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TI 99/4A

USER GROUP



NEWSLETTER

\$1

FEBRUARY, 1992

HEAR YE!

by Justin Dowling

Here comes the fair! This is your chance to buy that hardware and software you've been wanting for your TI 99/4A or Geneve system.

And your income tax return is coming just in time. What good luck! Vendors and User Groups from all over the country go to these fairs. Our fair is no exception! (As you know, you can't go into a store and buy hardware or software for your system. So get it at the fair.)

Give me a 'phone call some evening when it gets to be about the last two weeks in March and I'll give you directions: (508) 295 2237.

Telecommunications with the TI or Geneve is getting quite sophisticated. The Sysop of a local Amiga BBS calls me a



**THE NORTHEAST
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SATURDAY
APRIL 4
1992**

jetsetter because I have been communicating with Jan Newenhuis of the Dutch User Group, trying to locate a German Group that can network with a TI user in Rumania named Stan culeso Marin.

Actually, I see a few of you folks on The TIEcho

Tom Ward set up on the BBS (617) 331 4181, N81. survival. Repair has replaced obsolescence as the main problem, the way I see it. The

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solution to either problem is the same. Network with others. One of our members, from Western Massachusetts, agrees that our User Group has weathered the worst of the storm and survived. These days, it doesn't matter much which computer you use as long as the computer you use is capable of doing the job! (The only problem Donald Fahey has to deal with: he just spent most of a day taking his ailing Olivetti printer to someone who can fix it. Old equipment. Repair; that's an abiding problem, but for us it has taken the place of abandoning this system.

Inside is an article on the newest addition to the Public Domain Library. DDM (D3.01) by Andy Frueh is a utility for your word processing. There is also an interesting article on how to use the Indent function when word processing. Inside is also an article on how to use telecommunications to send or receive a file from your friend on the phone, together with an article from Toronto about OPA's newest Hardware device which makes use of the Program Library feature II built into the console and then never used.

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HOW TO DO A PERSON TO PERSON DOWNLOAD by Jeff Overton

How many times have you wished that you could get a copy of a program from someone? You could go to their home and make a copy, or you could just wait until the next HUG meeting. But what if you needed that program yesterday?

If you own a modem you can get the program that you need in a matter of minutes. You call the BBS and get programs all the time. Why not call a friend and get the program that you want? I know you're thinking, "I have tried before and it didn't work." Well, I also tried it before and it didn't work but this time it did.

I will try to take you through step by step how it is done using TELCO 2.3.

The first thing you must do is call your friends (on voice) and tell them what you want to do. Tell your friends what program you want. If that program has more than one file your friends should archive it, or you will have to transmit the files one at a time.

Each of you must set your terminal to HALF Duplex. If you don't do this neither of you will be able to see what you are typing. FULL Duplex sends or "echos" the received characters BACK to the sender only if the receiving terminal "remote echo" is set on. Let me assure you this is not a good choice!! To go to HALF Duplex, you will press "fctn N" from the terminal screen, or use the Setup Terminal option screen & select option "1".

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It is also a good idea to make your Setup Terminal option "C" a CR/LF. Doing this will make your text automatically advance a line at the end of your line width, or every time you hit "ENTER". This is a good way to signal the other user that you are through sending text. Hit enter two or three times & your text will roll up that many lines.

One of you will have to put your modem in Auto-Answer. To set a Hayes compatible modem to Auto-Answer, type "ATSO=1".

This will answer on the first ring. The modem will return non Auto-Answer after it is powered off.

You now hang up & whoever is NOT in Auto-Answer calls the other modem. When his computer answers, you will see on your screen "CONNECT" or "CONNECT 1200" or "CONNECT 2400" (depending on your baud rate). This is just like the way that you call the BBS.

Now you can talk to each other with the keyboard and display screens.

If you are to receive the file, you must press "fctn 4" to select a transfer protocol. Both computers must be using the same protocol (Xmodem or Ymodem) and this should have already been agreed upon. In our tests Ymodem is about three times as fast as Xmodem. On paper, it should be 8 times as fast; Xmodem transfers 128 bytes at a time and Ymodem transfers 1024.

The person sending you the file must press "fctn 6" and select a transfer protocol. The sender must then enter the file name exactly as it is stored on disk. However the receiver can name the file to be received anything, as long as it follows TI disk file header rules: (not more than 10 characters, no blanks or periods--You know the rules). Just type in the file name and it's automatic from then on.

I am sorry to say, if neither of you have Auto-Answer I don't know how it will work. If only one has Auto-Answer it will still work.

With a little practice this will become as easy as file transfers to a BBS.
(Reprinted from the Feb. '91 HUGGER newsletter. The author is a member of the Huston User Group.)

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FRUEH WARE (Pronounced FREE WARE)
by Andy Frueh
Lima Ohio User Group

(This article was originally published in the February, 1992 Lima Newsletter "Bits, Bytes, & Pixels")

DV MANAGER, V3.01

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This is the third incarnation of a program that previously had flopped. To date, I have received only one or two donations. I understand why it failed; lack of features and poor design. Hopefully I'll change things with this new design.

Being a user of TI-Writer, I have taken interest in the complaints of other users. These mainly have to do with the lack of features, or TI-Writer lacking the ability to do many simple tasks. There have been many stand alone utilities for TI-Writer. Most of these do things such as stripping the carriage return marks or splitting up a large file. The bad thing is, they do one thing and one things only, and their interface is usually clumsy. What do I mean by "interface?" In the clone world, a program interface is how the program gives you information and how it lets you respond.

The ideal interface for the one 555D disk system 4A owner is the 40-column screen, since it most efficiently uses the screen. The 32x24 mode usually in Extended BASIC is awful.

Haven't you ever wished you could print a file with or without dot commands, view it, copy it under a different name (or the same name to a different disk), delete it or count its words and lines and still be able to freely return to your word processor, or any other Editor/Assembler PROGRAM file? DV Manager ("DVM") does this and more using simple menus and a 40 column screen (using Brad Snyder's screen routines in Extended BASIC). Of course, since this is an Extended BASIC program, it doesn't have the flying speed of Assembly, but the features that it contains, along with its ease-of-use, make up for the loss of speed.

DVM allows you to do several things with your text files. By "text file" I mean any Display Variable 80 file compatible with the Funnelweb or TI-Writer editors.

Some of the features DVM includes are: viewing a file, printing with the option of printing without dot commands, copy text files, compare, delete (any unprotected file), view or print catalog (prints in sub/super script so most catalogs will fit on a disk envelope), count words, search for a string of text, and create/edit up to two 66 line pages of text.

Some "niceties" are included as well. These features include the ability to set your own screen colors and load any E/A "PROGRAM" file. For example, you could load DVM using Disk Review of Funnelweb, work with DVM, then return to Funnelweb by loading the FW file. You may also quit to the title screen or extended basic, or boot a DSK1.LOAD. I have tested the program and it is crash proof and bug free (I hope).

Docs are on the disk. I am asking a \$10 "Trueh ware" donation if you like DVM. For an extra \$2 I will send you a nice printed manual. Money received goes into my college fund. I am about to start as a freshman at O.S.U. Lima, so the Jaguar and Florida condo will have to wait. Please send whatever you can. I welcome comments and greatly appreciate your support.

[You don't have to write to Lima to obtain a copy of this utility from Andy. But if you use it and like it, you should send Andy a contribution; the program is

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freeware, or Frueh ware, as Andy calls it. If you want it, Just send us a disk mailer, a formatted disk, and a dollar for postage. If you don't have that stuff, send \$4, we'll put it together, and mail it back to you. Or, if you will wait, this disk will find its way into our library and onto our BBS where you can download it on your own phone bill. -Ed]

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WHY DIDN'T INDENT (.IN) WORK?

by Phil Van Nordstrand and John Owen
JSG USERS GROUP

(Reprinted from the PUNN Newsletter)

At the May JUG meeting, we were showing a new member (Shannon Thompson) how easy it is to use TI-Writer Editor and Formatter to prepare and print a letter. Everything worked fine but the date on the first line, which did not indent 50 spaces like it was told to do. It did not move over one space! Then we tried the "CENTER" command (.CE I), and that didn't work for the first line either. Here are the formatting commands so you see if you can spot our mistake.

```
.IN 50  
May 20, 1991  
.LM 5;RM 75;AD;FI  
Dear Sir,  
.IN +5  
etc., etc.
```

After the meeting, we reread the INDENT (.IN) instructions in the TI-Writer Word Processor Manual, Pages 54, 113, and 143, but did not find the answer to the problem. After rereading all of the Formatter instructions from the start, we found that the FILL (.FI) command MUST be used WITH or BEFORE using the INDENT command. We suggest you correct your manual on Pages 54, 103, 105 and 143 with the following note:

"The FILL (.FI) command must be used with or prior to using INDENT (.IN) [or CENTER (.CE) command]."

It is a good idea to always insert the .FI command on the first line of every document that is to be printed via the Formatter. The only time you ever want to use the NO FILL default is when you want to print the text exactly as shown in the EDITOR (i.e., tables and columns, etc.). The NO FILL command (.NF), which is the default, prevents the Formatter from moving or adjusting any of the text, even though commands to do so are included. If anyone ever revises the TI-Writer program, please make the FILL command, (.FI), the default command. (Attention: Will McGovern and R.A. Green). It is needed 99% of the time at the start of a document.

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This change would prevent frustrating and embarrassing demos as described above when being given by senior citizens that have "RAM" (Random or Absent Memory) problems.

P.S. This demo shows why it is a good idea to bring a printer to your meeting. Many demos don't need one but Word Processing and Graphics demos need one. In fact, most programs except for games have a printed output, e.g., Multiplan, DM 1000, DISKU, Calendar programs, Scheduling programs, etc., etc.

(JSC represents "the Johnson Space Center in League City, Texas--ed.)

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TI dbits #54

by Steve Nickelson

(Reprinted from Newsletter 9T9; Steve Nickelson is the President of this Toronto-based User Group)

OPA ANNOUNCES AT THE CHICAGO TI INTERNATIONAL WORLD FAIRE....

POP-cart!

What is a POP-cart...? Well, first off, it stands for PILE OF PROGRAMS.

What does POP-cart do...? It is a totally new custom design by OPA that allows the TI user to easily order a "personalized" set of user-selected T199 modules/programs and have them "burned" into a POP-cart by OPA at the time of your order.

Hmmm, sounds great, but what advantage does having your own custom module do for me...? First, since the modules/programs are being inputted via disks at OPA, custom modifications can be done to the original TI module, like converting TE2 for 1200 baud or changing "TP" print options to "PIO". Second, since POP-cart can go up to 2 megabytes in size, you could have all your favourite modules at a single keypress via a unique new power-up menu. Third, it saves on power and ease of use for those currently using a widget.

Can I change it later on...? Sort of, since the POP-cart uses custom chips, only OPA can do changes, but we offer reasonable upgrades or updates for those changing their minds later or upgrading to more ROM memory space. Call for current prices on upgrading your old POP-cart. But it should be noted, that since POP-cart works via the TI console, you can easily buy a couple of more different "custom" POP-carts, and just change POP's when you want to. You can even use a POP-cart with a widget!

I think I'm sold on the unit, but what is the cost...?

Not bad, compared to the cost of original TI module prices. The basic model we are offering currently at the Chicago show has 128K of ROM and 128K of GROM for a total of 256K of memory, over 6 times the size of the "Extended Basic" module, so on average we can fit up to 5-7 modules/programs into the basic 256K unit. Of course, bigger sizes are available. For current prices please contact OPA by phone or letter.

You forgot to mention the cost...? Oh! For the basic 256K it is only \$95 U.S. or \$105 Canadian, plus \$4.50 for Shipping and Handling. Outside North America S&H is \$7.50. That price includes all the needed custom programming and PCBoard with normal sized cartridge module case, all ready to go!

Great! But, how do I access all the different programs in my new POP-cart...? The basic way is via TI's own GROM 0 code as POP-cart uses the function "REVIEW MODULE LIBRARY" (RML) feature built into all TI consoles. This untapped feature of the TI allows up to 16 different banks of GROMs to be selected via one module page per screen, using the last number key on the list to advance a page. The only problem with this: that on a packed POP-cart with lots of banks, it can take up to 17 key presses to get the last program available.

But didn't you mention earlier that you can choose a new module/program with an easy, one-key, menu selection...? For another \$25 bucks (half the cost of a real SOB), you can have all the software features of the basic SOB like easy module selection via a scrolling pop-up window, cataloguing of Assembly programs, Object code, Forth and C99 programs, via an easy to use power-up menu. So, for a total of \$120 U.S. or \$130 Canadian you can have the power and ease-of-use of SOB, (without any internal console modifications), plus all your POP-cart programs!

Sorry to sound stupid, but what is an "SOB"...? Well, in case you haven't heard, SOB stands for SON OF A BOARD, another product available from OPA since January 1991. It allows you to replace GROM chips 0 & 1 (the main TI operating system) with a new start-up system, allowing ease-of-use of the RML function, plus cataloguing and loading of most programs, without the need of a TI cartridge. Originally, the SOB was built as part of the TIM (TI-IMAGE-MAKER V9958 upgrade) package for the TI console, to allow us to make TI's operating system fully compatible with the newer V9938/58 video upgrade devices and to fix some problems the "correct" way. But recently, SOB has become a hot-seller for those just wishing to access the cataloguing/loading features, as it's a great way to load programs also for those without a ramdisk with a Horizon MENU program.

A friend has SOB in his console, what if I plugged in my POP-cart with the "SOB-like" add-in, what happens then...? Nothing, the SOB in the POP-cart is designed to look for a SOB in the console, and use the internal SOB first! Also, it should be noted here, that due to

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POP-cart storing so much "forever" (no batteries or disks, etc.), it makes for a great thing to carry to user group meetings or between systems, without ripping a ramdisk out of the PC box, or trying to stuff disks or old modules in your coat. The POP-cart is very strong and durable, and being the size of a normal TI module, it makes great for carrying around.

What else can POP-cart do for me...? Three more good features. One, on special request we can also burn in 32K disk-based programs, like RAPID COPY, Disk Utilities, ARCHIVER, and many more. Call or write to OPA for the latest list of 32K compatible disk-based programs you can request instead, or in addition to TI modules. Second, the "REVIEW MODULE LIBRARY" function also works auto-like under the TI's operating system, so accessing TELL's Text to Speech is possible via X/B, if both are programmed into the same POP-cart. This leads to the third feature: Newer programs written just to be programmed into the module to take advantage of the extra GPL space, etc.

Software authors reading this take note. Contact us (OPA) for a complete GPL/POP developers package!

Well, I guess that's it. What about the bare facts for ordering POP-cart...? We currently accept U.S. or Canadian currencies via personal or business cheques, money orders, or cash if paying in person. SORRY, at this time NO credit cards.

OPA Oasis Pensive Abacutors
432 Jarvis Street #501-502
Toronto, Ontario M4Y-2H3
CANADA

(416)960-0925 8am-11pm EST/EDT (voice)
(416)963-TITI 24 hours TI HOTLINE (voice)
(416)921-2731 Our 24 hour BBS (TI+TOWER), at bauds 300 through 9600.

POP-cart, basic 128Krom/128Kgrom (256K) unit: \$95 U.S. or \$105 Canadian with the extra "better ease of use"SOB
>>: \$120 U.S. or \$130 Canadian. (voice)

