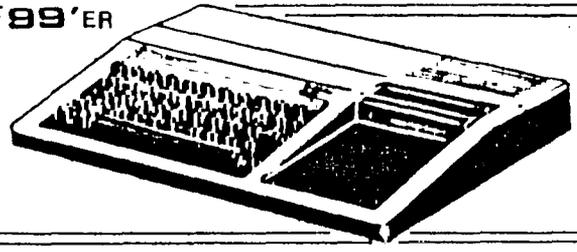


Roger B. Crampton, PhD
Wiregrass 99/4 Users Group
106 Hardwood Place
Enterprise, AL 36330

99'ER



NEWS

ENTERPRISE, ALABAMA
AUGUST 1984

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AUGUST MEETING

TUESDAY AUGUST 14

Room S-100 7:00 PM

Enterprise State Junior College

Two big programs: A demonstration of the OSCAR optical scanning bar-code reader for the TI-99/4, and a tutorial on adding graphics to your programs.

Don't miss this big meeting, it promises to be one of the best of the year.

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If you have any technical questions about your TI 99/4, don't hesitate to call Texas Instruments' Hotline at 1-800-842-2737 or at one of their regular numbers. Or you can write to them at the following address:

Consumer Services Manager
Texas Instruments
P.O. Box 53
Lubbock, Texas 79408

I called a few days ago with a question about the Personal Record Keeping command module. The girl on the phone was very nice, transferred me to someone who knew more about the subject, and in just a few days a packet of information concerning the PRK Module's special capabilities arrived in the mail.. Apparently TI is still responsive to our needs. Give them a try next time you have a question.

Roger Crampton recently spent a month in the hospital getting an overhaul and half-century checkup. He's well now and at home, but his activities are going to be slightly limited for awhile. According to Roger, the worst part of being in the hospital was not having his computer so he could play pac-man.

If any of our members own a Gemini 10 or 10X printer they can get a free TI-99 addendum to the Users' Manual by writing to:

Cherie Maddocks, Technical Support
Star Micronics, Inc.
3 Oldfield
Irvine, California 92714

This free addendum contains a 12 page list of special instructions and programs for the TI-99/4, along with DIP switch settings and also tips for using italic style type and other features. Also info on graphics. Send for yours today.

There have been additional talks with the Winegrass MicroComputer Society concerning a merger. No decisions have been made, and we would appreciate your ideas concerning the benefits and disadvantages of throwing in our lot with them.

As you may already know, they are larger than us, but have very few members who own TI-99's microcomputers. Their group represents Apple, Commodore, IBMs, etc. They are not as old as we are, we were the first users' group in the area. And they meet on Saturday mornings rather than weeknight evenings.

Let us hear what you think of a possible merger. Of course, the officers don't have the power to do anything without a vote of the general membership, so you'll have a chance to voice your opinion, if the officers decide to pursue the matter.

SMART PROGRAMMING GUIDE™ FOR SPRITES 5⁹⁸

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This guide will show you some of our professional programming secrets on how to: Use CALL PEEK • Get sprites to pick up objects, eat dots and lay down a trail. • Shoot sprites without missing a coincidence. • Make one sprite chase another. • Easily convert sprite rows and columns into graphic rows and columns and visa versa. • Generate moving sprite patterns. • Use 3 different CALL KEY or CALL JOYST examples for moving sprites. • Write a GENERAL BAR GRAPHING program (to one pixel accuracy) that shows you sprites aren't just for games.

Full of fast running and Byte saving examples that you can use in your existing programs or combine together to write your own programs. Each example program is fully documented in a step by step method that is easy to understand. A TI 99/4 or 99/4A computer and the extended basic command module are required.

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FREE ADVICE

by Ernie Howell

Through experience, I can inform you that the only way to maintain a guarantee surge protection for your computer equipment is to remove the plug from the wall outlet.

While using electrical equipment for my home addition, I experienced an electrical surge - even with an ALPHADELTA spike protection, my expansion box was lost. Bad luck - you bet!

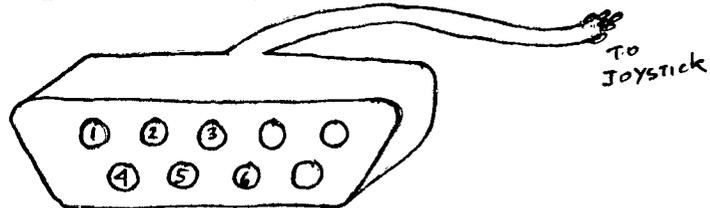
With the kindness of one of our users group members, Mr. William Bell, (who loaned me a box) I was out of service only a short time.

As a result of my experience, I would like to relay to anyone with timed TI equipment, TI has an exchange center located at 2125 Data Office Drive in Birmingham 35244 - phone (205) 988-4369. The exchange price is a fraction of the suggested retail that many of us had to originally pay. For more info see or call me.

Also if anyone is having trouble with their joysticks (I did) - it is a very simple procedure to modify one of the other brands to work with the TI-99/4A.

For example, to modify the WICO brand - first cut the end plug off the new joystick; second attach a standard plug from Radio Shack using the following color to pin hole as follows: and last plug in and run.

1. Green
2. Orange
3. White
4. Brown
5. Blue
6. Black



The entire job requires only about a half of an hour or so.

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H E L P W A N T E D

Folks, we could sure use some help with this venerable newsletter-- The typing is really not much of a problem, since most of us have some kind of a word processor to do most of our writing. (If you don't, you're missing much of what a microcomputer is best at! There are a couple of really good word processing programs in our group's program library that are yours just for the asking.)

The newsletter consists mostly of a pasted-up collection of articles from various sources, and we'd sure welcome submissions from more of our members. That way, Bubba would have more to work with when he begins putting it together each month. Sometimes he needs just a short five-line item to fill up a space, but he is always glad to get longer articles, both technical and for novices.

It's not really hard-- As the famous newsman Gene Fowler once said: "Don't wait for the idea or the inspiration. Just sit down with a blank piece of paper and stare at it until drops of blood appear on your forehead."

Get your article, items, ideas, letters-to-the-editor (don't think we've ever had one of those), or gripes to Bubba, blood stains and all, and watch for the next edition. Don't miss this chance to become a famous author.

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We probably can't repeat often enough the primary reasons for our existence-- since it's been a few months since these goals have been published, here they are again:

1. To provide technical assistance to owners of the TI-99/4 computer.
2. To assist in the solution of programming problems by pooling our expertise.
3. To operate a club lending library of programs on cassette (and recently also on diskette) on a five-for-one exchange basis.
4. To share ideas, demonstrate equipment, discuss new software and uses for the TI-99 microcomputer, and to provide instruction and advice.
5. To encourage and facilitate fellowship among people with similar interests through a mutual association of TI-99/4 owners.

There is much that we can learn from each other-- sharing our skills, talents, knowledge, and fellowship. It's sure nice to be able to call someone and ask "Say, how do you get your printer to feed the paper backwards by keyboard control?" That's a question I recently had occasion to ask a fellow member-- And he told me how!

OSCAR FINALLY ARRIVES

For several months we have been announcing that the program at our next meeting would be a demonstration of the Optical Scanning Bar-Code data reader, or OSCAR. As you know, we have had to substitute something else each month, but it's finally here! You can believe it this time, it's sitting on the floor right next to my feet. I hope to learn enough about it to be able to show it to you at the August 14th meeting. In fact, I've already lined up a couple of our younger members (10 and 12) to try it out, and see if it does what the advertisements say it will. About ten programs came along with the gadget, so we'll try to read them into the computer at the meeting.

TEXAS INSTRUMENTS



Dear 99er Users Group:

Many groups have requested the source code to TI-FORTH. Here it is! It's on two diskettes, and the attached instruction sheet should provide you with the instructions you will need.

I have also enclosed a diskette with some enhancements that were made to TI-WRITER and Multiplan. (Multiplan has been speeded-up a little, plus you will now have auto-repeat when moving the cursor around the screen. Simply replace these files on your Multiplan System diskette with these files on the enclosed diskette:

MPBASE
MPCHAR
MPDATA
MPINTR
OVERLAY

TI-WRITER has been enhanced to provide true lower case letters, eliminate the form feed while using the Formatter, and provide for a printer default while using the Formatter. You will need to add the CHARA1 file to your system diskette and replace the EDITA1 and EDITA2 files with those on the diskette. For the printer defaults in the Formatter, to get "RS232.BA=1200.LF" replace the FORMAL and FORMA2 files. The other default is "RS232.BA=4800.LF" and replace the FORMAL and FORMA2 files with the FORMA4800A and FORMA4800B file, while keeping the file names FORMAL and FORMA2 respectively.

This will be the last letter you will be receiving from me, for next month I will be transferred to Dallas to begin working for TI's Information Systems and Services Group. I have enjoyed your newsletter, personal letters and phone calls. I wish you all continued happiness working with your TI-99/4A.

Very truly yours,

William H. Barniea
Manager Home Computer Software

WHB/pr

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TI DONATES SUPER DE-BUGGER

In late June we received a surprise package from Texas Instruments. TI sent us a diskette containing their never-released assembly language de-bugging program utility. Apparently TI would like to see more TI 99 owners using assembly routines, and they have made it possible to really get into programs and do some fancy manipulations with this powerful editing and PEEK/POKE tool. The disk based program is available to any member who wants it, just make arrangements to copy it on a blank, initialized disk. So far, Ed Hayes, Ernie Howell, Lloyd Picou, Bubba Dejarnette, and Roger Crampton have copies. Get in touch with one of them to arrange for a copying session.

In addition to Super-Bug, we have also received a disk full of Assembly language music. Those of you who are interested in programming music should get a copy of this public-domain diskette. It is really unbelievable how fast Assembly language is, and how sophisticated an assembly program can be.

For members who have either TI-writer or Multiplan, we have received a diskette with enhancements to these two programs. Again, TI seems to be trying to mend some fences by donating unreleased materials to users' groups. The diskette contains several new subroutines that will replace some of the files on your present TI-Writer or Multiplan diskettes.

For advanced hackers who are using FORTH, we have two diskettes that have the source code for TI-FORTH. We are just beginning to realize how powerful FORTH is. If anyone would like to have the FORTH source code or the enhancements for TI-Writer or MultiPlan, make your arrangements to copy them. Don't forget, bring enough initialized blank diskettes to do the job.

FORTH ASSEMBLER SOURCE CODE

These two disks contain the portion of TI Forth written in assembler. The disk contents is as follows:

Part 1 (ASMSRC) is the dictionary entry for the 250 or so primitives that are present when Forth is booted. This is loaded into memory at >A000.

Part 2 (DRIVER) is the code for the I/O system and support for Forth. It contains the disk and screen I/O, the allocation of user variable space, the stacks etc. Because it is more efficient to rearrange memory from the way that it defaults in the Editor/Assembler, this section also includes (in the UTIL* files) those portions of the E/A utilities that Forth requires and assembles them to different addresses. A small portion of code is also placed into the console RAM at >8300 for speed reasons.

Also on part 2 is a program called BOOT. After Forth is loaded using ASMSRC and DRIVER, Forth can (after loading the file words) save an image of itself to the VDP RAM and write this image to disk as a program file. BOOT is used to read this image and to reconstruct the forth system from the image. When booting the Forth system in the normal manner, the file FORTH is the object code of BOOT and the file FORTHSAVE is the memory image of the system. Note that if the size of the system changes, BOOT will have to have some addresses modified to work correctly.