FOR THE RECORD
by: Judy Muir

Yes TI friends, yet another substitute for our secretary, who takes the summer off. The meeting came to some kind of order on time (7:32PM). I read the minutes, since the newsletter didn't make it to press in time. The newsletter staff hopes there was no inconvenience to anyone, we just keep in mind that this is all volunteer and there are more important things in life.

The President's Appreciation went to Bob Sandusky for finding us a meeting place and Ralph Vasko for doing the minutes for June. Bob then presented the Librarian's report--2 additions--Online Grapevine and CSGD Label Maker.----Paul Brock stated the conversion to Page Pro Disk from Instances.----Dick Ohi has Barry Travers articles on assembly.----Mike Sealy reported having received, today, a newsletter from the Chicago club with the results of their programming contest. One of the awards (I think 5th place was won by our own Stan Katzman (he forgot he even entered).----The President and Vice President will do the semi annual inventory of club property after the meeting if time permits.----There are still available to members, fans, power cables & monitors.----Art Gardner proudly turned over to Mickey the first $100.00 return from the reinker. This has been his project from the beginning and has shouldered the responsibility for the past year.----The cassette and module library is available at every meeting thanks to Norm Rokke. Also signup for the Lima video tape, one at a time please, the listing of contents should be published in this issue. It was composed by Mickey. She is also putting cassette based articles with additional information from other users, giving them due credit of course. This will be a nice addition to her cassette booklet. A review of the current Micropendium was presented.----A letter from Chris Bobitt announced some changes with Asgard Software which should make a good thing even better. The staff has been increased by 100 percent with the addition of Harry Brashear. This is expected to speed the turnover of orders and other services, not to mention Mickey's royalty checks.----A discussion about the differences between TI Base versions 2 & 3.----The was no new OnLine Grapevine disk for this month.----Check your newsletter for more info for the club t-shirts, both PUG & West Penn are checking out various approches.----Demoed were Coney Games & Tips ver 1.8. In addition to raffling off these there was also a Memorex disk case and 20 disks and a package containing all of the Tips Ver 1.5 thru 1.8. This package was donated by Bob McGinity (he is liquidating all of his TI equipment. The highlight of the evening came with to demo of Gary Taylor's "BEIGE" system, including his Casio with MIDI interface in a very dark shade of beige.----On that 'note' we ended the festivities at 9:22. Don't forget to come to next month's meeting if for no other reason than to find out who the secretary of the month may be!----Nitey night!

WEST PENN 99'ERS CLUB INFORMATION

NEXT MEETING DATE

AUGUST 20, 1991
7:00 P.M.

MEETING LOCATION

PENNS WOODS
CIVIC ASSOCIATION

JUST OFF ROUTE 30
N. HUNTINDON, PA

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	703-415-3964

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.	ASSEMBLY FORUM
8:45 P.M.	HARDWARE CLASS
11:00 P.M.	DOORS CLOSE

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS FOR THIS MONTH

* LATEST T.I. NEWS AND SOFTWARE DISCOUNTS

* LATEST NEWS CONCERNING OUR NEW T-SHIRTS

* ARTIST CATALOGER DEMO BY MICKEY SCHMITT

* ASGARD'S Y.A.P.P. - DEMO BY MIKE SEALY

* LATEST TIPS GRAPHICS CATALOG SUPPLEMENT

* "ON-LINE GRAPEVINE" DISK #3 BY VONRICKY

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP DUES!

$15.00 PER YEAR FOR INDIVIDUAL / FAMILY
$10.00 PER YEAR FOR ONLY OUR NEWSLETTER

CONTENTS FOR THIS ISSUE...

From the Editor...

Hey, everybody, you have no excuse this month for not attending the meeting. I am [your editor] travelling all the way from Washington, DC to attend the August meeting! If I can catch a flight on US Air from DCA, I think you can hop in your car. So, see you all there on August 20th! I am really looking forward to it.

Everyone check out the quiz on p. 5. I found it funny enough to include in this months issue.

I think we have an abundance of information this month. For summer supposedly being the slow time for the TI, we sure have plenty to report.

I want to thank Mickey Schmitt and Paul Brock for contributing to the newsletter this month. Everyone keep them coming.

See you on the 20th. [Unless of course I see you at the Pirates vs. Mets game on the 16th! How 'bout those Bucs!] CDP

WP♦

TI FEST WEST '92

February 15 and 16, 1992
Hosted by
The VAST Computer User Group
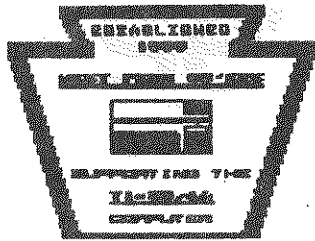### To be held at
Days Inn Phoenix/Camelback
502 W. Camelback Road
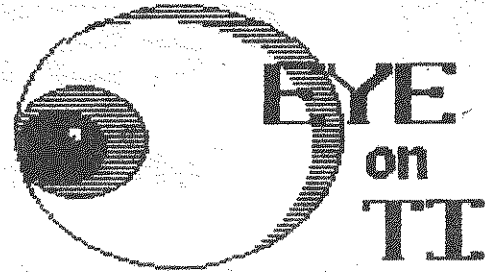## Phoenix, AZ 8501B

* Reservations MUST be in by *January 10, 1992*.
* Advance deposit of $20 MUST accompany your reservation request.
* Booth location assigned by TI FEST WEST '92 Committee.
* Special requests handled on a first come/first served basis.
* Transportation from airport: DAYS INN airport Courtesy Phones.
* For more information, call (602) 938-5446 or (602) 869-8145.
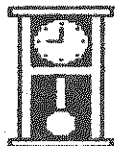* Mail this form to the address listed below.

BOOTH RESERVATION FORM
VAST Computer User Group
TI FEST WEST '92 Committee
4316 W. Altadena
Glendale, AZ 85304

DATES OF FEST WEST 1992: February 15 and 16, 1992	APPROXIMATE ARRIVAL TIME:	
YOUR FULL NAME:		
COMPANY NAME:	Transportation to and from Sky Harbor International Airport is available by using the Courtesy Phones for the DAYS INN Phoenix/Camelback.	NUMBER OF TABLES NEEDED:
STREET ADDRESS:		Telephone jacks needed:
CITY:		Electric outlets needed:
STATE: ZIP CODE:		

NAMES OF ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES: (Reservations include 2 FREE admissions.)

IF YOU HAVE SPECIAL NEEDS NOT LISTED ABOVE, PLEASE SPECIFY HERE OR ON REVERSE SIDE OF THIS FORM:

LOOKING BACK

EYE on TI

There seems to be so so much to learn about the TI computer that one can become intranced with all the complexity of the TI world that some things can be forgotten. This is one reason that I save almost all literature on the TI. There seems to be a time when nothing goes right and you can't remember how to do some things. So when I was looking for articals on Basic Assembly help, I found some old programs and articals that became quite some help. I thought that I would write about them.

In the West Penn news letter, if you haven't thrown the old ones away. January 1987 issue, Frank Zic started a fine artical called TIPS FOR THE BEGINNER. I just started to use disk drives not to long ago, and this infor- mation is realy handy. Because I didn't have the know how to run them.

How about all those articals and information that John Wilforth wrote. I liked the pro gram he wrote (Jan. PG.6) WAVE POWER! There is a lot of programs to be typed in that I didn't pay any attention to, because I didn't have a disk drive at the time.

In the May 87 issue there is a few photos of the old stand by's. Nice to see how it use to be.

I still look up the information on cassettes. Thanks Mickey for help in using my tape recorder. With the books that Mickey wrote I don't have to look to far.

In the Micropendium,I have compiled a lot of programs that I use all the time. Every once in while I look back in the old news letters and find something new.

I don't have a modem conected as yet, but there is articals on the subject in the Mar.87 issue. By Fred and Amy Mackey.

Now that I have a printer and software, I seem to need more info. So I am glad that I saved all the old news letters.

Forget how to design your very own cursor. then see Mar.87 issue,and start designing.

I am Proud to be a

WEST PENN 99er

with out their help I would never be this far with my TI COMPUTER!

THANKS WP.

R2D2&TI2   P.A.BROCK

KEEPING UP WITH CASSETTES

BY MICKEY SCHMITT

NUMBER 2

This month's article comes to us via an article that I read in the February 1991 issue of The St. Louis 99ers newsletter. It was entitled "Cassette Trick" and was written by Harold Hoyt.

If you have a tape recorder that apparently won't load data or programs to the 4A, try removing the red (microphone) jack while loading or verifying data. Put the microphone jack in only when saving data or programs to tape.

At this late date, Gene and I have discovered a nasty kink in the cassette Input/Output of the TI-99/4A. We think that we are the only people to have noticed this, and have never seen anything about it in all the newsletters we have read over the years.

Ordinarily, the cassette interface is a very well behaved part of the 4A. Wide variations of tape quality, recording levels and junky tape recorders work well with the 4A. Inexplicably, till now, some tape recorders refused to work with the 4A.

Most older tape recorders have a little impedance matching transformer which isolates the tape recorder's electronics from the monitor speaker. A look at the console schematic shows the monitor lead from the cassette recorder (white lead, pin 8 and it's return, pin 9) ungrounded in the console. In fact, the 4A requires a "floating", ungrounded input from the recorder since the 4A mixes a gating signal on the pin 8-9 combination.

Some modern tape recorders save the price of the output transformer by driving the speaker directly from an integrated circuit, which has no electrical isolation. Pulling out the microphone lead allows the tape recorder to "float".

The ultimate test of a computer literate user:

1.) Can you write your social security number in hexadecimal?
2.) What is the average access time of a floppy drive, in years?
3.) What is the ASCII code number for a British pounds symbol?
4.) How many pixels are there on a sixteen inch NEC 5D?
5.) What do the following acronyms stand for:

  a. RISC
  b. SCSI
  c. ESDI
  d. WORM
  e. TSR
  f. MCA
  g. VLSI
  h. CISC
  i. IDE
  j. TI

6.) Can you tell what COBOL, BASIC, FORTRAN, and PASCAL stand for?

7.) How many pins on a:

  a. Panasonic KXP-1124 printer
  b. Epson FX-86e printer
  c. HP LaserJet IIP
  d. Canon Bubblejet BJ-10

8.) Can you visually tell the difference between:
  a. a platter and a platen?
  b. a bit and a byte?
  c. an expansion and an explosion?
  d. a network and a nitwit?
  e. a Winchester 180 and a Winchester .22?

9.) What does IBM stand for:
  a. I Bought a Macintosh
  b. Itsy Bitsy Microchips
  c. Ignorant Brainless Morons
  d. Both (b) and (c)

10.) Can you convert between liters and megabytes? (You may use a calculator)

The preceding quiz was an excerpt from *The Ultimate Computer Exam*, a humorous stab at the hackers of the world, written by Michael W. Moyles. Some of the questions have different levels of humor, I found the quiz to be very funny. If anyone has any questions (or answers) regarding the quiz you may ask me at the August meeting (that's right, I'll be there this month!). CDP

WP◆   WP◆

Wanted: CorComp DS/DD Controller. Call Patrick Morris @ 301-647-3658 or Email on Delphi, PMORRIS.

Wanted: Plato Command Module, original with all documentation. Christopher Pratt, (703) 415-3964 801 15th ST, S. APT 605, Arlington, VA 22202-5017

For Sale: TI Expansion Box, w/TI floppy controller, Full Ht. DS/DD drive. $100. Christopher Pratt, (703) 415-3964

For Sale: Myarc 512K Memory Card modified for Geneve 9640. $150. Christopher Pratt, (703) 415-3964 Or Email on GEnie: C.PRATT8

[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 / Aug. '91

* Communications --
GEnie, Delphi, & CompuServe. All three major communication services are excellent sources for on-line information and services. This hacker frequents GEnie and CompuServe, but I have heard from many TI users that Delphi supports the TI the best (although all three do support the TI). Summer is going to be over soon and you may find yourself wanting to explore the world of telecommunications. If so, you may find yourself wanting to upgrade your modem. Whether you are ready to upgrade from 300 or 1200 or are going to purchase your first modem, this 2400 bps external fully Hayes compatable modem form T-NET Communications Warehouse 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. The best buy on 3½" drives as of 07/30/91, comes from CompUSA, 15160 Marsh Lane, Dallas, TX 75234 (Main office). They have Sony and Teac 1.44MB drives (personally I like Sony better) for $59.00 ea. Call: 1-800-451-7638. CompUSA (formerly Soft Warehouse) deals with mail order but also have many stores set up throughout the country, there may be one near you: Atlanta, Chicago (2), Dallas/Fort Worth (2), Denver, Detroit, Houston, Kansas City, Los Angeles (4), Miami, Philadelphia, San Diego, San Francisco/San Jose (2), Washington DC (2). (Cross-reference 3½" diskettes July '91).

Best Buys are the editors choice for products that are compatable 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 ♦

CONFIDENTIAL FILE

A monthly series
By: Christopher Pratt

From the TI echo these reviews of the TIM went by my screen...

TIM = TI-Image Maker

User review #1:

TI IMAGE MAKER is an internal console expansion board designed to be installed in your 99/4A with a few simple tools. TIM upgrades your current TMS9918 video display processor to the latest state-of-the-art and fully-compatible V9958 processor. This processor is also compatible with the V9938 used in other upgrades. OPA (Gary Bowser's company) used state-of-art CAD/CAE designing and top design engineers to bring you the best video upgrade for the TI in the smallest most compatible package possible. The PC Board containing the V9958, 192K of VRAM, a special ASIC device, a 25-pin monitor/expansion port for future video devices like digitizers, GENlock, etc. and the analog RGB video driver circuitry, has all been installed on a compacted 4" x 3" layout. TIM comes complete with:

* Step-by-step user installation guide
* Recommended RGB monitor guide, w/detailed specs. and pinouts for many different monitors to ease in interfacing TIM to your RGB monitor.
* Graphic demos displaying the power of TIM
* Our own GIF file viewer supporting the V9958
* Three disks packed w/fairware software which support the V9938/58 chips.

Also included with TIM is the improved SOB (son of a board), a $50 value, and after reading over the in-depth review of the V9958 processor, we are sure you will find that TIM is the best thing ever for your TI! $179.00 U.S. The SOB is an internal plug-in 2"x2" PC Board with a 16K EPROM and two ASIC's which allows you to replace GROMSs 0 and 1 in your TI console with OPA's own operating system featuring:

* 100% compatible w/99/4a operating system.
* Updated to be compatible with V9938/58 devices
* True lower case added to all modules/programs
* 4K micro-manager for cataloging floppy, ramdisk, hard drives, and from the catalog; delete, view files and run Assembly, Object, Forth or C99 programs.
* System on power-up.

User Review #2:

WELL, I HAVE FINALLY RECEIVED & INSTALLED OPA'S 80 COL CARD (TIM) AND NEW TI OPERATING SYSTEM (SOB). They were easy enough to install and the instructions are complete and detailed, all that needs to be done is unplug the 9918 chip & 2 grom chips, plug in the boards, solder one wire from each board to the TI board and smoke test. The hardest part was cutting an opening in t back of the case for the 25-pin DB plug. This plug is also the one thing th one has to be carefule with. Even though it is securely mounted to the TIM board, the only thing holding the TIM board in place is the pins going into th 9918 socket. This is unavoidbable, but one cannot insert or remove the plug without holding the socket which can only be done with the main board removed from the case, otherwise damage may occur to the pins that go into the 9918 socket. That's the bad part. There is no trouble using Basic like there is with the Mechatronics board [Ed. note, I have a Mechatronic card and have no problems using BASIC], nor is there the massive incompatibility problem. Some pgms that don't follow the proper rules won't work though, which are probably the same pgms that won't work on 9640... but this is explained in the instructions.

The design & construction of these cards is very professional. OPA does top-notch work! TIM, SOB fire up right away when the console is turned on. There is no waiting for them to get their bearings.

As for SOB, it contains 3 socketed EPROMS that can be updated if need be. It also contains a Micro-mgr that lists all the drives and the complete menu from whatever cartidge is stalled. It will list all the programs available from a gram device if it is active. One may catalog a drive & run a program from that drive, or run a program from a cartridge, or gram device. I haven't had any problems with any Micro-mgr functions. It also gives the prompts in a digitized voice. SOB contains a new character file (true lower case) & replaces the TI logo with OPA's logo.

Both of these cards work fine with the Horizon ramdisk & P-Gram+ cards, & have the same operational priorities as the original TI system. Both TIM and SOB have 1 year warranties and it's no secret that Gary bowser backs up his products. I AM VERY HAPPY W/THIS PURCHASE & IT IS GOOD TO HAVE 80 COLUMNS BACK. 2 SSSD DISKS W/PGMS, ETC. INCLUDED.

[Ed. note: The TIM can be purchased directly from Oasis Pensive Abucators, 432 Jarvis ST, STE 502, Toronto, Ontario Canada M4Y-2H3, (416) 960-0925, or from Bud Mills Services, 166 Dartmouth DR, Toledo, OH 43614.]

Next meeting August 20th

WP ♦

Call the PUG BBS:
300/1200/2400 bps
(412) 341-4820
24 Hours a day

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.
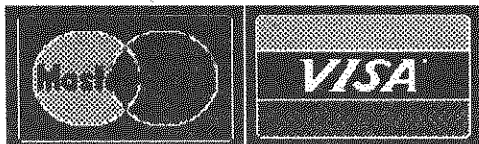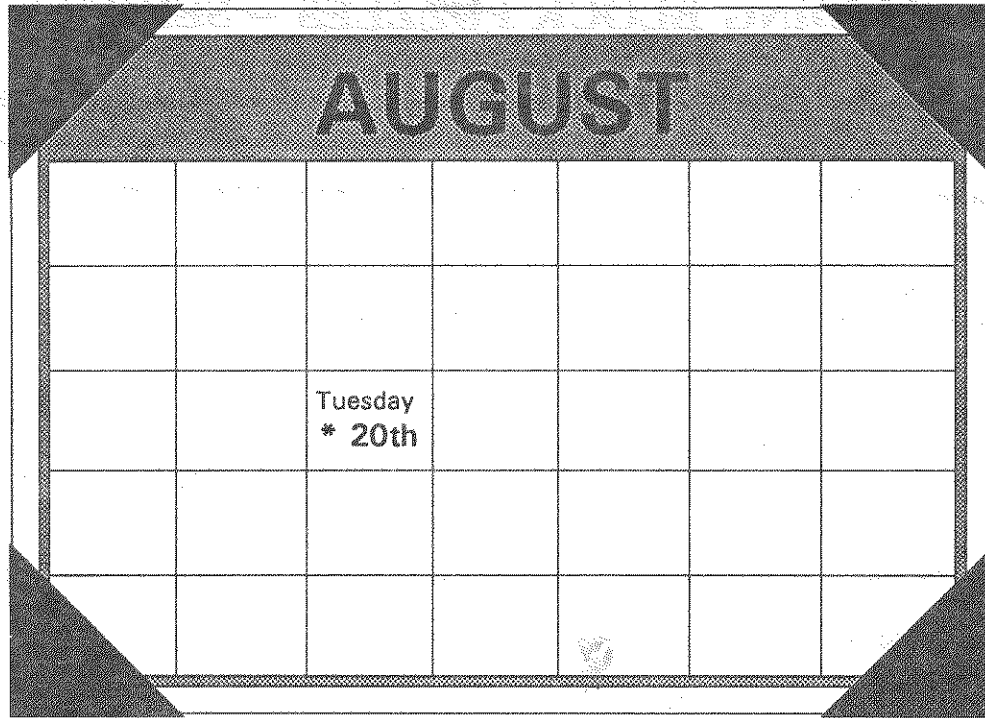
MS EXPRESS SOFTWARE
P.O. BOX 498, RICHMOND, OHIO 43944

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Card number:	Expiration:	MC 4 digit #:
SIGNATURE OF CARD OWNER:_____		

We Gladly Accept:

AUGUST

		Tuesday * 20th				

**The West Penn meeting is on the 20th of this month.
Mark your calendar!**

WEST PENN 99'ERS
% Mike Sealy
RD #1 Box 184
Toronto, OH 43964

ISSUE NUMBER 72
August 1991