



West Penn 99'ers



Supporting the TI-99/4A Home Computer

Established 1985

ISSUE #65

January 1991

FOR THE RECORD

by: Ed Bittner

Well... back in the saddle again... back by popular demand... not even cold yet... here we go again... just one more time... I like to give 110%.....For The Record must go on.

Mickey opened the December meeting of the WEST PENN 99ER'S at 7:15 P.M. the usual on time late start that we like. She gave special thanks to Art, Lynn, Art, Lynn and Art, in that order. Then I began to take the minutes: Thanks Lynn and Art for understanding. Second special thanks went to John Willforth in the form of a plaque (which he will use to cover holes or something), a plaque for which he promised not a speech but we got one anyway. Sincerely, John deserves all the thanks we can give him for his unselfish giving of his time for the past 5+ years.

Mickey received briefs (brief reports) from each of the officers in attendance and gave special thanks to the outgoing officers (AHM..., I had to mention this one). Mickey also reminded the members that DUES are DUE for 1991. We currently have 75+ members, most of whom are in the **A** category (good looking).

Funnelweb 4.31 is now around and Mike Sealy (corres sec.) is still dealing in newsletters from other clubs. Micropendium has some great deals on diskettes. John W. came bearing gifts from Chuck P. (Computer Bug). These were immediately scooped up by Mickey for raffle prizes.

Speaking of raffle and prizes, we had the biggest Non-raffle donation give away-prize awarding session since Sept. Rich Ohi walked away with a big one, -an ESD HFDC and 40 Meg hard Drive (WOW). Even I, Unlucky Scoops, came away with a breakout game which I absconded from my lucky daughter. Keyboards, labels, buttons, bugs, stands, pointsettas, fortran, word processors, etc., if you missed it shame on you. !!! Also each member received a Disk with Christmas Music. Nice touch. !!! Don't miss next month- SIGS_ Paul Brock-Page Pro, Lynn Gardner-TI Base and M. Schmitt- conclusion of language sessions. BE THERE !!!!!

really in finality submitted,
Ed (Scoops) Bittner

PS: Licence plate of the month : 2N2B4

WEST PENN 99'ERS CLUB INFORMATION

NEXT MEETING DATE

January 15, 1991
7:00 P.M.

MEETING LOCATION

ST. STEPHEN'S BYZANTINE
CATHOLIC CHURCH

JUST OFF ROUTE 30
BETHEL ROAD, NORWIN

LIST OF WEST PENN OFFICERS FOR 1991

PRESIDENT:	Mickey	412-335-0163
VICE PRESIDENT:	John	412-527-6656
TREASURER:	Lynn	412-835-4304
RECORDING SEC:	Frank	412-751-6065
CORRESPONDING SEC:	Mike	614-282-5627
LIBRARIAN:	Bob	412-863-5672
NEWSLETTER EDITOR:	Chris	301-322-6150

GENERAL ITINERARY OF THE CLUB'S MEETING

6:45 P.M.	DOORS OPEN
7:00 P.M.	GENERAL MEETING
7:45 P.M.	DEMOS & NEW INFO
8:45 P.M.	TI BASE SIG
8:45 P.M.	PAGE PRO SIG
11:00 P.M.	DOORS CLOSE

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS FOR THIS MONTH

- * LATEST TI NEWS AND SOFTWARE DISCOUNTS
- * PREMIER RELEASES BY MS-EXPRESS SOFTWARE
- * ARTIST CATALOGER DEMO: MICKEY SCHMITT
- * TOURNAMENT SOLITAIRE DEMO: LYNN GARDNER
- * "AN INTRO TO LOGO II" BY MICKEY SCHMITT
- * "GETTING THE MOST FROM YOUR USER GROUP"

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP DUES!

\$15.00 PER YEAR FOR INDIVIDUAL / FAMILY
\$10.00 PER YEAR FOR JUST THE NEWSLETTER

FROM THE EDITOR...

This is my first issue as editor of this newsletter and as my first official act I wish to thank John Willforth for his years of dedication and support to the West Penn 99'ers. Through John's 64 issues of the newsletter he has been able to keep the TI spirit alive for all of us. John, I think I speak for all 99'ers when I say that I hope that you will continue to write articles for this newsletter. Thank you for your five years of service as newsletter editor.

I think all of you will notice a change in the newsletter format (hopefully the content will be as fulfilling as ever). The first change you will see is the West Penn 99'ers Logo. I felt it was necessary to emphasize our name on the front page of the newsletter so that users groups that we trade with can more easily recognize us. Most of you will recall that I submitted 3 or 4 different styles for your vote, and I am pleased with the selection. (How couldn't I be -- they were all mine). Another significant difference in this newsletter is that my final copy is printed on a Texas Instruments laser printer which provides a clean crisp appearance.

I think 1991 is going to be a big year for the TI community. Plenty of new software and even some new hardware is being released. New items such as RAVE 99's new PE BOX (the 16 bit bus on that is the real excitement) and ESD's new H/F Controller card including new software companies such as MS-EXPRESS SOFTWARE will add to the excitement.

I am looking forward to what awaits us...

CDP

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TI NEWS

A new mail order company has taken over for Triton by the name of **TM Direct Product Marketing**. Mr. Terry Miller, President of TM DPM and co-founder of Triton, wrote me and explained that they were going to send out new catalogs early this year. The number for orders or questions is: 800-366-9966

Electronic Systems Development Corp. has informed me that there has been a delay in their shipping out the new Hard/Floppy Drive Controllers due to a problem procuring the Western Digital hard drive controller chip, WD1010A, from suppliers. They do not anticipate a long wait. (I can't wait to see the first surface mount TI card!). If anyone still does not have their address here it is: P.O. Box 23805, Washington, DC 20026-3805.

Good news for those of you who purchased version 0.9 of GIFFY. You may obtain a upgrade to version 1.0 by sending \$5.00 directly to: Barry Boone
P. O. BOX 1233, San Springs, OK 74063.
The program is now called GIF MANIA. (Also see page 6 of this newsletter for more on GIF MANIA).

I want to recommend highly MS EXPRESS's new Adventure Hints Series I. I purchased it at the Chicago Fair and it is a wonderfully original approach to adventure hints -- they load via the Adventure Module!

Vulcan's Computer Monthly is currently carrying classic computer articles, one of which is the TI-99/4A. The monthly

column is written by Barry Traver. The magazine is similar to the Computer Shopper and can be found on newsstands for \$1.95. Alternatively a one-year subscription is \$15.95.

The new club mailing address is:

West Penn 99'ers

% Mike Sealy

RD #1 BOX 184

Toronto, OH 43964

Please make a note of it!!!

Dues are due!!! West Penn one-year memberships are up this month, and if you haven't already, you can pay Lynn Gardner, our treasurer, at the meeting or send her a check made out to West Penn 99'ers. Her address:

642 Lois Drive

Pittsburgh, PA 15236

Individual and family memberships are \$15.00 per year which include all membership privileges. Associate memberships are \$10.00 and include only the West Penn 99'ers Newsletter.

Members are encouraged to submit articles for publication in the West Penn 99'ers Newsletter directly to me, Chris Pratt or to Mickey at the meetings. My address:
5613 Hawthorne Street
Cheverly, MD 20785-1118
Phone #: (301) 322-6150

I will announce at a later date when my official deadline of submitting articles or ads for inclusion in the current newsletter.

-WP ♦

NEW/AGE SPECIAL

* by JACK SUGHRUE, Box 459, East Douglas, MA 01516 *

GOOD, BETTER, BEST!

There is only one program in the TI disk community that is (as my 5th-grade pupils would say) "totally wicked awesome rad to a gnarlydegree." I agree with the sentiment, if not the mode of expression.

Nothing else in our world computer community has equalled the impact of the FUNNELWEB environment created for us by Tony McGovern and his son, Will. These two Australian geniuses (and I do not use the word lightly) put together what all of us deemed impossible for the TI.

FUNNELWEB just grew and grew. The original American release was a TI WRITER and EDITOR ASSEMBLER combo, more or less (actually more). Next version a few months later contained a bit more with lots of enhancements of what went on before. TIW, for example, does not contain a ruler or address recall or macro-key CAPS or LC. Tony put all these things in fairly early versions, all of which we take for granted in our word processing activities. The environment always loaded by either E/A or XB, thus making it ideal for supercarts (again from earlier versions) or RAIMs or whatever device hardwarers could devise. Then things like Disk Manager 1000 and Diskpatch were added and modified. As were loaders for c99, FORTH, etc. Each time Tony (primarily) would unravel the complexities caused by these needs and create new and better solutions than dreamed possible.

When he came up with the windowing effects for the CONFIG program, for example which established a profound systems configuration (still able to be ported en masse to any newer version, I felt he had reached his peak. Boy, was I ever wrong.

FUNNELWEB is not a program. It is an environment which gives you, the user, some great computing tools in such a complete package that it becomes almost impossible to do without them after using them.

Probably 80% or more of normal (non-programmer) use of computers -- especially the TI -- is word processing. People need to communicate. FUNNELWEB turned TIW into a great word processor, adding so many features that should have been in the original cart/disk combo that when you go back to that combo you are appalled at its limitations. As I say, we have become spoiled by Tony and take for granted what is surely a remarkable achievement.

Much as I ♥ my TI, I know that if FUNNELWEB did not exist I would no longer be Tling. I couldn't. FWB's a structure equal to the best that any home computer has to offer its users at any price.

Let's face it. It serves as a Master DOS. What does a Disk Operating System do? Well, it lets you load up other programs, primarily, or lets you handle some disk management tasks. FWB does all that as a sideline.

With the new 4.31 FUNNELWEB the console 99 disk user has just leaped quantumly into an exciting era. The 40-column (standard) TI computer fan now has available to him or her a package heretofore only available to non-standard 80-col upgraders.

Before I go on, I'd like to say:

STOP!

The bad news is this: Will went over to the Amiga a long while ago, and his father will be following shortly. This will mean that the greatest single piece of software for the TI will no longer grow; nor will we be seeing any other pieces come from Funnelweb Farm; nor will there be any more great tutorials (particularly those on exploring XB). This is not only BAD news, it is

HORRIBLE news. Not that I can blame Tony. Although close to 100% of all TI disk users use FWB and its upgrades an extremely small number has ever paid the author a penny - and a tinier number, still, has ever given a second contribution (though the original to present upgrade is similar to the difference between my salary and Donald Trump's). And a tinier number, still, have ever written to Tony to tell him how much they use and appreciate FUNNELWEB and all the other great things he has done for us.

Remember, this is not commercialware. Fairware authors need and deserve our support. Fairware authors of the stature of Tony McGovern have earned massive support financially and socially. They just don't get it.

I urge every user group to "charge" a minimum \$10 copying fee to each member for this upgrade and send the entire collected sum to Tony. Send a group letter. Write him up in your newsletter. Let's let '91 be the Year of the McGovern. Even more, I urge every single reader to sit down at your first opportunity and write (probably using FUNNELWEB) a supporting letter, enclosing the largest cash (certified check, international coupon, money order) contribution you can really afford. It'll still be cheaper than anything you'd have to pay for that would be in the same league as FUNNELWEB (if such a thing exists). People couldn't wait, for example, to shell out \$60 for PRESS (sight unseen) or \$25 to \$60 for data bases. Many of our game cartridges cost at least five times what some consider a "fair" price to pay for the finest piece of software ever for the TI. How about this for a rule of thumb? Take the most expensive piece of software you ever bought (and probably don't even use anymore) and double it. Send that as a donation. Remember what you paid in those pre-inflationary days for LOGO and MULTIPLAN and TI WRITER and DISKMANAGER II and E/A and whatever?

Well, the new FUNNELWEB has so many new features that most of those expensive cartridges and upgrade disks can be chucked in the basket.

What's your TI worth to you? What'll it be worth to you down the road with Tony McGovern gone? Decide soon about your commitment and make the investment today in your future.

~~~~~

So what are a few of these outstanding features? Well, for one, there is no more Disk Manager 1000 nor Disk Patch, because the new Disk Review performs all the functions of both (and then some) from within the FWB environment, including COPYING FILE BY FILE (to eliminate fractures) WHOLE DISKS TO MULTIPLE DRIVES! So stick a disk in Drive 1 and copy to Drives 2, 3, AND 4, while you go comb your wallaby. Disks can be FORMATTED to Quad density, if you have the right controller any program can be RUN right out of DR, including the huge IV254s. The Quick Directory now lets you mark a file from WITHIN the FORMATTER or ASSEMBLER. And the disk editing functions are plentiful and profound.

The whole FUNNELWEB 4.31 environment is profound. You'll realize this immediately when you see BOTH central menus displayed on the screens simultaneously and you just have to move the cursor around to either RUN the program (or VIEW and/or PRINT the text file).

This is a must for everyone!

Get it from your user group today, being bare that everything worthwhile in life costs.

[If you use NEW-AGE/99 please put me on your exchange list.]

--WP♦

# CONFIDENTIAL FILE

A monthly series  
By: Christopher Pratt

## 1990 CHICAGO TI FAIRE

Highlights 11/3/90

The Chicago Faire had many high points let me elaborate on just a few of them. Here are the things that caught my eye:

\* Comprodine released several new programs for the TI. My favorite was a game called "BACKSTEINE" (bok'stin.y) -- it immediately caught my eye as I passed their booth. The game is so similar to the game Arkaniod for other computers that I had to keep looking for an IBM clone or special video card hooked up to the TI console, but to my pleasure the game is for the TI-99/4A. I bought this one right away.

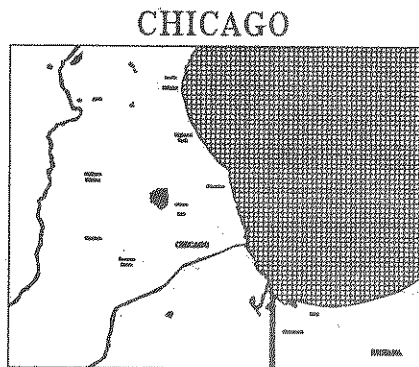
\* Barry Boone was manning the Texaments booth and everybody loved his new program "GIF MANIA". This program allows 4A owners to display GIF pictures without any special equipment attached (video cards and the like). Definitely a winner.

\* Notung Software from Tujunga, California were present with a variety of add on modules for some favorite TI programs such as Certificate 99 and TI Base. My personal favorite is their Star Trek: The Next Generation calendar program by Ray Kazmer.

\* Chris Bobbit from Asgard had the new MIDI interface set up (I believe the author was demonstrating it for people but I am not sure, I apologize). Also the new very impressive graphics program "YAPP" (which stands for: Yet Another Paint Program) was for sale. YAPP is well documented and comes with a large manual in a hardback binder.

\* Gary Bowser from OPA (in Canada) demonstrated many of his new electronic gadgets, including a new widget type device which allows users to access up to ten command modules simultaneously and a 9958 circuit which plugs into the 9918A socket in on the mother board. This 80 column/hi-res video device has 192K of video

memory, a 25 pin analog RGB video connector, and requires no external power supply. Gary demoed the 9938 prototype but will be selling the 9958 version for \$179 soon. I own a Mechatronic 9938 device and love the added features on the 4A including the 80 column support, since the Mechatronic device is no longer available I am glad to see others pursuing these expansion options. (Asgard plans to be coming out with a Mechatronic "CLONE" in 9958 version too, Asgards will be an external device with power supply and a DSR; OPA's does not have a DSR on the board.)



\* T and J Software demonstrated a new program called "Hardback" by Mr. Tom Freeman. This program is a miracle for those who own the Myarc HFDC and wish to back up their hard disks. Also demonstrated a program called "The Bugger".

\* Other hard drive news for the TI came when ESD announced its official shipping date for their new Hard/Floppy controller. Mr Shane Truffer (President of ESD and the designer of the controller card) along with yours truly (Chris Pratt) fielded questions after the announcement. ESD also held a 3 1/2" 1.44MB floppy drive give away to promote their new controller which is able to control the 1.44MB floppy drives.

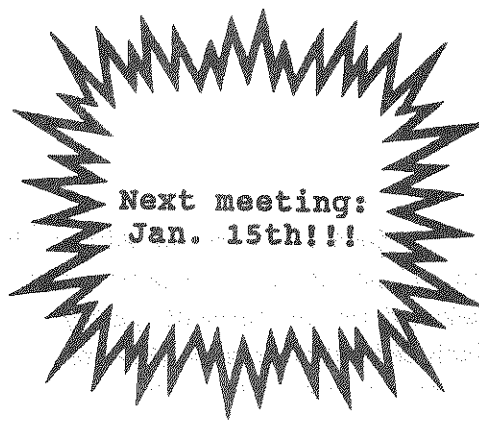
\* Rave 99 demonstrated their new PE/2 expansion box which is very sleek looking and allows for the user to install the 99/4A motherboard or the Geneve in the chasis, with other TI peripheral cards, hard drives, floppy disks, and with the Rave XT keyboard allows users to change the look of their TI. The only draw back I can see is that although they allow for the plugging in of command modules however it is a little awkward with an extension calbe emerging out of the side of the box. However, this box offers a something new for the TI community and that is a 16 bit bus in the expansion slots. They have added an extra 36 pin connector to each of the 60 pin connectors to provide future designers of peripheral cards the option of adding 16 bit performance to the TI world.

There was so much more at the show but unfortunately I did not have the time to document everything.

CDP

-WP♦

FEST WEST 91 FEST WEST 91 FEST WEST 91 F  
 E Come Help Us Celebrate The E  
 S TI-99/4A's 10th Year S  
 T Anniversary T  
 W UGOC, in association with the W  
 E Pomona Valley UG is hosting E  
 S FEST WEST 91 S  
 T THE HAPPIEST FEST ON EARTH T  
 9 Across the street from 9  
 1 Disneyland PLUS many more 1  
 F attractions in the area for F  
 E the wife/husband and kids to E  
 S enjoy while you meet inter- S  
 T nationally renowned TI T  
 9 entrepreneurs, enthusiasts, 9  
 1 and innovators. 1  
 F PLAN YOUR THREE DAY WEEKEND NOW F  
 E Fest dates are FEB 16 & 17, 1991 E  
 S The Fest will be held at the S  
 T Ramada Main Gate, Anaheim T  
 W Toll Free 1-800-447-4048 W  
 E Special rate to fest goers E  
 S (\$55.00 per night) S  
 T Only 50 rooms available at this T  
 9 rate. Make Reservations early. 9  
 1 Travel arrangements may be made 1  
 F by contacting Travel Concepts F  
 E Ruth Dickey E  
 S (714) 778-5459 S  
 T Stay tuned for future T  
 W announcements on this BBS, W  
 E the UGOC BBS (714) 751-4332 E  
 S or write to: S  
 T Fest West 91 Committee T  
 9 C/O Bill Nelson 9  
 1 11692 Puryear Lane 1  
 F Garden Grove, CA 92640 F  
 E FEST WEST 91 FEST WEST 91 FEST WEST 91 E  
 S  
 T



## CLASSIFIED ADS

**Wanted:** TI-99/8 computer.  
Call 301-322-6150 or write:  
Chris Pratt  
5613 Hawthorne Street  
Cheverly, MD 20785-1118  
with information.

**For Sale:** TI Hardware.  
RS-232 Card -- \$60.00  
TI DS/SD Disk Controller -- \$30.00  
32K Memory Expansion -- \$30.00  
Call or write above address. Ask for  
Chris.

**For Sale:** TI-99/4A Consoles  
Black & Silver -- \$15.00  
Beige -- \$20.00  
Speech Synthesizer -- \$15.00  
TE II Module -- \$5.00  
TI Modem 300bps -- \$8.00  
See John Drennen at the meetings or  
Contact him at:  
455 Tenth Street  
Struthers, OH 44471-1050  
216-755-7550

Classified ads may be placed by any member of the West Penn 99'er User's Group free of charge. Please send ads directly to the editor or give to Mickey at the meetings. The normal deadline for submission applies.

-WP♦

## Best Buys / Jan. '91

\* 2400 Baud modems --  
Whether you are ready to upgrade from 300 or 1200 or are going to purchase your first modem, this 2400 bps external fully Hayes compatible modem from T-NET Communications Corp. might be for you. They sell for \$79.95 + shipping + 3% for credit card orders. To order call toll free: 1-800-826-6336.

\* Diskette Drives --  
The price of floppy drives have dropped drastically since the early TI days. One can now purchase two 3½" half height drives for the price of 1 SS/SD full height many years past. Anyway, the best buy on 3½" drives comes from Soft Warehouse. They have Sony and Teac 1.44MB drives (personally I like Sony better) for \$69.00 ea. Call: 1-800-451-SOFT. Soft Warehouse deals with mail order but also have many stores set up throughout the country, there may be one near you.

**Best Buys** are the editors choice for products that are compatible with the TI and are based upon the editor's personal experiences with the products listed in this column. Items are selected on the basis of quality, price, and performance. Suggested vendors are sometimes included either because they are the only ones who carry the product, or because of outstanding customer support from the vendor.

-WP♦



# SLIDING BLOCK PUZZLES -- SERIES I

## BY NORMAN ROKKE

Today, literally hundreds, perhaps thousands, of sliding block puzzles have been created, though most of us are only familiar with Sam Loyd's infamous 14-15 puzzle, which first appeared on the market back in the 1870's.

Hopefully, our sliding block puzzle series will help bridge this puzzle gap by introducing you to some of those other, less-familiar, but just as addicting, sliding block puzzles that have been created over the years.

There are three different puzzles in *Sliding Block Puzzles -- Series I*.

Puzzle #1 consists of nine blocks of different colors, and can be solved in a minimum of 59 moves. Puzzle #2 contains ten blocks of different colors, and can be solved in a minimum of 81 moves; and puzzles #3, consisting of 11 different-colored blocks, can be solved in a minimum of 90 moves.

This program is ideal for folks of all ages, and even comes with a save game feature, just in case you need to stop in mid-game.

Caution, these games can be quite addicting, and a whole lot of fun!  
Are you up to the challenge?

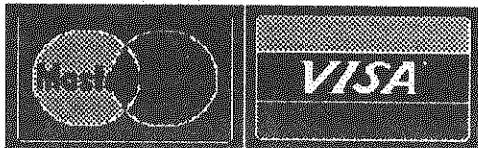
*Sliding Block Puzzles -- Series I* requires a TI-99/4A console, a color monitor or color TV screen, a disk drive system (minimum configuration of 1 SS/SD drive), 32K memory expansion, and the Extended BASIC Module.

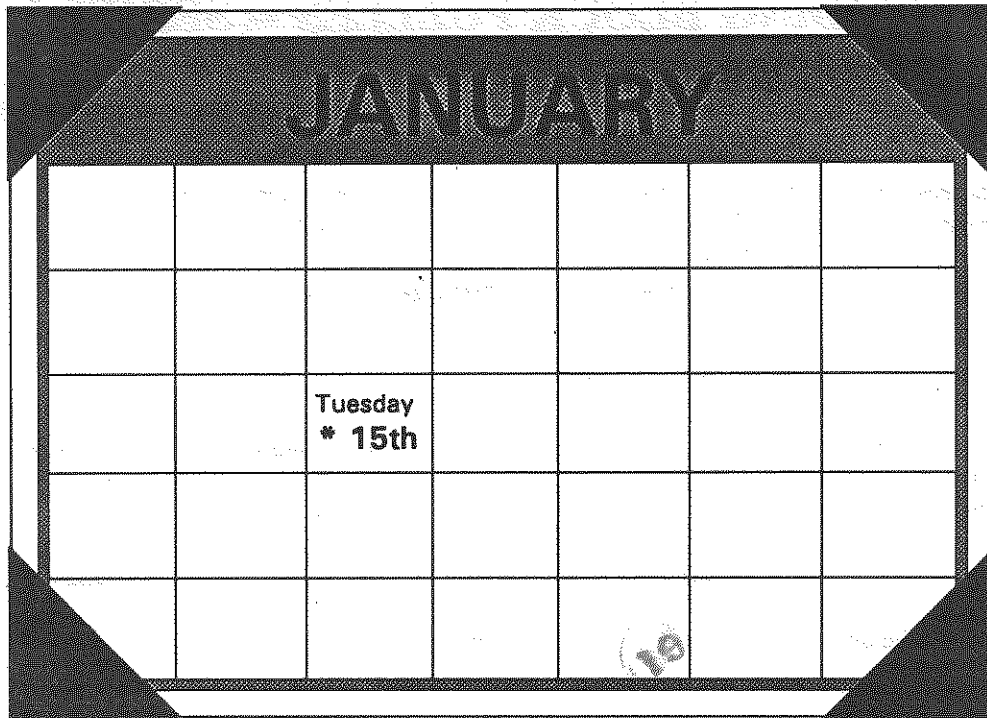
## MS EXPRESS SOFTWARE

### P.O. BOX 498, RICHMOND, OHIO 43944

|                                          |                  |               |
|------------------------------------------|------------------|---------------|
| <i>Sliding Block Puzzles -- Series I</i> | _____ X \$7.95   |               |
|                                          |                  |               |
| Name:                                    | SUBTOTAL         |               |
| Address:                                 | OHIO TAX         |               |
| City:                                    | \$1 PER ITEM S&H |               |
| State & Zip:                             | GRAND TOTAL:     |               |
| Card number:                             | Expiration:      | MC 4 digit #: |
| SIGNATURE OF CARD OWNER: _____           |                  |               |

**We Gladly  
Accept:**





**The West Penn meeting is on the 15th of this month.  
Mark your calendar!**

**WEST PENN 99'ERS**

% Mike Sealy  
RD #1 Box 184  
Toronto, OH 43964

**Please note change of address!**

**ISSUE NUMBER 65**

January 1991

**FIRST CLASS MAIL**



PLEASE RENEW 901231  
MICKEY SCHMITT  
196 BROADWAY AV  
LOWER BURRELL PA 15068