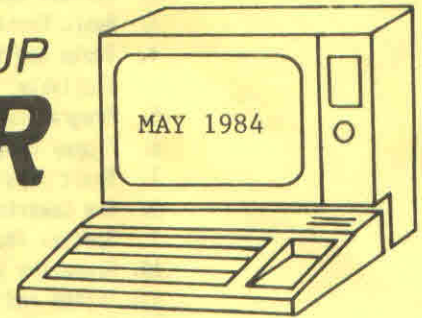


# CEDAR VALLEY 99'ER USER GROUP NEWSLETTER



## \*\*\*\*\* MINUTES FROM MAY MEETING \*\*\*\*\*

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by President Jim Green. Minutes from the April meeting were approved as printed in the April newsletter. The treasurer's report was modified to correct a typographical error in the Dividend Income category.

Old Business: A Basic programming course will be started in the next 30-days, with Jim Trainor instructing. The club will pay half the course fee for members.

Four committees still need chairmen for the next 12-months. Volunteers were requested to contact the officers. (See related article elsewhere.) Three people volunteered to help Chuck Moats with the preparation of the Newsletter.

The membership was reminded that the newsletter may be used for classified ads at no charge.

New Business: Pricing of software from the software library was questioned, with the idea that programs supplied on disk should be less expensive than those supplied on cassette. After discussing the matter, no changes were formally requested.

Each TI owner should have received a newsletter from T.I. and a catalog from Triton within the last two weeks. If you did not, add your name to their mailing lists by contacting T.I. at P.O. Box 53, Lubbock, TX 79408, or by phoning them at 800-842-2737; or by contacting Triton at 800-227-6900.

The Triton catalog shows a new expansion system from Myare for \$595. Myare will offer the user group a discount on a group buy. (Dhein's in Waterloo will handle this system for approximately \$500.)

Dave Beckwith presented the evening's program by explaining how to use Extended Basic to program sprites. After his presentation, the program committee (with the help of the 99/4A) gave away the door prize to Bob Walstrom.

After a general discussion session, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

For the Secretary  
Jim Green

## \*\*\*\*\* THE TREASURY \*\*\*\*\*

	THRU MAR 1984	APRIL 84	TOTAL
<b>INCOME</b>			
Memberships	\$1582.00	\$ 40.00	\$1622.00
Sales of software	598.95	40.00	638.95
Sales of cassettes	483.95	0	483.95
Programming classes	130.00	0	130.00
Dividend	8.70	0	8.70
Group S/W purchases	421.75	90.50	521.25

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3225.35</b>	<b>\$170.50</b>	<b>\$3395.85</b>
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## DISPERSALS

Receipt book	\$ 6.00	\$ 0	\$ 6.00
Meeting rent	95.00	14.00	109.00
Postage	195.20	28.48	223.68
Bank/Check charge	5.92	1.00	6.92
Cassettes purchase	500.90	0	500.90
Software purchase	64.00	0	64.00
Subscriptions	24.50	0	24.50
Class teacher salary	250.00	0	250.00
Class tuition refund	5.00	0	5.00
Address labels	24.18	0	24.18
Recorder purchase	109.19	0	109.19
System purchase	838.21	0	838.21
Advertising	54.60	0	54.60
Group s/w buy	512.75	0	512.75

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2685.45</b>	<b>\$ 495.48</b>	<b>\$3180.93</b>
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## ASSETS

Savings account	\$ 5.00	\$ 0	\$ 5.00
Cash on hand	24.30	28.00	52.30
Checking account	510.60	(352.98)	157.62

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 539.90</b>	<b>(\$324.98)</b>	<b>\$ 214.92</b>
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Ed Hayek  
Treasurer



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\*\*\*\* BOOKS AND SOFTWARE LOCALLY AVAILABLE \*\*\*\*

NEWSLETTER TOPICS

1. Next Meeting Reminder
2. Welcome Newcomers
3. Basic Course To Be Offered
4. Books and Software Locally Available
5. Programming Tips
6. Floppy Disk Use
7. Basic Tips
8. New Committee Chairmen
9. Special Thanks
10. Signalman Volksmodem-A review
11. Triton and TI Newsletters
12. Buy and Sell

Montgomery Wards, I have been told, now has books and software available for the TI. The software contains listings and cassette tapes. All kinds of new items are available, including some of the latest arcade games. Check it out!

Bruce Graves

\*\*\*\* PROGRAMMING TIPS \*\*\*\*

1. From the MICROpendium, formerly known as the Home Computer Compendium, comes a hint on other ways to clear the screen. If you're tired of using CALL CLEAR all the time, try replacing it with a CALL HCHAR or CALL VCHAR command. For example: "10 CALL HCHAR (1,1,32,768)" will clear the screen by sweeping it from top to bottom; or "10 CALL VCHAR (1,1,32,768)" will clear the screen from left to right.

Editor

2. From the COMPUTE! magazine comes some programming hints that may come in handy:

A. Do you want white characters on a black screen for the duration of a program run? Try adding the following to your existing program:

```
10 FOR J=1 TO 14
20 CALL COLOR(J,16,1)
30 NEXT J
40 CALL SCREEN(2)
```

The results will work fine on a color tv, but not so neat on a black and white tv. This is due to scan lines breaking up each letter into separate dots. For black and white tv's try using a CALL SCREEN(15). This will make the screen gray while leaving the characters black.

B. When listing a program in Extended Basic, press any key while the program is scrolling on the screen and the listing will stop. Press any key again and the listing will continue.

C. Have you ever written a program, resequenced it, and found line references to 32767? This is a common occurrence when references to non-existent lines are used. This will also happen, as I can relate from actual experience, if a power surge occurs at the same time you resequence. However, in this case, you may have to go back in and change all the line reference numbers back to what they were supposed to be.

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\*\*\*\* NEXT MEETING REMINDER \*\*\*\*

The June meeting will be held on the second Monday, June 11th, at the JA building located at 330 Collins Road, N.E., Cedar Rapids. The meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m. If you have any friends, or know of anyone, who has a TI 99/4A----- bring them with you.

\*\*\*\* WELCOME NEWCOMERS \*\*\*\*

We would like to welcome those new members who just joined us in April and May:

- |                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| Wayne Young      | Leo Young      |
| Norm McCallister | Dick Ferreter  |
| Jim Harrington   | Richard Scheit |
| Stephen Yuskis   | Al Ross        |
| Dave Reinhart    | Leroy Bopp     |
| Jim Harrington   |                |

\*\*\*\* BASIC COURSE TO BE OFFERED \*\*\*\*

Members interested in learning the Basic language fundamentals will be glad to hear that another Basic class is now being formed. The cost will be \$10.00 per person, with the club paying half the fee. Anyone interested should contact Jim Trainor at 365-2047 as soon as possible. The starting date and location will be determined by those interested in taking the class. The class will be limited to 25, so call before June 1. Anyone who is interested in learning Basic, but is unable to attend a weekly class, can contact Jim and set up private tutoring.

Jim Green



D. Did you know that Basic gives you 608 more bytes of available memory than Extended Basic? Extended Basic takes up some of the memory within the TI when used, but you can usually write a program more compactly when using it. So, the difference is of little consequence.

E. The sound generator produces frequencies from 110 to 44733 hertz, well above the limits of human hearing. However, the response of the sound section of most tv's fall off markedly above 2000 Hz---or at best, above 10,000 hertz. This means that you cannot, as sometimes written, use the sound generator to test the upper frequency limit of your hearing. It also means that frequencies above 2000 Hz may not sound the same on all tv sets.

F. When using Extended Basic, if you use the command "RUN CS1" to load a program from the cassette, the program will immediately load and then run. This is much easier than using "OLD CS1" followed by "RUN". The same thing will happen when using a disk drive. Use the command "RUN DSK1.filename".

G. Do you want to transmit lines of more than 80 characters to the printer? Open the output as "RS232.CR" or "PIO.CR" rather than "RS232" or "PIO". You must still end your line of output (by executing a PRINT statement that does not end in a comma or semicolon) before more than 80 characters have been transmitted. Doing so will not cause the printer to start a new line. The printer will stay on the same line until you explicitly transmit a carriage return (CHR\$(13)) and a line feed (CHR\$(10)).

This is particularly useful when you are using a dot-matrix printer in the graphics mode and using each character code for a single vertical row of dots.

H. The loss of resolution on the screen, that occurs with certain color combinations, is inherent in the way color is encoded onto the video signal and does not represent a defect in the tv set or modulator. For greatest sharpness, use black on gray or cyan.

John Elam

\*\*\*\*\* FLOPPY DISK USE \*\*\*\*\*

How long will a floppy diskette last? That's a question addressed by th Arizona 99 Users Group in Phoenix. Diskettes that are used daily should be replaced every four months or so if the data is important. They recommend that disk users purchase

premium quality diskettes only and maintain backup copies of important data. The author of the suggestion noted that his time-frame is conservative, noting that most diskettes will last longer. However, there's no point in taking chances, unless you can afford to lose.

Editor

\*\*\*\*\* BASIC TIPS \*\*\*\*\*

Try this on your computer:

```
100 CALL CLEAR
110 C=12
120 PRINT C=11
130 PRINT C=12
```

You should see two printed numbers on the screen. The first, from line 120, is the number 0. The second, from line 130, is the number -1.

This is the way your computer evaluates relationships. If the relationship is false, as in line 120, the computer returns a value of 0. If it is true, as in line 130, the returned value is -1.

This characteristic of computers allows very compact, time and memory saving, programming. Let's take, as an example, the business of moving a figure around the screen.

Here's one way to do it:

```
100 CALL CLEAR
110 R=12
120 C=12
130 CALL KEY(0,K,S)
140 IF S=0 THEN 180
150 CALL HCHAR(R,C,32)
160 IF K=68 THEN 500
170 IF K=83 THEN 600
180 CALL HCHAR(R,C,43)
190 GOTO 130
500 IF C>31 THEN 190
510 C=C+1
520 GOTO 180
600 IF C<2 THEN 190
610 C=C-1
620 GOTO 180
```

That works O.K. The plus symbol moves left and right when you press the arrow keys, and is also prevented from going off the screen.

But, using what we know about the way the computer evaluates relationships, a shorter program is possible.



```

100 CALL CLEAR
110 R=12
120 C=12
130 CALL KEY(0,K,S)
140 IF S=0 THEN 170
150 CALL HCHAR(R,C,32)
160 C=C+((K=68)*(C<32))-((K=83)*(C>1))
170 CALL HCHAR(R,C,43)
180 GOTO 130

```

Isn't that interesting? All the programming contained in lines 160, 170, 500, 510, 520, 600, 610, and 620 in program one is handled by line 160 alone in program two.

Let's look at line 160 in more detail:

```
160 C = C + ((K=68) * (C<32)) - ((K=83) * (C>1))
```

There are four conditional relationships here: 1, 2, 3, and 4. Further, 1 and 2 are combined into a single relationship by the parentheses around them both, as are 3 and 4.

If we press the right arrow key, "D" or ASCII 68, the relationship 1 returns a value of -1 (TRUE). Since we didn't press "S" (ASCII 83), relationship 3 is false, or 0. Since 3 and 4 are multiplied together, their product is 0, as 0 multiplied by anything is still 0. Therefore, everything to the right of the minus sign in line 160 is 0, and doesn't affect anything.

However, we did press key 68 or "D". Relationship 1 is true (-1) and relationship 2 is true (-1) as C is still less than 32. We remember from high school that -1 times -1 is equal to +1. So, C is now equal to C+1 or 13.

If we keep holding down the "D" (68) key, eventually the "+" will get to the right side of the screen and C will equal 32. At that time, relationship 2 will become false (0) and the product of 1 and 2 will become 0. No further rightward movement can occur.

The same sort of thing is true for leftward movement, when C is 1. Of course, to make this program complete, we need one more line to cause movement up and down, too.

It would look like this:

```
165 R=R+(( )*( )-(( )*( ))
```

What? Incomplete, you say? Sure, now it's your turn.

Bryan Hawkins

\*\*\*\*\* NEW COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN \*\*\*\*\*

We want to give special recognition and thanks to two members who have graciously volunteered to serve the user group for the next year. These members are:

Gary Fish	Program Chairman
Paul Mortensen	Publicity Chairman

Please offer support and your talents to help Gary and Paul in their new jobs. Your ideas and suggestions are always welcome.

We still have vacancies for Education and Technical Committee chairmen. Interested parties are asked to call one of the group officers as soon as possible.

Jim Green

\*\*\*\*\* SPECIAL THANKS \*\*\*\*\*

We would like to give a big special "thank you" to Dave Beckwith for a fantastic presentation on "Programming With Sprites" at the past meeting. I think I can speak for the majority of the members who were present in saying: "we're a little green with envy". Dave, who always provides a unique way of presenting his topics, makes programming look so easy.

Editor

\*\*\*\*\* SIGNALMAN VOLKSMODEM--A REVIEW \*\*\*\*\*

The Volksmodem from Signalman is a new product now getting national distribution. I purchased one last month by mail for \$60.00 (including cable), although most catalogs price it between \$75 to \$90. Check the ads to ensure that the cable is included before you send money.

Signalman has been selling their Mark III modem for the TI-99/4A for a long time. It connects to your modular phone between the handset and the body of the phone. (Not too convenient if you have a new one-piece phone, is it?) The Volksmodem solves the problem by connecting between the phone and the wall jack. The modem plugs into the wall, and your phone plugs into the modem. The phone is used normally as long as the modem is not turned on. The modem cable plugs into the RS232 card in the expansion box.

The Volksmodem works just fine with the T.I. and the Terminal Emulator II command module. We hooked it up at our last Executive Council meeting and talked to three bulletin boards in Cedar Rapids. The 300 baud

data rate puts text on the screen faster than the eye can read it. Connecting to another computer is as simple as dialing its number and pushing one switch on the Volksmodem. Screen data may also be dumped to a printer through control of the Terminal Emulator module.

The Volksmodem will not dial or answer your phone for you, but it does a good job once the connection to another computer is made. The Volksmodem is available from several advertisers. I got my good price from: Datasolvers, Inc., 440 Maple, Wichita, KS 67213; phone area code 316, 264-5068.

Jim Green

\*\*\*\*\* TRITON AND TI NEWSLETTERS \*\*\*\*\*

This past month Triton and Texas Instruments provided the majority of the membership with newsletters. If you did not receive one, and wish to have your name added to their mailing list, contact Triton and TI using the following 800 phone numbers:

Triton	Texas Instruments
800-227-6900	800-842-2737

\*\*\*\*\* BUY AND SELL \*\*\*\*\*

For Sale: The following items can be purchased from Don Story by calling him at 396-6017 after 5:00 p.m.:

As a package: TI-99/4A console (copyright 1981)  
 Manuals - Beginners Basic Reference  
                   User's Reference  
 Speech Synthesizer  
 Dual Cassette Cables  
 Cassette Recorders - 1 Sears  
                                   1 Panasonic  
 Joy Sticks

Price: \$170.00

Command Modules with Manuals:

Business-Securities Analysis	\$15.00
Personal Real Estate	\$15.00
Household Budget	\$10.00
Games- Music Maker	\$10.00
Othello	\$10.00
Hunt the Wumpus	\$10.00
Munch Man	\$10.00
Number Magic	\$ 5.00

\*\*\*\*\* REM \*\*\*\*\*

The CEDAR VALLEY 99'er USER GROUP NEWSLETTER is published by the Cedar Valley 99'er User's Group in the Cedar Rapids/Marion area. Members are encouraged to contribute articles. Opinions expressed are those of the writer and are not necessarily those of the Cedar Valley 99'er User's Group, its Officers, editor, or members.

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