



West Penn 99'ers



Supporting the TI-99/4A Home Computer

Established 1985

ISSUE #79

March 1992

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FOR THE RECORD

by: Frank Zic

The February meeting started at 7:15 PM. sharp, even included a 2 minute warning as to when the meeting would start. The first order of business, as usual, was Mickey giving thanks. Appreciation was given to Mike Sealy, Norm Rokke and Paul Brock for having selected a sample disk to study and sometime soon, put on a demo on their disk. Next she gave thanks to Judy & Ralph for their efforts in working on the Newsletter. Lynn Gardner gave a favorable Treasurers' report. Then Bob Sadusky gave his Librarians' report. He said TIPs manipulator would be available and Star Trek music and graphics are available. Von Rickys', OLGV (downloads from the Delphi BBS) series 1-8 were for sale at \$1/disk. Anyone wanting to demo TI Casino or Mail Room are welcome to pick-up the disks from Mickey. Bob also announced that he is working on cataloging the entire library. What a guy. Bob, I do a little woodworking and was impressed with the nice gavel you made. I'm not sure that it is safe in Mickey's hands though. Paul Brock will continue with his NL graphics and index. Nice touch Paul.

Old business- Two WP T-shirts are still available, a 32K card for \$20, \$1 ribbon re-inking, 3 1/2 inch disks- 5/\$3, TI Tax program for 1992, loaner modules and cassettes, disks and sleeves and much more is available at every meeting. Still some problems with the timing of the newsletter, working on it. Gary reported the BBS still needed some work and that it would be fixed soon and with the newest, just released program. No kidding he said soon!

New business- Someone sent hi c key a postcard stamped from Pittsburgh, teasing her about her favorite drink, Pepsi. She said she thought she knew who it was from and was planning to get even next month. Wonder what she has up her sleeve?? Articles to check in the Micropendium from Mickey are; p2 Tex-Comp module sale, p32 with no comment (look it up), p33 Artist card shop, also p33 TI-Casino update along with its announced contest. Also check the 1992 Fairs on p5. Next on the program was Mike Sealy reporting on his visit to Fest West '92. ESD had a wire wrapped version of their new card there. They are waiting for the DSR to be written and tested and then into production. TI used equipment sale were many and very reasonably priced.

No demos were given this evening; as the extra large raffle took up a bit of time and offered a nice time for a snack break. Thank you Lynn or Art Gardner for bringing in the 2 delicious cheese cakes. The prizes were a box of printer paper, TI Logo II, TIP's Manipulator, 3x5 form cards, Video wiping cloth and printer envelopes. What a rumble. BTW, there were two double winners. Which is kind of unreal. Near the close of the meeting an old personal nemesis joined our group and we barbed about the good ole days when he and I alternated writing the minutes of the meeting. None other than Ed Bitner. He said he enjoyed the minutes better back then. Wonder what he meant by that? Oh! well.

May the good 4's be with you.

I am sorry to report to everyone that February 27th, Thursday evening, at approximately 6:00 pm, Jerry Petrulak died from a massive heart attack. Jerry was a lively part of our TI community. We will all miss you Jerry.

WEST PENN 99'ERS CLUB INFORMATION

NEXT MEETING DATE

MARCH 17, 1992
7:00 P.M.

MEETING LOCATION

PENNS WOODS
CIVIC ASSOCIATION

JUST OFF ROUTE 30
N. HUNTINGDON, PA

LIST OF WEST PENN OFFICERS FOR 1992

PRESIDENT:	Mickey	412-335-0163
VICE PRESIDENT:	Norm	614-264-6442
TREASURER:	Lynn	412-835-4304
RECORDING SEC:	Frank	412-751-6065
CORRESPONDING SEC:	Paul	412-478-2754
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
9:45 P.M.	DEMOS AND NEW INFO
9:45 P.M.	SOCIALIZING
11:00 P.M.	DOORS CLOSE

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS FOR THIS MONTH

- * LATEST T. I. NEWS AND SOFTWARE DISCOUNTS
- * DOUBLE SPEECH! - DEMO BY JOHN WILLFORTH
- * BABA BREWERY LABELS DEMO BY NORM ROKKE
- * DEMOS BY OUR VERY OWN "MASTER GAMESMAN"
- * "ON-LINE GRAPEVINE" DISK #8 BY VONRICKY
- * SURPRISE DEMO - FROM ONE OF OUR MEMBERS

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From the Editor...

While thinking about this month's issue my mind wondered back to my school days. I recall one afternoon in late 1983 when my best friend was taunting me because as he put it my computer was a lemon. Well it is quite some time later and the TI, in my opinion, is still going very strong. Who can debate this after the Fest West '92 show in Arizona last month? Sure some groups are experiencing a lack of participation, but the community is still whole. There is more hardware and software available for the TI-99/4A now than ever before. In this issue I have published some of the evidence. ESD had an update at the faire and in this issue. New companies are emerging like ttc. People and organizations are working together as demonstrated in the new standards being defined by The National Committee for the TI Standards (NCTIS). But it is more than just the above mentioned that keep the TI world going, it is the people who are so special.

Please help your club's newsletter by submitting articles for publication. This allows YOU to directly influence the direction of OUR newsletter. Conveniently drop off your submissions to Mickey at the meetings [or whenever you may be fortunate enough to see her], or just as easy drop it in the mail directly to me:

Christopher Pratt
801 15th ST, S. APT 605
Arlington, VA 22202-5017

If you have any questions please feel free to call either of us [phone number on left].

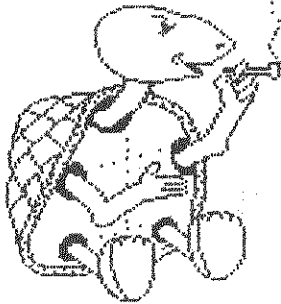
Happy St. Patrick's Day everyone. I wonder if the meeting will have anything special this month as it falls on a holiday?

CDP

--WP*



PAULS PAGE



This is a special edit. Many of my news items are being corresponded by members. I am going a little slow right now. I am looking forward to the new job.

I hope that I can do as well as Mike. Last month I received a box of news letters from the meetings, most of the material was out of date. I found some interesting articles that were of interest to me. There is a lot of information that is available that could be used to locate.

I would like to have some suggestions on how to get that information to our members. I know that no one likes to spend a lot of

time searching for the information. Most of the material is out of date, but there is some things that you are interested in. I will try to organize it and try to make it a little easier.

I have noticed that some of the news letters have articles on certain software and hardware for example the Spirit of 99 the news letter of the Central Ohio Ninety-Niners Inc. has several pages on TI-BASE. The P.U.C. Pittsburgh Users Group has articles on MODEMS.

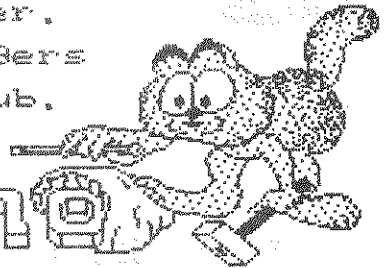
Right now there is a lot of material that I haven't gone through. I will do my best to break that material down and give you a report.

There is hundreds of news letters, so I may not be able to list all that is in every one. I am glad that there is an exchange of news letters, so that we can keep informed of what is going on in the TI world. I remember when I needed help and everyone came to my rescue.

Here is what I have found so far.

1. TI Slaves and Oaden 6/91 page 1. Meeting started with the Oaden meeting. By Micky Roberts. By Micky Roberts. Page 188. By Ron Wilcott.
2. Hooser Users Group 2/91 page 14. Kids Korner a take in program for the grandchildren.
3. Nutmeg News 1-2/91 page 20. How to buy new floppy disk drives.
4. Gillford 99'ers 3/91 page 20. Take in program on direct sound control.
5. Spirit of 99 2/91 page 17. Large Database don't mess with them. By Martin Smoler.
6. Ozark 99'ers News 1/91 page 8. Tigerclub Software on Laneway's.
7. Great Lakes Computer Group 2/91 page 6. Software-Hardware Hints.
8. Ozark 99'ers 4/91 Front Page- Special TI-Artist Users disk by Leland River.
9. Gullford 99'ers 1/91-page 20. Desk Top Pub. by Bob Carmone.

MEMO



Well that is just about all I have for one page. I hope that it will help. If you need some information you can call. I don't have an answering machine!

Special thanks to Micky for taking that other box home. I might not have got this article finished.

Made in the U.S.A.

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PRESENTS**



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FOR TABLE INFORMATION CONTACT:

**RON WILLIAMS
14 EAST STREET
AVON, MA 02322-1913**

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LIBRARY REPORT

NEW ADDITIONS:

ONLINE GRAPEVINE by Von Ricky of PUG

- Disk #1-----5/91
- #2-----6/91
- #3-----9/91
- #4-----10/91 DSSD
- #5-----11/91
- #6-----12/91
- #7-----1/92
- #8-----2/92

This continuing FREWARE series features a fast menu and text reading program on each disk to read and display the disk text files containing information about the TI community, hardware, software, authors, vendors, etc. Tutorials and ExB programs are sometimes included. Extended Basic required.

THE STAR TREK ALBUM by Ken Gilliland

This FAIRWARE disk contains music and graphics files based on the Star Trek TV series and the Star Trek movies. The disk files are menu driven. Extended Basic required.

TIPS MANIPULATOR, VERSION 2.10 by Patrick Powell

This FREWARE utility program is for TI Print Shop picture files. It allows you to rename and sort picture files into common categories. Extended Basic required.

WORK IN PROGRESS:

I am working on a project to catalog the entire West Penn 99'ers Library on disk. The catalog will be text files that can viewed or printed with TI Writer or any program that can access D/V 80 files. An example is shown below.

WP99ers LIBRARY DISK # 173

Diskname: MACFLX/065	Files= 4	Available= 27	Used= 331
Filename	Siz	Type	P
CLASSIC1	103	D/F 128	Y
CLASSIC2	95	D/F 128	Y
PROPOSAL	61	D/F 128	Y
WHOPEE!	72	D/F 128	Y

Bob Sadusky, West Penn 99'ers Librarian

--WP4

From: Beery Miller
To: All
Subject: Genie Msg to TI-ECHO

Msg #52, 02/25/92 05:21pm

Category 14, Topic 1
Message 27 Mon Feb 24, 1992
J.WHITE28 [Jeff] at 20:57 EST

Today I downloaded two programs which will be very useful to me while I restore my hard disk to reduce wear-and-tear. These are Program File Compressor by Koen Holtman, and ARCHIE by Jim Reiss. I proceeded to use PFC on Disk Utilities by John Birdwell, Archiver III by Barry Boone, and ARCHIE. All went fine until I ran the compressed ARCHIE file, which I had named ARCHIE-PFC. The ARCHIE title screen was glitched at the bottom, with garbage characters following: * Press any key to proc

I checked the original ARCHIE file, and sure enough it runs fine. This missing characters were "eed *". That is five missing characters, so I had a pretty good idea what had went wrong. So I loaded Disk Utilities and started looking at ARCHIE with the sector editor. What I found was "eed */" in the last six bytes of the file. Thus, PFC was somehow not finding those bytes. Looking at the six-byte loader header in the first sector of ARCHIE I found the value >0C08 (3080) in the second word, which is the actual length of the program, and the PROPER value to store there. At the seventeenth byte (Byte 0 is the first byte, so I am talking about byte >10 or 16.) in the ARCHIE file descriptor record I found the value >0E, which is the number of bytes used in the last sector of the file.

Then I started looking at Archiver III, version 3.03 which I had patched with the correction implemented in version 3.03g. At the seventeenth byte in its FDR was the value >B2, and in the second word of the six-byte loader header was the value >1FB2. Going to the last sector of the file, the ABSOLUTELY correct values should be >62 and >1F5C, since only >62 (98 bytes) are used in that last sector. But that does not really matter.

I checked the Disk Utilities files, and sure enough the values at the second word in the six-byte loader headers were six higher than they needed to be to properly load. I.e., for DSKU1 and DSKU2, the value was >2000, and each of the values in their respective FDR's at the seventeenth byte was >00 (signifying all 256, or >100, bytes were used in the last sector of the files). The values should have been >1FFA and >00, but this time it was fortunate they weren't. For the DSKU3 file, the value in the FDR was >F2, and the value in the six-byte loader header was >1BF2. If you are following closely, you will realize that the value in the six-byte loader header need only be >1BEC.

However, for PFC to work properly, the second byte in the second word of the six-byte loader header in the first sector of each program image file must be equal to the seventeenth (byte >10 or 16) byte in the FDR of that file. If that byte is >00, the first byte in the second word of the six-byte loader header must be incremented by 1. E.g., if the DSKU1 file had as its six-byte

loader header 0000 1FFA A000, before using PFC on it, you would look at the FDR for DSKU1, find that byte >10 has the value >00, and change the value >1FFA in the loader header to >2000.

Anyway, what started this was the glitch PFC had compressing ARCHIE. The value in its six-byte header that needed changing was >0C08. So I changed the value to >0C0E, and ran PFC on ARCHIE. This time when I ran the compressed version of ARCHIE, the title screen looked right.

Program File Compressor (PFC) has the bug in my opinion. But now you know how to work around it. Had the last few bytes of ARCHIE been program code rather than title screen data, unpredictable results might have occurred while running ARCHIE.

"Now the rest of the story." Program image files such as PFC1 and PFC2 can be packed with Archiver III as described in the ARCHIE docs, and then you can run them with ARCHIE. I created an uncompressed archive of PFC1 and PFC2, called it PFC, and now I have save disk space and a filename in the directory. I used PFC to change DSKU1 to DSKU2 into DSKUT to DSKUV, then packed the latter three files into DSKU, and now I can run DSKU with ARCHIE.

Of course, single files such as ARCHIE and Archiver III need not be packed, but compressing them with PFC works fine. ARCHIE compressed to 89% of its original size, Archiver to 79%, and Disk Utilities to 77%.

Now you may be wondering if you should compress your program files with PFC and follow that by archiving them with docs with Archiver III. I recommend that you check both ways. To support my position, consider the case of ARCHIE. The file I downloaded was 19 sectors archived with ARCHIE and ARCHIE/DOC. I used PFC to make an executable compressed file named ARCHIE- PFC, and when archived with the ARCHIE/DOC file I had a 22-sector file. Then I created a non-executable file with PFC called ARCHIE-P, and archived it with ARCHIE/DOC and got a 20-sector file. Obviously, for file transfers it pays to have the smallest possible file size. But that was only one case. I then used Archiver III to archive itself, and it created a 27 sector file than is not runnable until it is unarc'd -- a catch-22. However, the version of Archiver III compressed with PFC that I named ARC-PFC was 26 sectors. That is a reasonable way to distribute Archiver III.

I do recommend that ARCHIE executables not be archived with doc's, as an archive of the separate program image files, support files (like CHARA1), and doc files will normally be smaller. Nevertheless, it is possible to get a

small archive of ARCHIE executables by using Archiver III twice. Case-in- point: a compressed archive of DSKU/REF, DSKU1, DSKU2, and DSKU3 was 94 sectors. I compressed DSKU1 through DSKU3 into DSKUT through DSKUV, then packed them into an ARCHIE runnable file called DSKU. I compressed DSKU/REF with Archiver III, then packed it with DSKU, getting a file of 93 sectors. That is a savings of only 1 sector, but a big savings in time. Unpacking the DSKU file is a much quicker process than decompressing and unpacking the DSKU1 through

DSKU3 files. With ARCHIE, DSKU is runnable. BTW, the packed DSKU file of PFC-compressed files is only 74 sectors, while a compressed archive of DSKU1 through DSKU3 is 76 sectors. The DSKU/REF file compressed to 19 sectors with Archiver III (wonder what Clint Pulley's Text compressor would do).

Jeff White, on his never ending search for more space

--- * Origin: -9640 News BBS- MidSouth 99'er BBS **1-901-368-0112** (1:123/50)

-WP*

The National Committee for TI Standards (NCTIS)

Committee proposal, generated at Fest West 1992, Phoenix Arizona.

To form hardware, software and configuration standards to extend the life of the 99/4a and bring order to the community.

In these hard times, the TI community needs a direction to go. In the past other committees have been formed, such as ANSI to generate standards for hardware and software developers to follow. The standards set forth by NCTIS will aid the users and developers in providing a better software/hardware solution for you. Once standards are set, it is recommended that all current and new software is labeled as standard #1... compliant. These standards should have acronyms for easy recognition.

The following guidelines were discussed at a "Vendors Forum" on February 15, 1992 in Phoenix Arizona. These are recommended standards for the community to ponder upon until May 1992 at the Lima fair, at which time the standards will be decided and publicized.

LEVEL #1: TI 99/4a Console, 32k memory expansion, cassette, and EA/S loader (EA, Supercart, TI Writer, Multiplan, etc.)

LEVEL #2: Level #1 system PLUS: RS232, and DSSD Disk drive and controller

LEVEL #3: Level #2 system PLUS: at least 128k of CPU RAM, bankable at the >6000 space.

LEVEL #4: Level #3 system PLUS: 9938/58 VDP with 192k VDP RAM

PLEASE remember that these are recommendations generated by this first meeting, and are by no means locked in stone. We are presenting these ideas to you, the user, the developer, the market. Please take our recommendations and think carefully about them, and forward your ideas to your local user group, and then on to the Lima fair.

We appreciate your support.



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Dear Computer Enthusiast,

On 15 February 1992, in Phoenix, Arizona a new era in computing will begin. On that day ttc will introduce the "aTI", "xTI", and "mTI" which represent an advanced, expanded and multimedia respectively version of the Texas Instruments 99/4A home computer which was discontinued in October 1983. The 99/4A was chosen because many of its powerful capabilities lay dormant until this event. More importantly, the 99/4A is a concept computer, ttc is developing this concept hereforth to be known as "Concept 99." Like any new business I must have customers to survive but the dwindling base of 99/4A users may prevent Concept 99 from developing fully. *I need your support.*

The majority of Concept 99 software is under the trademark "t_ware" and is easily recogniabile. I have developed core modules (usable but in no way user friendly) for the following t_ware:

t_draw (a drawing program) t_chess (a chess program)
t_font (a bit map font program) t_sked (a scheduler program)
t_base (a dbase manager) t_write (a word processor)
t_learn (languge tutor programs: *Mid-East, European, Slavic, Asian*)

I can use these programs but to make them marketable, they must be completed, tested and most importantly have manuals written. To accomplish the above tasks I must know where to concentrate my resources. Please let me know for which program you would be willing to make a deposit in order to support continued development. Use the address above to correspond.

Also, if you are aware of any group willing to pay for custom software (especially, educational), I'm available to discuss terms.

Thank You

Chris Taylor
owner, ttc

OLD TRICKS FOR NEW (AND NOT SO NEW) USERS

by

JOSEPH COHEN

LIMA USERS GROUP

Though many of us tend to ignore most of the cartridge software for our computer, with the exception of TI Extended BASIC and, possibly, Multiplan, Logo II, Editor/Assembler, and TE-II (for speech), many of the cartridges are very enjoyable. In order to give you an excuse for searching your closets and basements looking for those hidden modules, I'd like to point out that many of them have undocumented features ranging from useful to interesting to amusing. Here are a few examples.

Many are probably familiar with "The Secret of Personal Record Keeping: Implementing DISPLAY AT and ACCEPT AT without Extended BASIC," published way back in 99'er magazine and reprinted in The Best of 99'er, page 76. Briefly, TI BASIC with the PRK module contains the commands CALL D() and CALL A() (similar to DISPLAY AT and ACCEPT AT). Presumably this also works with the Statistics module, but I do not have this one and could not verify it. I have been told that this is a result of the hybrid nature of certain modules, containing both GPL and BASIC coding. Perhaps someone knows or could discover additional undocumented features of this cartridge (I have extra PRK modules if anybody would like to experiment with it), and possible other cartridges with call console BASIC routines (e.g. Tax/Investment Record Keeping).

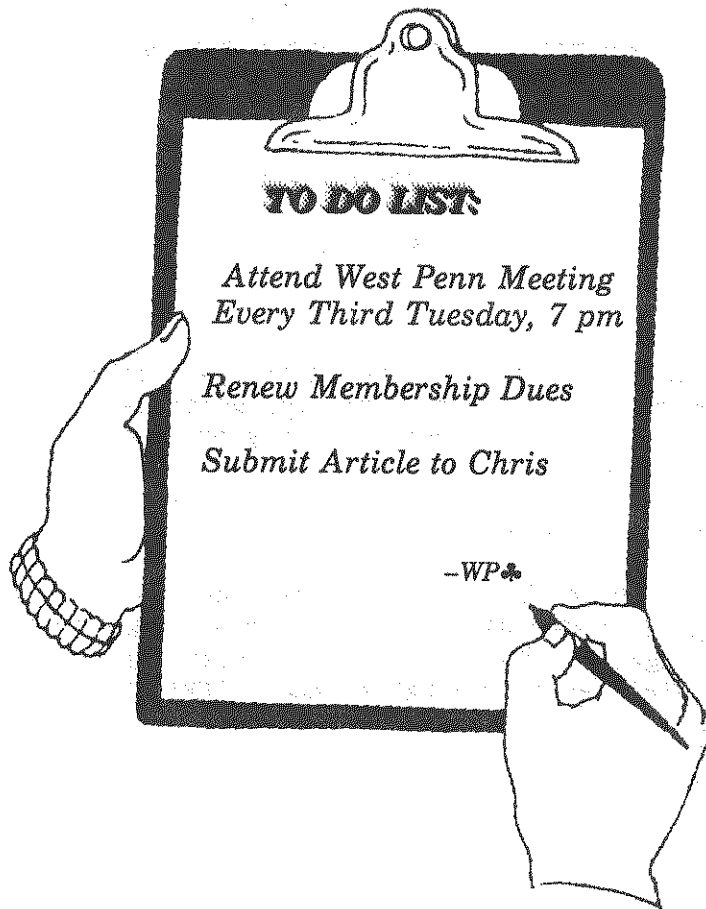
Next, the TI Disk Manager cartridge offers a proprietary protection feature that does not allow the Disk Manager to copy a protected diskette. To use it, press the FCTN X key ten times while on any menu screen. You will hear a beep (if your monitor has sound!) and >< will appear at the center top of the screen. Any diskettes initialized at this point will be proprietary protected. Each time you address them using the Disk Manager cartridge (e.g. to catalog such a diskette), a low-tone beep will sound (not present for unprotected diskettes), informing you that the diskette is protected. The protection information is stored in sector 0 on the diskette. This type of protection is ineffective against the sector disk copiers and has been discussed in the past. I wonder if anybody knows more about it. The DM-1000 offers protection and unprotection of diskettes; is it the same kind as the TI Disk Manager cartridge?

Now to a few game cartridges. Moonmine, Alpiner, Munchman, Munchmobile, and Hooper have a test mode, where you can select the starting level. So if you wanted to see what it is like to play at those levels you could never reach, here is a good reason to plug those cartridges into your 99/4A! The test mode is obtained by pressing SHIFT 8, 3, 8 at the game title screen (SHIFT 8 only, for Hooper), and on Burgertime, pressing SHIFT 8 gives a message: "Code modifications by John M. Phillips."

Have you always played Parsec as a one player game? Here is something different, for a two player team. If the fire buttons on both joysticks are pressed simultaneously, Spaceship Parsec will not overheat. Horizontal lines will appear on the screen, but they do not disturb the game and would allow, in fact, one to see the Bynites when they turn invisible.

This is certainly not an exhaustive list. If anybody knows about other "tricks," would they please let me know.

Joseph Cohen, P.O. Box 647, Venedocia, Ohio 45894



Oh, Wow!

WEST PENN 99'ERS

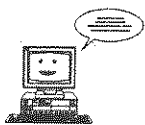
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Address Correction Requested

ISSUE NUMBER 79

March 1992

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