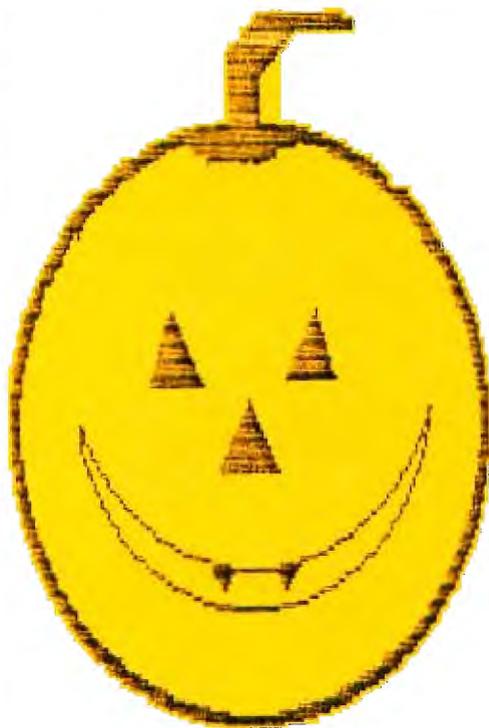
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P.O. BOX 42383 -- TACOMA, WA 98442

Volume 5

OCTOBER 1988

No.10

JEAN'S JOTTINGS



**DUES
are
DUE**

As the new co-editor of the monthly TACOMA INFORMER, I would like to whole-heartedly thank Art for his training and help to make the transition as easy as possible. I know Cheri feels the same way. We will strive to keep the TI one of the top quality newsletters in the TI99 community.

One of the nicest things about being the newsletter editor is getting the exchange newsletters on a timely basis. (We are the first to read them, so this in itself was an incentive to become editor.)

Many of the other newsletters simply copy articles from other newsletters, but I am hoping ours will continue to have articles submitted by our members. We will not refuse any articles because if you find one that is extremely interesting, pass it on and perhaps add a note of your own, even if it is a 5 line commentary on whether you agree or disagree with the article. Perhaps an article might inspire you to try something new. The whole article (if it's not 5-6 pages) could be reprinted plus how it inspired you.

We are requesting, but it is not mandatory, that you use the following format:

Keyboarded by (Your Name)
From
NAME OF PUBLICATION

From the Editor.

Month 19YY (DATE)

.LM 1;RM 34;FI;AD;IN +4

.CE2

NAME OF ARTICLE

AUTHOR

It is really neat to see your name in print and know you are helping your club out. If you use special codes in your article then note these right after the Keyboarded line and the printer you use. (For instance, whenever my ribbons get a little worn, I enter the line

.TL 123:27;71

with a { as the first character.

This causes my Epson MX80 to double print everything so that it looks like I have a new ribbon.)

It would be a big help for us to have you to print it out and just give it to us in printed form but if you wish to give it on disk then give it to us at any meeting. We can either copy it there using the club's system or else bring the disk back to you at the next meeting. Just be sure to have your name on it if you want it back. We do not promise to have it in the following newsletter but it should appear soon. Cheri has a modem and can receive articles that way but mine still isn't working.

If you are really into using a modem and find something really interesting on one of the BBS's either locally or nationally the format should be:

Downloaded by (Your Name)

From

NAME OF BBS

MM/DD/YY

.LM 1;RM 34;FI;AD;IN +4

.CE2

NAME OF ARTICLE

AUTHOR

If you can't remember this, don't worry about it, simply note it on a slip of paper when you give us the article.

If you have any questions, and can't get to a meeting to ask it, a phone call to any of our officers will probably either get you the answer or the name and number of our local guru (probably Joe Nollan) who can answer your questions. However, if you prefer an answer in writing, a note to the newsletter staff (use the PO BOX) hopefully will get you an answer. We will pass it on to the guru and perhaps it will give them an idea for an article because others might have been interested also.

In future articles, I will try and list articles in the exchange newsletters which might prove to be of interest to all of you.

TACOMA BBS USERS GROUP OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

FRANK ASHBURN.....582-8886

VICE PRESIDENT

JOE NOLLAN.....572-4680

SECRETARY

LARRY HAWK.....564-3884

TREASURER

RON PREWITT.....474-7310

LIBRARIAN

TOM KING.....535-2563

CO-EDITORS

JEAN SCHMIDT.....735-9056

CHERI JEFFRIES.....838-7995



Boyd Shugert's Bullish On Graphics!



BOYD SHUGERT of Portsmouth, Ohio has a great program named TIGRAPHICS. The bull graphic above is an example.

Boyd said he wrote the program for TI'ers who didn't have Epson compatible printers like the 8-pin GP-100 TI, 7-pin Axiom GP-100 TI, and the Gorilla Banana. He also wrote (thank God!) an Epson compatible version.

If you are interested in doing your own first-rate graphics and aren't a good drawer, his method uses the "grid" technique; you trace or transfer pictures on a grid. As part of his package he includes 2 double sided typed sheets of information and instructions on graphic programming, two ready made grids, and a sample of how the "bull" graphic was done.

TIGRAPHICS prints graphics tabbed from 1 to 70 spaces across your paper. The above was done in two steps. First I printed the bull (tabbed 5) at the left; I rolled the paper back up to my original starting point and printed the graphic again (tabbed 60). I loaded TI-ARTIST; went to the enhancement section and loaded my font. I typed my title. Finally, I returned to the main TI-Artist menu and printed using all the defaults.

But what is so unique about BOYD SHUGERT'S TIGRAPHICS? First and foremost, it's the 33 unique graphics. (See backside for some samples). They are excellent!

The other unique feature is that the graphics can be printed in two sizes, and can be done in mirror image. The graphics at the bottom of this page are in mirror image.

What's that you're saying? Of what use is this program? Well, if you are not into extensively using TI-ARTIST or FONTWRITER for custom made letterheads, signs, card making, or just for decorating some text file. It's very simple to use. No programming is necessary; and of course as a bonus, you have a tutorial on how to create your own graphics!

The cost of his 2 disk flippies is \$5.00 a disk (\$10.00 total). They are SSSD formatted. When you order give him the name of your printer and any special printer characteristics.

There's more!! If you are a Sunday School Teacher, Pastor, or Church Bulletin Editor (or just interested in religious graphics), Boyd has another 2 disk floppy set of TIBIBLICAL graphics. The price is the same for the set (\$10.00). See some examples on back.

Boyd Shugert's address is:
1729 Timmonds Ave.
Portsmouth, Ohio 45662
Thanks! Boyd for writing this excellent program; hope to see more from you.

HAPPY TI-ING! JIM LUQUE



UPCOMING EVENTS

Tacoma 99ers User's Group 1988 Activities Calendar

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL
7th 8pm Meeting	4th 8pm Meeting-Demonstration of the GENEVE by Barb Weiderhold	3rd 8pm Meeting-BBS demonstration by Cynthia Becker	7th 8pm Meeting
21st 8pm Meeting	18th 8pm Meeting- TI ARTIST Demonstration	17th 8pm Meeting	21st 8pm Meeting 23rd SOFTWARE GIVE-AWAY
MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST
5th 8pm Meeting	2nd 8pm Meeting 4th 4-H EASTSIDE FAIR	7th 8pm Meeting 9th Movie Saturday	4th 8pm Meeting-SUPERCART DEMO BY Joe Nollan 13th MOVIE SATURDAY
19th 8pm Meeting 21st MIDWAY SWAP-MEET	16th 8pm Meeting-DEMO ON PC-TRANSFER BY Ron Previtt	21st 8pm Meeting- MULTIPLAN DEMO BY Cheri Jeffries 23rd STAR-LITE DRIVE-IN SWAP MEET	18th 8pm Meeting-GRDM PORT CLEANING DEMO BY Joe Nollan
SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
1st 8pm Meeting	6th 8pm Meeting	3rd 8pm Meeting	1st 8pm Meeting
15th 8pm Meeting 17th SWAP-MEET 24th SEATTLE TI FAIRE	20th 8pm Meeting	17th 8pm Meeting	15th 8pm Meeting

REVISED: 07/17/88

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IMPACT/99
by Jack Sughrue

§... OLD DAYS

PART III: THE DARK AGES

Were the Dark Ages really awful for all the people who lived through them? I mean, if I were a serf would I never have had any happiness if I truly didn't know about such things as freedom and rights? That's the impression we keep getting from everything we read about the Dark Ages (which were not called that, of course, except in hindsight).

Might we not be living in the Electronic Dark Ages right now? Might not some future generations (freed from a flesh body thanks to robotics and the research into Artificial Intelligence) refer to us as primitive, what with degenerating bodies; minds cluttered with trivia and obsessions; politics of death rather than life; slums, homeless, terror, war, famine?

But, still, might WE not think this is a pretty cool age? And we pretty cool cats? And life a gas? (If not downright totally wicked awesome rad.)

So we come to the eve of orphaning of the 4/A. That infamous date (was it really a Friday the 13th?) will linger on in many memories. The doomsayers leaped from what they thought was an abyss and began chanting, "Dark Ages. Dark Ages. Dark Ages.")

I can clearly recall reading the announcement in the papers and saying, "Forspoth!" (or whatever was the proper expletive in those days), and going home that evening and taking the cover off my console and looking at it for a long time. Like Ol' Dog Tray, 4/A and I had been buddies for a long time. Now it looked like the last roundup.

"Wait a minute!" I thought aloud. "This computer still works. It's still better than an Apple or IBM or Commodore as is. There's no one down in Texas who is going to snap a switch that will shut off the 4/As instantly worldwide. We still have over 2 million owners. We still have software being made, books being written, and, best of all, my user group is still intact."

We're well into the second half of that decade now and we're not dead yet. Not by a long shot.

There have been some remarkable misjudgments by publishers and software and hardware companies. I think, for example, that the biggest mistake came when companies and the user groups eliminated the non-techies. Forgetting about them. Magazines like SMART PROGRAMMER

overestimated the number of techies who would be interested in such things as internal schematics or such software as Advanced Diagnostics. Once the market was quickly saturated (some estimate TI techhood as high as 10,000 people worldwide, out of a possible 2 1/2 million owners and a possible 7 million users: that was it. Software, for the most part, was just not being made for the regular user. As a result, lots of software companies died (as did lots of Fairware projects). Pirates were blamed for ALL these deaths. There was piracy, no doubt about it: but the pirates, for the most part, were the very techies who were a small part of this very small part of the TI community. No non-techie would pirate Advanced Diagnostics, for example, even if they knew how (which would make them a techie), as it would serve no purpose in that person's computer life. Nor would they pirate "Poceye" because they wouldn't have the technical ability to do so.

I think piracy has been overated as a cause of death. Particularly as there is no corpse.

I know of many people in our user group (and this has happened at least nationwide) who left, first, because they believed the doomsayers: second, because they didn't understand the nature of undergrounding: and, finally, because the rest of us had bought RAMdisks and OSDDs and 512s and 8Ks and were getting into Assembly and were discussing GRAMS and GROMS and other such things. Our workshops were turning into boring nightmares of technical jargon and fast-moving files flashing across multiple screens.

The general feeling of these enthusiastic techies was expressed often and loudly at faires and conferences and club meetings: "If you don't want to join the 20th Century and update your system, then get the hell out!"

As simple as that.

The tape recorder crowd who needed a slower pace or didn't have the money (or desire) for upgrading the system, was left in the lurch.

So were those who only wanted cartridges for software application: PERSONAL RECORD KEEPING, MULTIPLAN, LOGO. The one exception, of course, was TI WRITER.

I remember one meeting where a speaker talked for 45 minutes on Eproms. I didn't know what they were and no one in the audience knew (either before or after). Or cared. Fewer of the old regulars came to the meetings. There was no longer anything for them. Each time we lost a few more members, my heart would sink. Without the user groups, I knew, there would be no TI. The machine would still work, but there would be no community, no sharing, no fellowship.

We tried raffles and other band-aids for a while, but we didn't bring back the oldtimers. And there aren't any newtimers.

Or are there?

The TIs are still in the homes of many people. If only young people (including old young people) could be encouraged to take an interest.

Many of the techies (if they've not already done so) are going to leave the TI for greater techiehood. This is too bad. They left behind some great things. But they left behind (in those cases where there were club takeovers) many dead groups. Some of us are not technically oriented, nor will we ever be. There are a lot of 99ers out there with tape recorders; a lot of 99ers who have never used FORMAT on their TI WRITERS; a lot of 99ers who wouldn't even care to own a GRAM KRACKER (which is great for them as GK isn't made anymore). However, we non-techies can be assets to our groups. We can contribute and have lots to contribute.

What did we do in the old days of before and after the orphaning that was so different?

We went to our user groups as a social occasion, a monthly night out. I think that came first for most people. The 4/A was our commonality. It was social. We talked and shared and learned. We were all, more or less, in the same boat. Those who knew a bit more than we did helped us. We did not feel excluded.

I went to a large TI group last year with the intent of joining. When I got there I felt very uncomfortable. The members did not introduce themselves, nor did they ask me to "come on over" and chat. Nothing. The meeting was disorganized, but when it settled down, nothing happened. There were no workshops, no plans, no anything. Except for five or six men (a couple rather famous in the TI community) who kind of held sway, loudly cracking inside jokes as one or the other of them talked a little bit about what's on their BBS, about Epronis (Damn Epronis, I say!), about how to wire in an XB chip to your console (using all the terms but without a chart or graph). Everyone (except those five or six) was bored to tears. I couldn't understand why anyone even came to the meetings. I didn't join, though I belong to quite a few groups.

When I went back to M.U.N.C.H. I noticed our meetings were getting like that (though not yet as bad).

When meetings started to get down to three and four members present, I knew drastic changes had to take place.

So what did we do to renew membership and keep it active?

First, we started having user workshops. Things we normal types wanted the computer for. Most people want to do something with wordprocessing or graphics. (PRINT SHOP is, after all, the most popular home computer program on the market - for other computers.) Desktop publishing it's being called, and it is just that. We started giving workshops on FUNNELWEB and PLUS! and CFS and TI-ARTIST and FONTWRITER, primarily, because people owned these programs or were seriously considering getting them, and they wanted to know how to use them. They wanted to go slowly and in small groups and ask lots of questions and have things shown a few times. People have a mistrust of manuals, no matter how simple. (The ones that are very simple seem too wordy; the ones that

are thin seem to assume too much knowledge on the part of the user.) People like to see things in operation. They don't care how the TV or the car or the microwave or the washing machine work. They only want to be able to use the things. For most people, this is also true of computers. And for the TI in particular because most purchasers bought it for home and as their first computer experience.

We tried to provide for these 99ers, but we first had to get them back.

We improved the newsletter: increased the number of pages, eliminated the repetitious or irrelevant materials, tried to jam-pack it with goodies from all the exchange newsletters and add graphics and PROGRAMS TO TYPE IN whenever and wherever possible.

Next we mailed them to ALL former members inviting them back to the fold.

We had coffee and goodies available.

We greeted each new or returning visitor at every meeting and pulled them right into the one-meeting group discussions.

And had signs xeroxed. A batch was given to each member present to put anywhere and everywhere.

We increased our raffles; brought back our text library, our long-forgotten tape library and dubber, our disk library.

At each meeting we begin with a social time (to talk, eat, look at the stuff for sale, for loan, for raffle), pull everyone together for a general filling-in of what the workshops that night will be and a filling-in of what's happening in our computer's world. Lots of jokes and fellowship. Then we have a short, semi-formal meeting (president, treasurer, secretary) and conduct the workshops. Meetings begin officially at 7. Most members arrive by 6:30. We end abruptly at 9:30.

We gave a list of all members names and addresses and phones to all members.

There is much outside-the-club contact. Many members belong to other clubs, too, so there is a greater sharing. If members show an interest in Epronis, for example, they can bring it up at a meeting and request a workshop for those interested.

The heart and the brain of the user group (for ALL user groups) is the newsletter. Without it, there is no real user group. It is the connector of members. It is the communicator. It is the touchstone and signature of each club around the world. The newsletters are as individual and quirky as the editors whose remarkable dedication continues to turn them out. You can tell from the newsletter if the club is friendly and worth joining.

The main ingredients in successful user groups are the four F's: FUN, FELLOWSHIP, FOOD, AND FRIENDLINESS. When groups get away from these qualities, they're fading into the shadows. However, as M.U.N.C.H. is proof, with a little effort a group can leap back into the light.

My 4A and I have been through a lot together. We're good buddies. It even sends me valentines.

Would an Apple have been that loyal? An IBM? Ha!

And 4A and me, we've got a long, long way yet to go.
 Join us by joining (and rejoining) your user group,
 go to the meetings often, voice opinions, run for office,
 stable the newsletters, bring a cake. Something! Because
YOU are the TI!

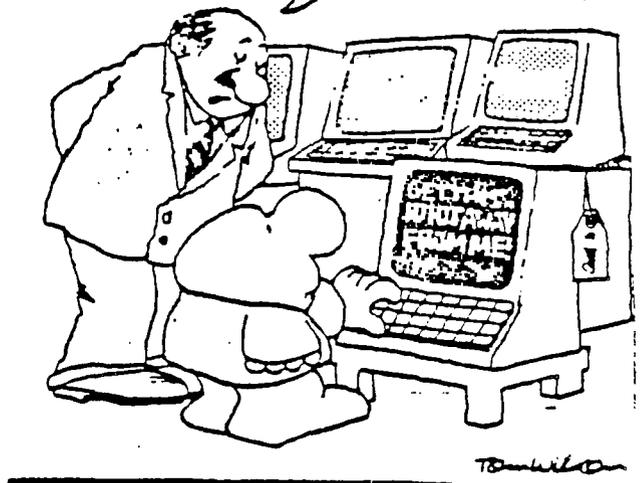
Ten years from now I hope you'll be reading IMPACT/99
 and sharing some of our mutual trips down Memory Lane.

[This is the third of three articles about the
 author's personal experiences in the drama of 4Aing.]

[Jack Sughrue, Box 459, E.Douglas MA 01516]

If any newsletter editor prints these IMPACT/99
 articles, please put me on your mailing list. Thanks -
 JS

...PERHAPS A SIMPLER MODEL, SIR...



JIFFY FLYER Demonstration
 by Jim Luque

If you missed last meeting, you missed a great demonstration by one of the new members of our club. Jim lives in Toledo, WA and his home club is the NOVA group in Vancouver. He has a regular column in their newsletter which is always informative.

He demonstrated JIFFY FLYER, a new program by Roger Merritt who also wrote PICTURE-IT and PRINT-IT. JIFFY-FLYER is a very user-friendly program which enables you to easily design and print those garage signs, flyers, and notices which you have been wanting to make. AND IT DOES IT WITH YOU ONLY HAVING TO REMEMBER TWO KEYS. The space bar steps you thru the various choices available and the enter key steps you thru the program.

An example of what it can do is shown. There are several fonts, 45 borders, and uses CSGD graphics.

The program is well worth the \$10 asking price, and can be ordered thru him

Jim Luque
 706 Pacific Road
 Toledo, WA 98591



MAD HUG JUL 88

This is from the new ASGARD NEWS magazine (Asgard Software, P.O. Box 10306, Rockville, MD 20850 - quarterly - \$6 per year):

*Print Help For Gemini Users

"Do you have a Star printer?. To be more to the point - do you get ugly white horizontal lines on your screen dumps of GRAPHX or TI-Artist?"

Type in the following program, save it, and run it with your printer on before using your artist programs.

```
10 INPUT "TURN ON PRINTER AN
0 PRESS ENTER..":A$
20 OPEN #1:"PI0",OUTPUT
30 PRINT #1:CHR$(27);"A";CHR
$(6)
40 CLOSE #1.
```

Problem solved. I load it before using MAX-RLE and dumping stuff for our newsletter. Just great!

TACOMA 99ERS USERS GROUP

P.O. BOX 42383
TACOMA WA 98442

DUES: SINGLE MEMBERSHIP= \$15.00
FAMILY MEMBERSHIP= \$20.00

DATE ____/____/____

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION: NEW ___/RENEWAL ___/; INDIVIDUAL ___/FAMILY ___/
NAME _____ ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ ZIP _____ PHONE _____

QUESTIONNAIRE

WHAT COMPUTER(S) DO YOU OWN?

WHAT PERIPHERALS DO YOU CURRENTLY USE? CASSETTE RECORDER DISK CONTROLLER
DRIVE PERIPHERAL EXPANSION BOX RS232 32K MEMORY EXPANSION TV B/W MONITOR
COLOR MONITOR SPEECH SYNTHESIZER JOYSTICKS PRINTER MODEM OTHER (PLEASE LIST)

WHAT TI LANGUAGES DO YOU WORK WITH? PLEASE, INDICATE LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE
EXTENDED BASIC ASSEMBLY LOGO
BASIC FORTH OTHER

WHAT ARE YOUR MAJOR USES: EDUCATION ENTERTAINMENT BUSINESS
PROFESSIONAL HOBBY HOUSEHOLD MANAGEMENT COMPUTER LITERACY
OTHER

DO YOU HAVE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING: TI-WRITER MICROSOFT MULTIPLAN MINI
MEMORY EDITOR ASSEMBLER EXTENDED BASIC MODULE

PLEASE, use the following area to tell us where you would like to be in increased knowledge at the end of this year. This will help us to formulate activities to help you get there. Also, please, include any areas of interest that you feel qualified to help others in their quest for knowledge.

TACOMA 99ERS
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MEETINGS - 1st and 3rd THURS. - 8 p. m.

South End Pool Building - 402 E. 56th Street - Tacoma, WA

For More Information Call 474-7310